

ScotPEN Wellcome Engagement Award

SWEA Final Report

This form, including relevant appendices, must be submitted electronically as a single PDF file, **no later than 14th August 2024**

Please send to: scotpen-wellcome-engagement-award@glasgow.ac.uk

Please note, this information will be shared with external evaluation consultants who have been commissioned by SWEA and Wellcome, and will be used for the purposes of evaluating this grants scheme. The data gathered is extremely valuable in understanding the value, outcomes and impacts of this scheme as a whole; what improvements need to be made; and will help to inform how Wellcome PE Enrichment grants are supported and awarded in the future.



1. Project Information

Project lead: Name and position	Prof J Welburn
Project title	Fabric of Life
Start date	1 st April 2022
End date	19 th June 2024
Total funding awarded	£11,537.05

Project summary

Please refer to the summary originally provided in your application and modify it if appropriate. (Summary for external publication; maximum 250 words).

Fabric and textiles used in everyday settings for clothing and furnishing provide a source of colour and tactile interaction, enhancing our personal environment. People use textiles in fashion as a mode of self-expression and personal identity carried with them in the public space. Eye-catching pieces of clothing have triggered many a conversation between strangers.

Our goal was to develop a set of bright, engaging fabric prints that communicate our research, and express our enthusiasm for it. The fabric designs will be used to engage creatively with a range of different audiences, including textiles students and a youth group to create new items and upcycle others.

We designed a set of cell-biology-themed motifs to be digitally printed onto crafting cotton. These “Fabric of Life” prints have been, and will continue to be, used in workshops with audience not traditionally engaged with science. The project evolved to include textiles students from Edinburgh College coming up with their own biological themed fabric designs, based on their experience working with our researchers, and having these designs become part of the workshops.

During the groups visit to the research centre, and our visit to the youth group and the college, quality interactions occurred with rich dialogue a result. Now that we have a stock of fabric, with both student and researcher designs, many more such interactions and discussions can occur.

2. Inputs

What resources were used in the development and delivery of the project?
For example: funding including any additional/partnership funding; in-kind support; key staff involved; partners – internal or external; training/support received.

The primary input to this project, besides from the generous SWEA funds, was staff time.

Researchers

As well as those researchers named on the bid - Julie Welburn (Principle Investigator), Atlanta Cook (Principle Investigator), Tony Ly (Principle Investigator), and Alison Pidoux (Research Fellow) – Hannah Wapenaar (Postdoctoral researcher), Ankita Gupta (PhD student) and Ola Pompa (Centre Lab Manager) also had significant involvement in the delivery of the project.

A number of other researchers (ranging from PhD students through to other PI's, along with technical staff) provided the research related images and helped us to host and provide activities for the centre visits for the Textile students and ICYS member.

Public Engagement Professionals

Maria Fanourgiaki (PE Coordinator) acted as project manager. Her time was mostly paid for by this grant (we were able to increase her contract from 1.5 days to 2 days for an extended period) but some additional hours were used from her Wellcome salary.

Sarah-Jane Judge (PE Manager) – her time was provided under her existing Wellcome salary.

Partner staff

Intercultural Youth Scotland – Nic McGowan (Group Lead) acted as our liaison with the young users of her group. She helped us to tailor the sessions to the needs of the young people.

Edinburgh College – Anna Stride (Textiles Lecturer) acted as our connection point the college. She also helped us to tailor our sessions for her textile students and advised on suitability of fabrics. Anna's time, and two of her colleagues who came to the centre visit and took part in the workshops, was included in their salaries.

We also worked closely with Hannah Scott (Textiles Technician) at the Edinburgh School of Art who helped us with the design and printing of the fabrics. Whilst the actual printing and fabric was paid for from the grant, Hannah's time was provided in-kind

3. Outputs

- (i) **Audiences and partners.** What individuals/ public groups were involved? (e.g. young people; adults; families; schools; community groups; local residents; patient groups etc.). Please also include any demographic data collected (e.g. age; gender etc.).

Approximately 12 textile students took part in the project. The age range was 17-60. There was also 3 staff members from the college who worked with us.

