



University of
Sheffield

The University
Library

SCONUL Technology Enhanced Spaces Webinar

20 February 2024

Reimagining the Digital Commons through a decolonised lens.
The Creative Library Project.

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Digital Commons Manager



Contents

- Overview of the Digital Commons, Sheffield's Information and Digital Literacy offer and the Creative Library Project
- Co-producing change using the 4Ds of appreciative inquiry
- Decolonising information and digital literacy

- Creativity and makerspaces
- The offer
- Impact data

Digital Commons



The Commons

The Digital Commons is a physical space in the Information Commons, our student library. It brings learners, creativity and digital tools and skills together in a collaborative space.

Information and Digital Literacy Framework

Discovering

Understanding

Questioning

Referencing

Creating

Disseminating

The University of Sheffield's Information and Digital Literacy (IDL) Framework

Background: The Creative Library Project

The Creative Library Project (Liberate the Library!)

Aim	To reimagine the Digital Commons through a decolonised lens.
Objectives	We will collaboratively organise workshops focused on digital creativity and aligned with the liberation priorities of students. Workshops for: Black History Month, Disability History Month, Reclaim the Night, LGBT+ History Month.
Methodology	Change methodology of appreciative inquiry as a form of participatory action research working in partnership with the Student' Union.
Funders	AHRC-RLUK, Participatory Research Network, IATUL.
Approach	People centred, co-produced between librarians and students, digitally enable our information literacy (Commons, Creativity, Digital).

Background: The Creative Library Project

At the heart of the Creative Library Project is the active inclusion of missing voices through digital library making. We are positioning students from marginalised groups as (digital) knowledge creators in our University Library.

Co-producing change through an appreciative inquiry

Appreciative inquiry

- A collaborative organisational **change technique** that sees change as continuous. It is a way of being more than a separate process.
- **Underpinned by 5 philosophies:** Constructionism, Simultaneity, Poetics, Anticipation, Appreciation.
- **Works through four practical (non-linear) steps - the 4D model:** Discover, Dream, Design and Deliver
- We are using appreciative inquiry as a tool to co-develop the **Digital Commons, through a decolonised lens**

Engaging stakeholders

- **Students**
- **The Library Team**
- **Library Directors**
- **Funders**
- **Academic Colleagues**
- **University Leaders**

Using the 4D Model to Decolonise IDL

Discovering, Dreaming, Designing and Delivering

We have collaboratively **designed** four digitally enabled creative workshops **delivered** in partnership with the Students' Union Liberation Officers and a team of Library Student Associates and reflected to **discover** what works well. On 28th February 2024 we will bring librarians and students together to reflect further on the workshops and to collaboratively **dream a vision for the future**: Imagine it is the year 2034. You decide to visit the Digital Commons to see how dreams to decolonise the library have developed. You expected good things to happen but this is beyond your wildest dreams. What does it look like? What technology is included? What workshops and activities are happening? How do you feel? How has this happened?

