SUMMER RESEARCH 2021/22
PROJECT ABSTRACT

SUPERVISOR/S: Nicholas Vanderschantz
PROJECT TITLE: Designing for Children's Information Seeking
FIELD: Design
DIVISION/SCHOOL: HECS - School of Computing and Mathematical Sciences
PROJECT LOCATION: Hamilton

PROJECT ABSTRACT:
The BAT (Beginning Acting Telling) is a guided inquiry model for supporting children, parents and teachers during children’s information-seeking. This information-seeking method was developed through research with children by Associate Professor Valerie Nesset from the University at Buffalo in the USA. AProf Nesset and Dr Nicholas Vanderschantz (University of Waikato) are presently developing research resources required to investigate the use of the BAT method in educational settings in the USA, Canada, and New Zealand.

This Summer Scholarship is required to develop the research materials needed to begin this new international research program that will be lead by Dr Vanderschantz and AProf Nesset. This scholarship will further support the development of a funding proposal by Vanderschantz and Nesset to undertake this research program.

The specific goal of this Summer Scholarship for the student is to develop a suite of print and digital research materials for the BAT. These tools will need to be suitable for use by parents, teachers, and children in classrooms and homes around the world. A unique design research problem for the student will be developing design solutions that work for this diverse audience. The research question being addressed during this practice-based design investigation is: what is required to communicate the BAT research method to this diverse audience?

The successful student will have the opportunity to meet AProf Nesset (online) and learn about the research on which the BAT is founded. The student will analyse and evaluate the initial design system that has been completed and propose and implement improvements to this design system. The student will investigate necessary design solutions for a series of learning tools for use with the BAT research method that they will then develop. A website will be developed to house and disseminate the material produced and the research associated with the BAT.

Through close collaboration and supervision by Dr Vanderschantz the student will benefit through the development of core skills in design and human-computer-interaction research and practice for diverse audiences. The successful student will also contribute to identifying gaps in the research and the opportunities to pursue their own graduate studies working in the area of children’s information-seeking if they choose.

STUDENT SKILLS:
- Well organised with strong communication skills
- Interest in developing design solutions for inter-generational audiences
- Design capabilities in cross-media visual communication for static and interactive print and digital media
- Self-motivated and comfortable working (at times) on their own

PROJECT TASKS:
- Evaluation of the BAT Visual Language and Design System
- Design a series of educational devices (research tools) for use by teachers, parents, and students
- Design and build a website to disseminate research outcomes of the BAT and recruit participants for empirical user testing research
- Outline a research article describing the design differences for the BAT compared to other common guided inquiry models for teaching information-seeking practices to children
EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

- Student’s Research Poster (as per clause 6 of the Scholarship regulations)
- Initial research tools for use in empirical user testing research in NZ, and internationally (research collaboration in Canada, and USA currently established)
- A website to disseminate research outcomes of the BAT and recruit participants for empirical user testing research
- A research article describing the design differences for the BAT compared to other common guided inquiry models for teaching information-seeking practices to children suitable for ASIS&T
- Preparation for funding application with AProf Valeri Nesset