7 young people from ICYS took part in the project. The age range was 16-20's. There was also 2 staff members from ICYS who worked with us

The participants from both groups included a mix of genders (including non-binary).

- (ii) **Activities.** Please indicate the types and numbers of activities or events delivered and/ or resources produced (e.g. festival; exhibition; workshop; walking tour; video; publication; online resource).

- 1) Researchers from the across our centre were invited to submit research related images for consideration to be turned into fabrics. These were then whittled down, by the project team, based on their suitability to be turned into a repeating pattern, and making sure to have a good range in terms of aesthetic and science. With the help of Edinburgh Art School, these images were then turned into patterns and fabric.
- 2) Researchers visited Edinburgh College to meet with Textile students on two occasions. During one visit, the textile students were given a version of our "Life through a lens" workshop, getting to prepare onion cell slides and viewing pondlife and other samples through different types of microscopes. They used our microscopes to look at different types of fabrics they commonly work with.
- 3) The Textile students then visited the Wellcome Centre where they were given a tour of one of the labs, visited our optical laboratory (including trying out our VR headset system to view different types of cells), made DNA helix jewellery and had lunch with a range of research staff.
- 4) The textile students used what they had seen during these visits, along with their own research, to create biological related designs. These fabrics were then also printed.
- 5) Researchers visited with ICYS and delivered an upcycling session using the science fabrics and unwanted tote bags from conferences (donated by centre researchers). Where appropriate, participants were shown how to sew by our researchers, and they were all given their own sewing kit to take away. Rich dialogue occurred during the time where researchers and young people sat and sewed together.

4. Evaluation

What evaluation method(s) did you use to gather evidence and indicators of outcomes and impacts?

Both researchers and participants were asked in advance what they would like to get out of taking part in the project and engagement sessions were designed with this in mind. In the case of ICYS, this was conducted by their staff members and fed back to the project manager. As part of the formative evaluation with ICYS, the young people expressed an interest in learning how to hand sew, and so we made sure this formed part of the project. The textile students however reported a desire to take part in the design of the fabric, rather than just utilising them. This shifted how we worked with this group quite considerably.

After each session, participants were asked for their feedback verbally for quality assurance. We know that young people particularly might not feel confident giving feedback, particularly negative feedback, in person and so we asked staff at each institution to pass any feedback on to us. Thankfully it was all positive.

Researchers will be interviewed about their experience of taking part in the project. We have held off on doing this as it will form be part of Sarah-Jane Judge's fellowship research into impact of such activities on researchers and research culture (commencing August 1st).

5. Outcomes/Impact

What happened as a result of the project? How many people did you reach/engage? Please refer to the intended outcomes provided in your Application. Please highlight whether these outcomes occurred, and any other outcomes, as may be appropriate.

- (i) **Public.** Number reached/engaged; key outcomes.

Audience numbers and demographics of project participants are provided in the outputs section above. These participants from both ICYS the college reported greatly enjoying taking part in the project, with the textile students really enjoying bringing science giving the particularly memorable comment...

"this was the first time I've been able to learn about science without worrying that there would be a test at the end of it"

As yet the fabric hasn't been used as part of any general public events. It is our hope that the textile students will utilise the fabrics to make garments that can be showcased.

Similarly, it is also our hope that the upcycled items, such as the conference tote bags, will catch people's eye and our participants will feel empowered to

tell others about their experience making it, and maybe even the science behind the designs of their stylish new bag!

(ii) **Research/Researchers.** Number reached/engaged; key outcomes.

A total of 22 researchers were involved across the project as a whole...

- Visiting Edinburgh college and delivering sessions there
- Hosting college students and ICYS user at the centre
- Submitting research images
- Delivering sewing workshop at ICYS

Whilst full interviews are still to be conducted, from general conversations, researchers enjoyed participating in the project, particularly those who took part in the actual making session with ICYS. These researchers enjoyed sharing their knowledge of both science, and sewing/crafting, simultaneously. They the fabrics to be a useful tool in starting conversations and also to explain some of the more complex aspects of their science.

(iii) **Other outcomes:** e.g. for partners, institution or unexpected.

