

# FUTURE EXPERIENCES



Symbiotic Futures:  
Health, Well-being  
and Care in the  
Post-Covid World

2022

## Interviewees:

### Project leads:

Kirsty Ross (Glasgow School of Art)

Nicol Keith (Institute of Cancer Sciences,  
Glasgow University)

### Experts:

Chris Halsey (Clinical Lecturer and Paediatric  
Haematologist, Institute of Cancer Sciences)

Lewis Just (Head of Design, Pawprint)

### Students:

Gabby Morris

Heather Drake

Aidan Fraser

Emma Defty

Olivia Aslett

Lucas Cheskin

“ This project is about people rather than process, It’s about a community of people that come together to collaboratively explore a societal context. That’s what it has done for five years. It’s **a project that uses design and collaboration as the raw material for innovation.** ”

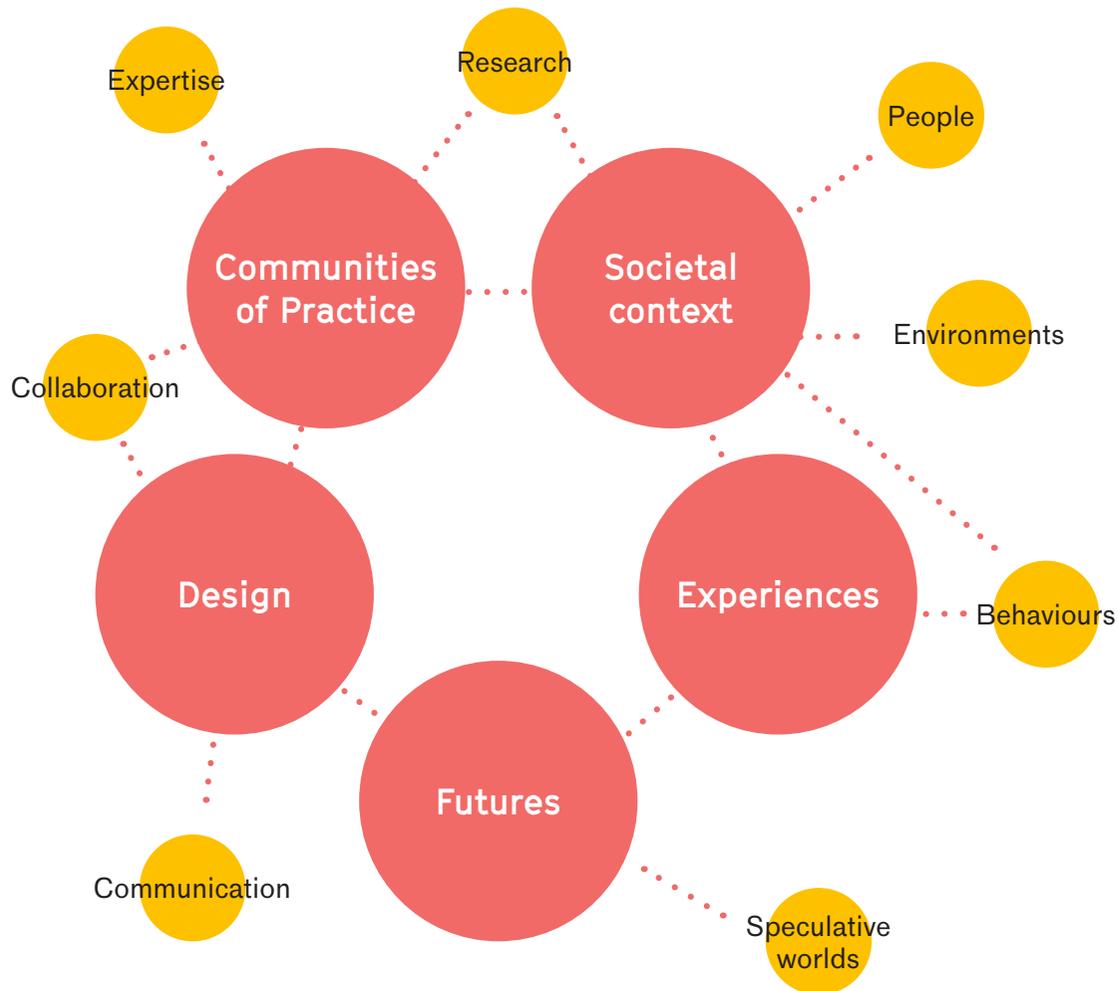
Kirsty Ross

“ (It’s) about addressing these big, messy problems and challenges that we face in society and work in life. And it’s about the future, but it’s not a science fiction kind of future. It’s about **preferable futures.** These projects allow us to **inhabit the worlds of others through experiences** and allows us to look and to imagine what these would be like in the future. They are taking big real world problems and breaking them down through experiences. ”

Nicol Keith

This document aims to provide a blueprint for the Future Experiences project as well as present the process for this year’s iteration of the project, *Symbiotic Futures: Health, Well-being and Care in the Post-Covid World.*

# Introduction



Future experiences is a collaborative design project where students benefit from the input of a community of experts, to design speculative future worlds and experiences based on research on a societal context. This year's iteration of the project looked at health, well-being and care from either a people-centred perspective, or an environment-centred perspective.

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# Timeline

## PART 1: GROUP

### Discover & Define (Future Worlds)

#### Week 1: Research and synthesis

- Project launch and introduction to project partner lead Nicol Keith and colleagues from the University of Glasgow
- Specialist online collaborative workshop with studio AndThen.

#### Week 2: Future vision / Future worlds

- Future Worlds Workshop, with Designer Brian Proudfoot
- First Expert input session Day - Remote group discussions around the research.

#### Week 3: Designing the worlds

- Part One Review: Formative review of the group stages of students work on the six worlds

## PART 2: INDIVIDUAL

### Develop & Deliver (Future Experiences)

#### Week 4: Selecting an aspect of the future world to develop

- Part two Intro
- Specialist online collaborative workshop with Will Brown, founder of Return to Nature