De-colonising information and digital literacy

**Black History Month Workshop
October 2023**



Poetry Workshop



Craft Cupboard



**Virtual Reality and
Collage Workshop**

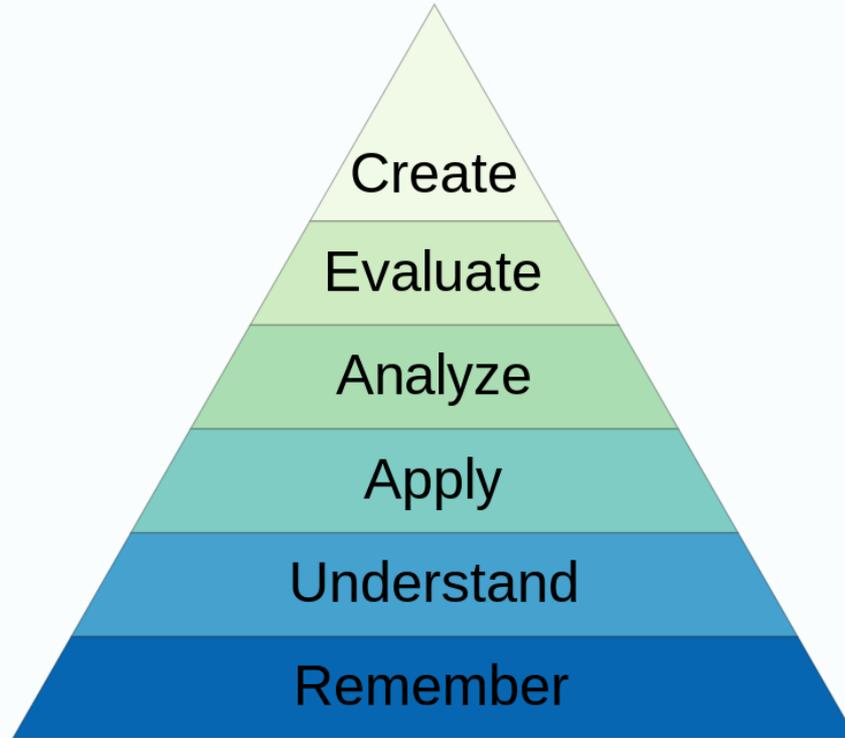
Move away from “Holders of Knowledge....”

We fundamentally believe in the power of enabling creative opportunities for our students to empower them for an increasingly complex world

Makerspaces enable experiential learning

Constructionism - where learners construct their understanding through creating and reflecting on tangible projects

Bloom's taxonomy



Creativity and Makerspaces - we aim to...

Provide any students with opportunities to experience digital creativity irrespective of their discipline

Transform a very traditional Library study centre into digital makerspace



What we will offer - 3D printing

Making fidget toys for Disability History Month



What we will offer - Digital stitchcraft

Introductory creative stitchcraft

Creative coding and embroidery
(eg algorithmically generated embroidery patterns)



What we will offer - XR Technologies

Orientation to VR environments



Creating in VR - 3d painting, 360 media, VR computer aided design



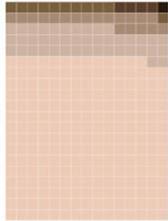
What we will offer - Critical AI Literacy

Ethnic Bias - skin tones analysed from AI generated images

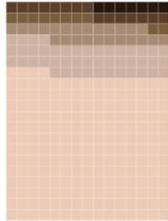
Lighter skin
I II III
Darker skin
IV V VI