We are also helping to facilitate a potential visit by ICYS members to the Textile College, so textile students can show ICYS users how to use sewing machines, so they can further build their sewing skills. This relationship between ICYS and the college would not have developed had it not been for this project.

6. Legacy

Did this project generate long-lasting resources or partnerships and/or lead to additional PE or research projects being developed?

We have a good amount of fabric remaining and plan to use this for additional engagement sessions with both ICYS members, but also other community groups. This will include an approach to other quilting groups as the previous grouped we had hoped to collaborate with did not work out. (This proposed element of the project was essentially replaced by the more extensive partnering with the Textiles College students)

The future workshops, to which the SWEA funded fabric will prove invaluable, will form part of a new research project looking at the impact of research adjacent activities (including PE) on the researchers and research culture. Additional funds for delivering these workshops has been made available via research funding.

Only one ICYS member has been able to visit the centre so far, but we hope to be able to arrange a further centre visit for ICYS user after the summer.

Edinburgh Textile College have been offered some of the fabric they designed, it is our hope that, after the summer, students will use this to make garments.

7. Additional Information

Please include any relevant information and/or links here relating to your project, which could be used to raise awareness of your project work to others.

For example: links to an online resource, a film, internal/ external communications, news coverage or social media posts about the project; quotes from project partners or public participants/ audiences.

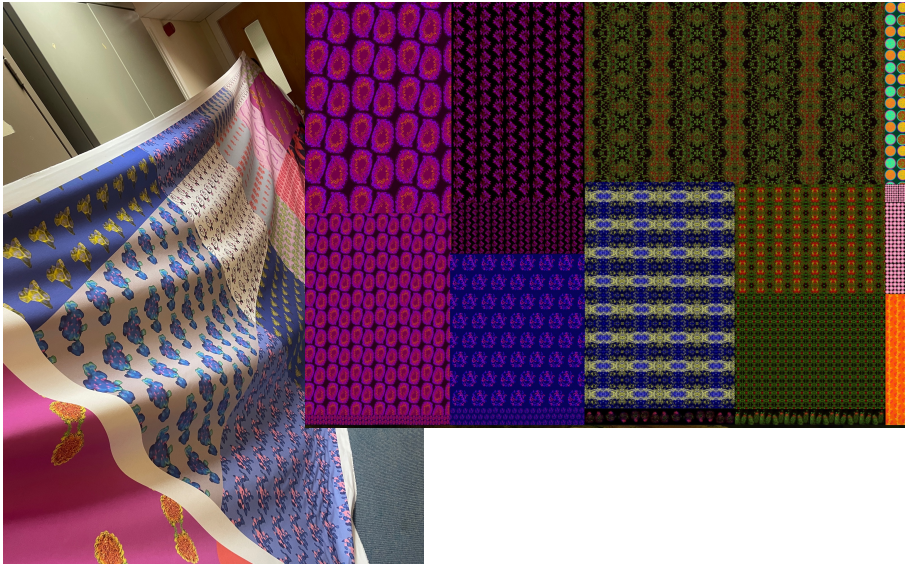
Please send/share relevant high-quality images/ photographs of the project 'in action' and/or project team.

8. Please complete the project finance table below.

Expenditure	Awarded (GBP)	Spent	Balance
Lead Applicant Costs			
Staff	4849	4862	-£13
Travel and subsistence	250	353	-£103
Consumables	4480	5321	-£841
Other (contingency)	957	contingency covered overspends in other categories	
Total	£10,536	£10,536	£0
Partner Costs			
Staff			
Travel and subsistence			
Consumables			
Other	£1000	£1000	£0
Total	£1000	£1000	£0
Grand Total	£11,537.05	£11,537.05	£0

Photos from Project

The Fabric



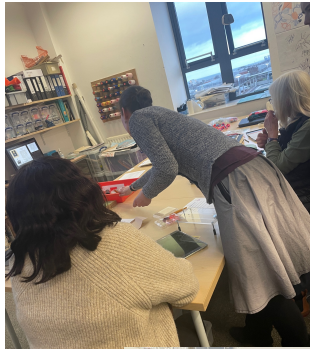
Workshop with Intercultural Youth Scotland





Edinburgh College Workshop





Centre visit