#### Week 5: Selecting and developing final concepts

- Second Expert input session Day

#### Week 6: Developing design proposition

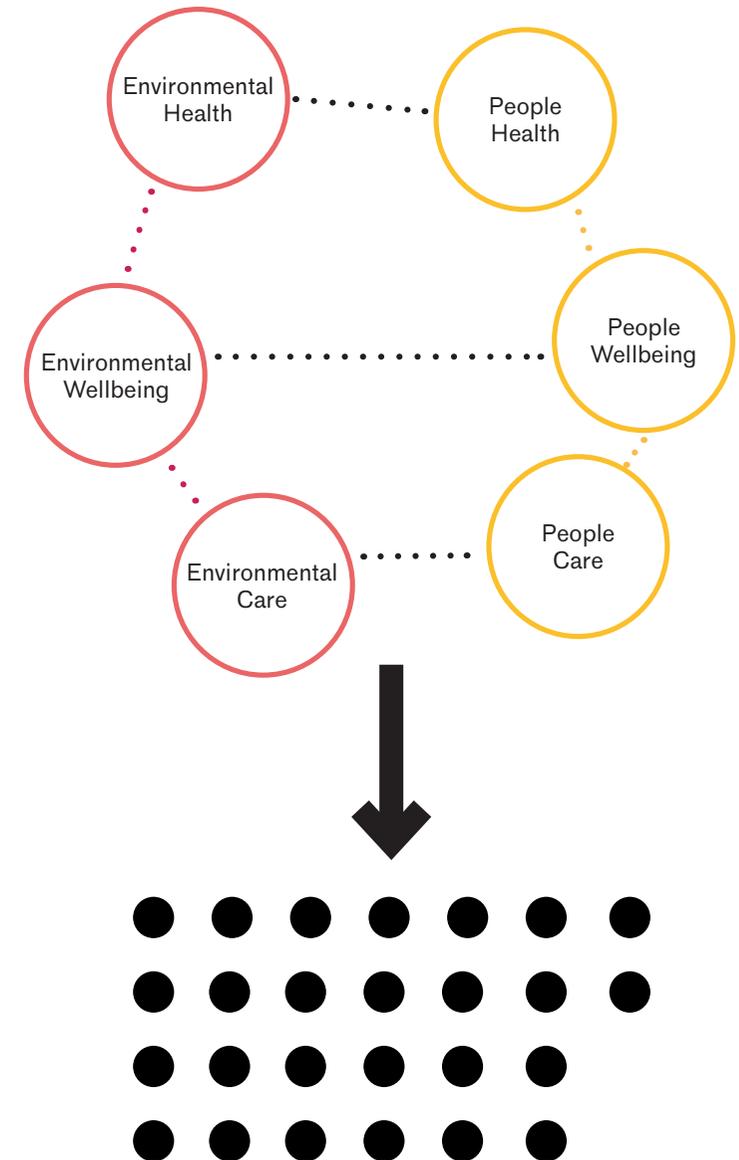
- Part Two Interim Review

#### Week 7: Resolving and representing

- Third Expert Input Day

#### Week 8 & 9: Producing and communicating

- Part Two Final Review



# Symbiosis

“ When most people think about design, they think about it in a very material way, from a very human centric perspective. (But) this project, was (...) about shifting away from that human centric mindset into a mindset that’s more symbiotic. How do humans interact? And what is their relationship with the wider system in which they find themselves, the planet and nature at large? ”