High-paying occupations

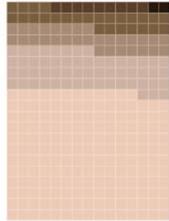
ARCHITECT



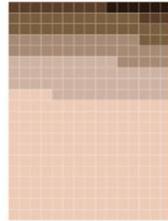
LAWYER



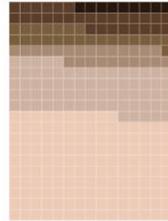
CEO



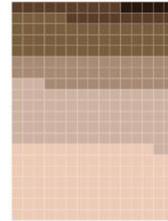
POLITICIAN



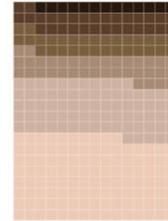
JUDGE



ENGINEER

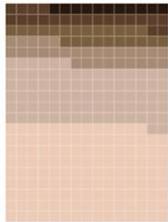


DOCTOR

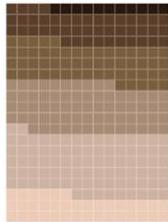


Low-paying occupations

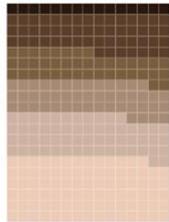
TEACHER



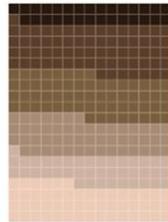
HOUSEKEEPER



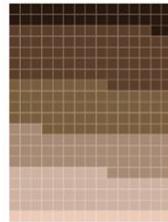
CASHIER



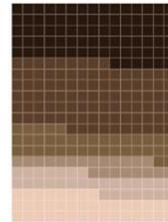
JANITOR



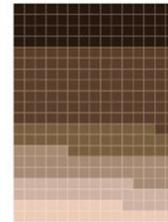
DISHWASHER



FAST-FOOD WORKER



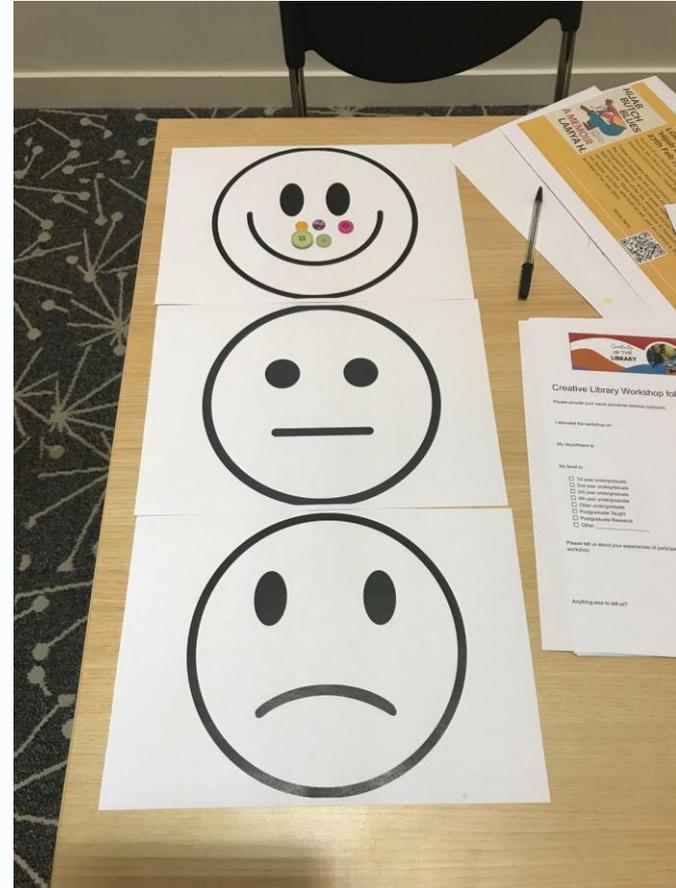
SOCIAL WORKER



Impact (data)

“Wonderful. Thoughtful, engaging.
Helped to generate so much creative
ideas I did not think I had.”

“It was so good!
I love it
Look forward to more”



Impact (data)

“Workshop included ...digital stitchcraft, collaborative poetry, fidget toy crafting, an introduction to 3D printing and an introduction to sound recording and noise making ... Each activity utilised different senses and abilities, from touch to sight to sound ... The combination of activities, and how they had been adapted to suit varying needs, helped the event to feel more accessible than any event, workshop, seminar or lecture I have previously taken part in. As a facilitator, my primary roles were to assist with the 3D printing presentation, as well as to assist a visually impaired student, who was taking part in the event ... The students ... (experienced) the printer complete one of the fidget spinners and they all took turns in taking a piece of the fidget spinner from the build plate. Our visually impaired student was also keen to get involved and we encouraged them to feel around the safer parts of the 3D printer to help them understand the shape of the machine and how 3D printing works ... Students felt so comfortable ... when the event had finished, a number of them remained seated around a table and discussed LGBTQ+ and religion. One of the students stated that they rarely got the chance to discuss the topic, which is important to them ... This was refreshing to see as it meant that the event had triggered a conversation which was important to many of the students involved; it also opened my eyes to the fact that the participants will discuss the event, and topics which were raised, after the event had concluded ... something unique that allows students to try their hand at a creative activity ... this maximises the student experience, improves what the university is offering and brings students together.”

Librarian Facilitator Reflecting on the Creative Library Project 6th December 2023

Any questions?

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