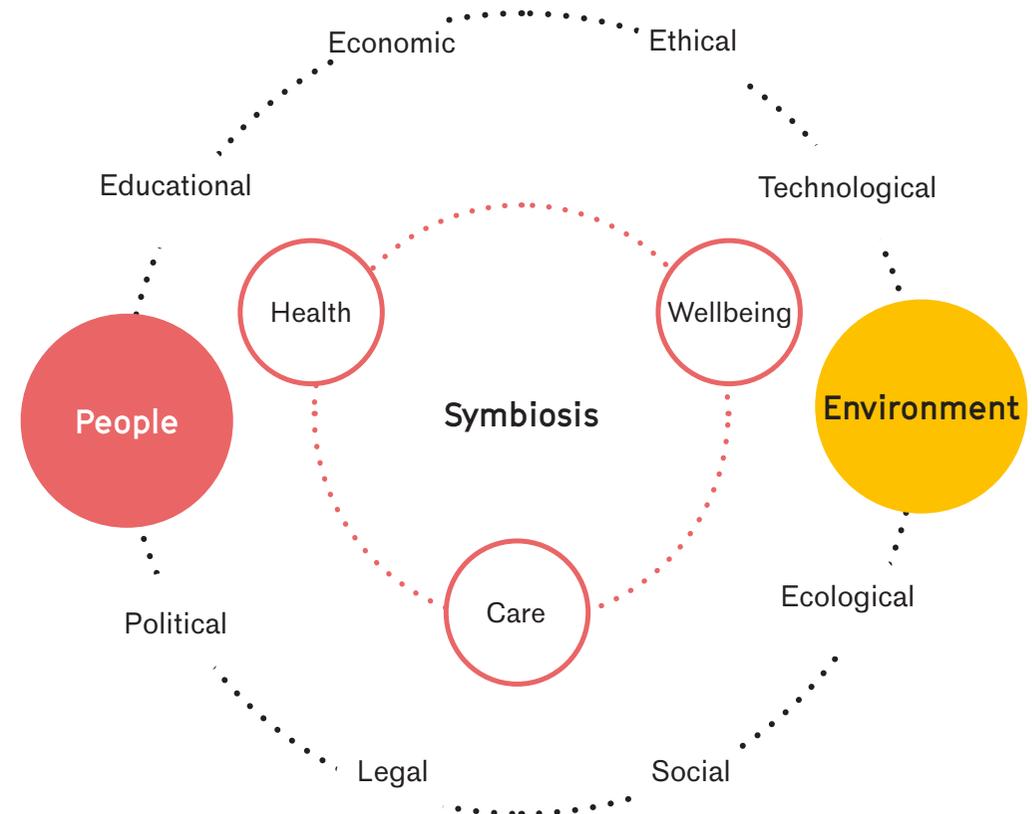
Lewis Just (Design expert)

“ It was really interesting to think about, not what humans want, or need, and more about what does the environment need. And it had quite an impact on the project. It’s something I’ll definitely carry forward, like how to focus on other things, nonliving, or non human needs, and for the better good of humans as well. ”

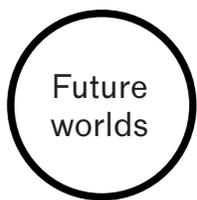
Heather Drake (Student)

A key difference in this year’s iteration of the project was the theme of symbiosis, widely defined as a mutually benefiting relationship, and the role of “environment” as a focus.

This was the first time that non-human stakeholders, as well as our relationship with the environment, were the main part of the brief.



# Project Structure

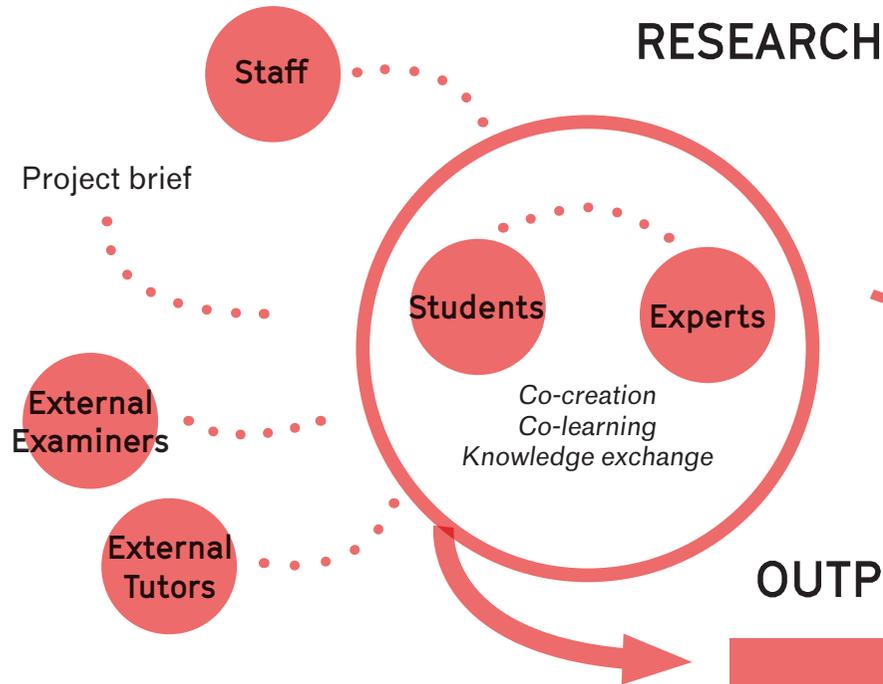


Future worlds are groups of students working together on specific topics, to establish the context for their project and collaborate on research and development.

In this iteration of Future Experiences, the worlds were clustered together around 'People focused' and 'Environment focused', but also joined up across these groups to create pairs of worlds, and in the process generate symbiosis between the groups. These worlds were then the starting points which the students explored in their individual projects.

# Project Landscape Map

## EDUCATION



## OPEN-TO-ALL

Open Access  
Know-how  
Open Knowledge

## CURATION



## FUTURES

## OUTPUTS



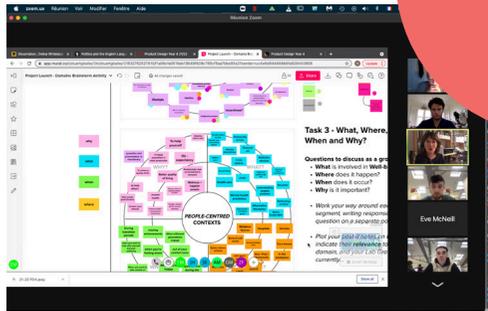
## ENGAGEMENT



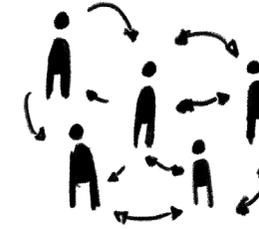
# Hybrid ways of working



Virtual



Studio



Blended



*Expert Input Day - October 2021*

This iteration of the project saw a blended return to the studio, which presented new opportunities and challenges. The Product Design course is traditionally studio-based, with students working physically around tables within their groups.

Students had to consider how to collaborate and work together, working in the studio, using digital platforms like Mural/Miro and Padlet, and engaging with the external experts through communication tools like Zoom and Slack.

# Hybrid ways of working



*Future Worlds presentation - October 2021*

# Hybrid ways of working

*“It’s something that was sorely missed in third year because of the pandemic, (I) wanted to get as much use of peer review, just studio chats on the whim, it helps you push your way through some issues that you have.”*

Aidan Fraser (Student)

*“Adjusting back to being in studio, it was wonderful. But we had been online for a year, and had gotten so used to Miro. And working together in that capacity, there was definitely a little adjustment period. I can see in my sketchbook that the first couple weeks are really rough, me clearly trying to like figure out, how did I do this, and then in the end it flowed a lot better. And I think a common struggle was kind of coming to terms with these approaches.”*

Emma Defty (Student)

*“This was truly a hybrid digital working environment unknown to all of us. And different from the past year or any years previous, it was neither totally digital nor purely physical. So the conditions and characteristics of this digital working were for me, uncharted territory. Flexibility and almost a mobility of practice on all sides were very important.”*

Kirsty Ross (GSA lead)



Project Interim review - November 2021

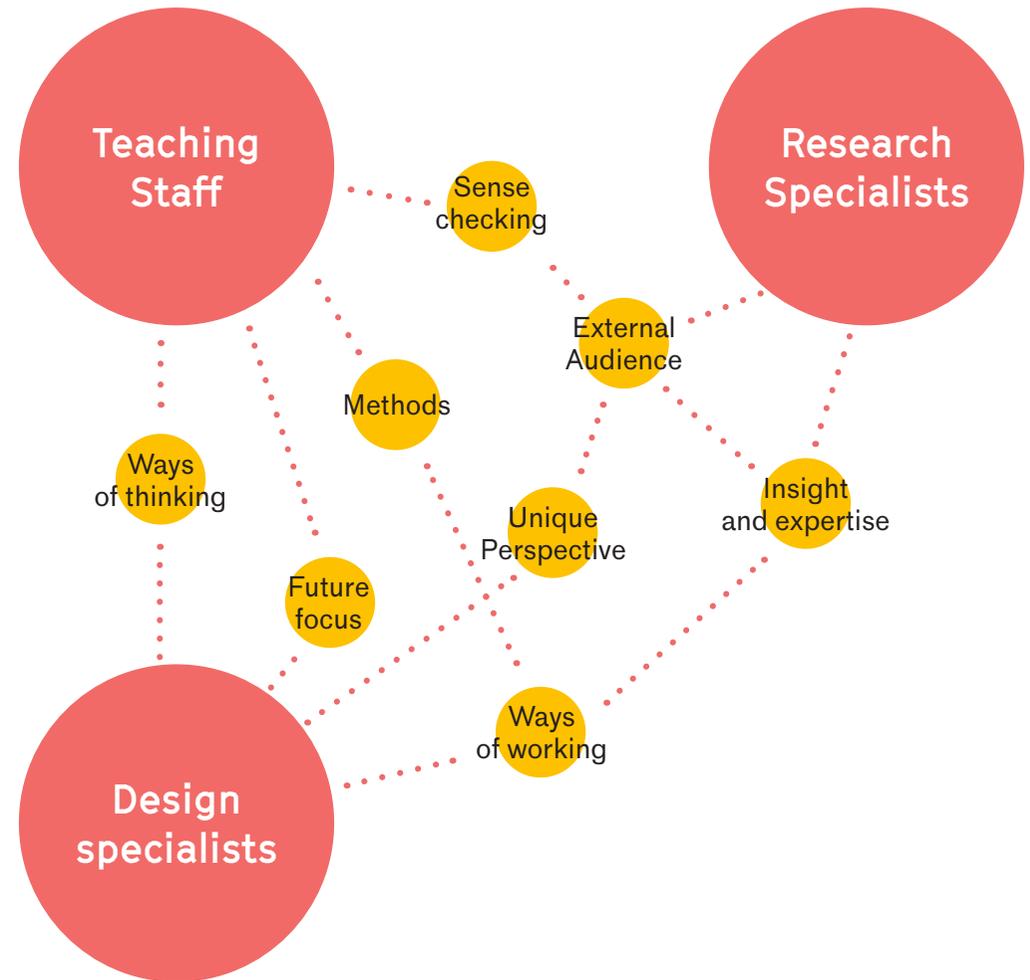
# Communities of Practice

“What I particularly like about this project is that the students show a lot of materials and they actually run the sessions themselves. So you’re invited to the session, you’re not really supposed to have done any kind of preparation for them. And the students very much prepare and define what they want out of the session.”

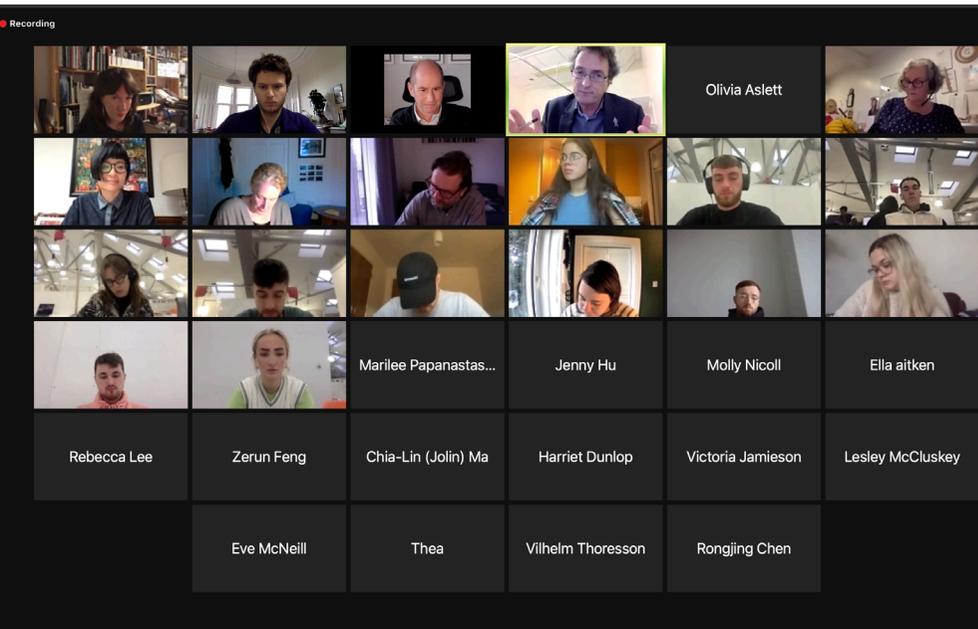
Chris Halsey (Health expert)

Experts from the University of Glasgow, the Innovation School faculty, the Product Design teaching team, and an external network of experts contributed to develop an, evidence-based, multi-perspective community of practice within the project.

A range of experts supported the students’ research and proposals throughout the project, through “Expert Input Days” as well as workshops which helped defined key points of the process. During the Expert Input Days, students presented their work to the experts and organised questions and ways to gather input from them.



# Communities of Practice



Expert Input Day - October 2021

“ We were able to ask questions, remember faces, and they remembered our project. It felt like an easier process as the project went on, and a lot more comfortable. You could definitely feel the interest from the experts, which motivated you to really keep the value. And we always had their contact details. And I know that I’ll be able to reach out to them if I need any more help. So that relationship did feel like we had about 30 tutors. ”

Heather Drake Student)

“ Because I’m also a designer, I understand the process and the journey that the students are on. So I could empathize and try to help guide people through (the project). Sometimes it’s very divergent, sometimes it’s convergent. Sometimes you get very close to a project and it becomes very difficult to understand what you’re actually doing, and becomes quite disorientating. The value that I could deliver is to bring a fresh set of designer eyes that understands that there’s an outcome at the end of this. And then a fair amount of kind of questioning and pushing as to why things are the way they are in this world. ”

Lewis Just (Design expert)

“ What I bring is a bit of a reality check on what healthcare is but also a view from someone who is going to have to implement these things in the future on what the potential pitfalls might be. ”

Chris Halsey (Health expert)

“ Then you just come back with your thoughts and comments. Some of those are quite kind of visceral, your emotional reaction to it, or what it made you think about, and then others are more strategic, about areas that they might want to develop further. You bring your perspective about whether this is something that is important in your field, whether it has applications to what you’re working in. ”

Chris Halsey

# Future Worlds

The Future worlds allowed students to group together to explore their domain: Health, Well-being or Care. These groups were further categorised, in a complimentary manner, between People-Centred and Environment-Centred.

Students pooled together research to create a future setting that would later be used as a basis for their individual projects, the titular “Future Experiences”. Students usually keep referring back to the research that was done during this phase and use their groups as a way of getting feedback on their individual projects.



*Future Worlds - February 2022*

# Future Worlds

Future Worlds presentation - October 2021



# Individual projects



*Project Interim review - December 2021*

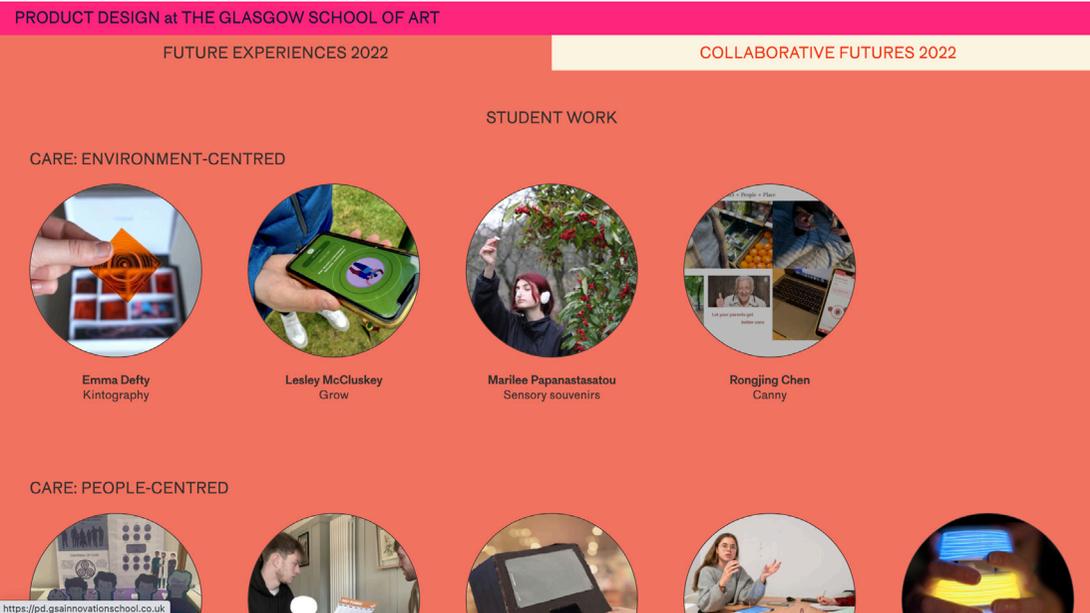
The second part of the project saw individual students select an aspect of their Future World research to develop as a design direction, which they then prototyped and produced as a products, services, and/or systems. These are designed for a specific user, context or scenario of use defined by the students and communicate a future experience. The Future experiences reflect the societal contexts explored during the research phase, projected 10 years into the future, and communicated in a manner that makes the themes engaging and accessible.

# Individual projects

*Project Interim review - November 2021*



# Work In Progress Show



Work In Progress Show website - 2022

“ I would say that the process of creating the WIP show really paid off this year, I think it brought people closer to the work at a critical point in the project. And also in the academic year, it afforded the cohort the chance to step back and evaluate what they had designed, but (for) me as well. ”

Kirsty Ross (GSA lead)

Part of the deliverables of the Future Experiences project is the Work in Progress show, an event and exhibition showcase of the students work before it is assessed. This serves as an experience for the students to communicate the project to an outside audience as well as a celebration of the work that was accomplished. This has taken the form of a physical exhibition in the past but has taken place digitally over zoom and a showcase website since COVID. This year, the students prepared presentations to be delivered in breakout rooms through zoom to allow interaction with the “visitors”.

# Value

“ It has helped me pioneer a shift in what we teach here, especially in final year. I can see a shift in moving from teaching design skills to teaching design competencies, and that’s ways of behaving, ways of designing, and with people outside of design, people in design, designing within really complex contexts.  
But our graduates now are pioneers, they are creating new roles, in areas of society, in public and private sector, organizations that never had designers before. Projects like this equip our students with the confidence and the competencies to go and do that.

Kirsty Ross (GSA lead)

“ The value is actually getting me to re-evaluate what health, well being and care actually means to people. It will help shape how I think about my own field in terms of asking the right questions, (and) it will reinforce that practice that tells me that the design way of working has incredible value when applied to really complex problems.

Nicol Keith (GU lead)

As well as project deliverables to be assessed as a key part of the students’ final year, the project and its outcomes are valuable to the students, staff, experts and ultimately the audience of the project when presented/exhibited.

## Value to the students

- Defining their practice
- Access to knowledge and expertise
- Working with and presenting to external experts
- Confidence to explore complex societal contexts
- Applying a diverse range of design disciplines within a project

## Value to the world

- Being challenged and exposed to different ways of thinking about a societal context
- Experiencing a complex problem through engaging Future Experiences

## Value to the experts

- External perspective on their practice and area of knowledge
- Visibility of alternative models and approaches from other disciplines
- Imagining future ways of thinking and working.

# Value



Future Worlds - February 2022

“ (designers) are able to package that in a way that people can relate to. And that’s because you don’t stick to one way of documenting or codifying something, you don’t just use words. So the outputs find a way to resonate with different groups of people. Because you don’t present it in a one dimensional way. ”

Nicol Keith (GU lead)

“ I want to position my practice as a hopeful speculation rather than dystopia. It’s very easy to sink into “Oh, God, we’re ruining everything”. But what I hope my project can do is remind people that in 10 years time, they’re still humans wanting to do what’s best. ”

Emma Defty (Student)

“ We need more people thinking on these types of scales about these types of problems, wicked problems that are really complex. The projects aren't even necessarily answers, but they're provocations. But hopefully the public or someone who experiences that comes away, challenged by the work and thinking at a different scale, and level, and maybe understanding the problem in a different way and looking at the world with a slightly different lens. ”

Lewis Just (Design expert)

“ I see the projects as a really valuable formative experience for thinkers and leaders in this space in the future, so I actually see a lot of the value in the students themselves. Having gone through this process, I feel that at least some of those students are going to go on, (to places) where in the end, they actually can enact these better futures, that they have envisaged. ”

Chris Halsey (Health expert)

# Experts and Credits

## Specialists



Rob Jones  
Chris Halsey  
Nicol Keith  
Leigh Abbott  
Elisabeth de Vries  
Nigel Jamieson  
Jeff Evans  
Mia Perry  
Jude Robinson  
Azadeh Emadi  
Manon Mathias  
Sara Macdonald  
Olivia Wu  
Tina Onwuka  
Tiziana Lembo  
Katie Gallacher

## Design Specialists



Santini Basra  
Freya Harris  
Brian Proudfoot  
Lewis Just  
Will Brown

## NGOs & Industry Specialists



Cary Adams  
Harper VanSteenhouse

# Experts and Credits

## Staff and Tutors



Kirsty Ross  
Irene Bell  
Bob McCaffrey  
Rachael Sleight  
Mil Stricevic  
Sneha Raman  
Zoë Prosser  
John Thorne  
Gaston Welisch

## Design Innovation



Jay Bradley  
Gordon Hush  
Marianne McAra  
Lynn-Sayers McHattie  
Paul Smith  
Bruce Tharp

## Students



Abby Milliken  
Aidan Fraser  
Bethany Lloyd  
Drew Mogford  
Ella Aitken  
Emma Defty  
Eric Chen  
Eve McNeil  
Ewan Gaynor-Kirk  
Gabby Morris  
Harriet Dunlop  
Heather Drake  
Jenny Hu  
Jolin Ma  
Lesley McClusky  
Lucas Cheskin  
Marilee Papanastasatou  
Molly Nicoll  
Olivia Aslett  
Rachel Corrie  
Samuel Everett  
Thea Brown  
Thomas O'Brien  
Victoria Jamieson  
Vilhelm Thoresson  
Zee (Zerun) Feng