



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ANNUAL REVIEW 2020- 2021



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Community Engagement Team



Claire Mulrone
Community Engagement Manager



Anne Mooney
Community Outreach Officer



Paul Cassidy
Community Outreach Officer



Emma Hetherington
Media Design Intern



Holly Sherrard
Media Design Placement Student

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TEAM



Ulster University actively seeks to build and engage in sustainable community partnerships with the primary aim of positively influencing individuals and communities across the region. The Community Engagement team actively supports The Science Shop, Civic Ambassadors, MY LACES, Care Experienced Students, Community Learning and in partnership with the School of Law the Social Justice Hub.

This 2020-2021 Community Engagement Annual Review showcases the wide range of activities the team have developed and engaged in throughout this very challenging year.

We are based at The Gatehouse on the Magee campus, accommodating both the Community and the Social Justice Hubs. If you require any further information on the work of the team, our activities, or want to discuss a potential community engagement project please contact community@ulster.ac.uk

Claire Mulrone
Community Engagement Manager

FOCUSING ON SOCIAL JUSTICE

Through the last year the Social Justice Hub and the Law Clinic based at our Magee and Belfast campuses have been funded by Alison Donaldson and family. This year the funding has supported a number of initiatives including substantial donations to two Christmas Appeals for families based in both locations.

We also set up a fund with three local solicitors to support individuals who can't access legal representation for family and immigration law issues.

- o Edwards & Co Solicitors Belfast
- o McGeady Molloy Solicitors Derry
- o Phoenix Solicitors

In partnership with The Rainbow

Project, we commissioned a documentary film entitled "Respect Comes from Within" which explores the Transgender journey in Northern Ireland. The documentary film maker, Chriselda Burke, was a final year Cinematic Arts student at the Magee campus, who was supported and supervised by Dr Victoria McCollum.

Through the Whistle Project we supported numeracy and literacy tutoring and counselling support for young people.

We also supported the Breakfast Club @ Home, more details on this project available on page 10.



240 PARTNERS AVAIL OF LEGAL TRAINING

Sharing our legal expertise in Family Law, Employment Law and Social Security is the corner stone Social Justice Hub and the Law Clinic. Throughout this challenging year and embracing technology we were able to support 240 individuals from seventeen community and voluntary partners to attend online accredited training sessions in:

- Social Security
- Employment Law: Furlough, Layoffs & Redundancy

- The Rainbow Project- Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity
- Employment during a Pandemic and Brexit
- Maternity Rights
- Family Law

Dr Esther McGuinness led the training with support from her colleague Shauna Page.

Thanks to our external facilitators Mary Durkan (BL), Seonagh Gervin from Advice NI and Eimear Willis from The Rainbow Project.

Community partners in Belfast and the Northwest who engaged in the training included:

- Lower North Belfast Family Support Hub
- Ashton Centre
- Autism NI
- Human Rights Consortium
- Star Neighbourhood Centre
- Ardmonagh Family and Community Group
- NOW Group
- Smile SureStart
- Lighthouse Charity
- North Belfast Advice Partnership
- Advice NI
- The Whistle Project
- NSPCC
- Pink Ladies Cancer Charity
- Derry And Strabane District Council

Employment Law

Welch and
Stevens

LIVING

BREAKFAST CLUB @ HOME

TACKLING FOOD POVERTY IN NORTH BELFAST

Through the Social Justice Hub and the Law Clinic, we have partnered with Culinary Arts staff and students from the Belfast campus, the North Belfast Advice Partnership, which runs the North Belfast Food Bank and Lower North Belfast Family Support Hub, to tackle food poverty for 100 local families.

Together we co-created the Breakfast Club @ Home to ensure children in North Belfast are returning to the classroom fully fuelled and ready to learn, after Covid-19 restrictions saw them learning at home.

The funding for this Club is kindly provided by Alison Donaldson and her family. Alison explains: **"We were delighted to be able to support the Breakfast Club @ Home, and on a recent visit we saw first-hand the amazing work Sinead McKinley and her team are undertaking**

with multiple organisations and families, it is humbling."

A North Belfast parent, participating in the Breakfast Club @ Home said

"We are really enjoying being a part of this, my daughter loves creating the recipes we receive, and she is even making them by herself."



Thanks to...
Michael Gilles and Mairead McEntee
Department of Hospitality Management

Sinead McKinley
North Belfast Advice Partnership

Edith McManus
Ashton Centre & Lower North Belfast
Family Support Hub



CIVIC AMBASSADORS

Ulster University Civic Ambassadors initiative creates an opportunity for staff from across faculties to work in partnership with community organisations, the voluntary sector and schools throughout Northern Ireland, supported by widening access funding.

In 2020/21 we all experienced the impact of Covid 19 on planned activity but with knowledge, expertise and innovative approach, our Civic Ambassadors adapted projects and presented across digital platforms.

Community partners and course participants also rose to the challenge of remote learning by embracing online delivery whilst encouraged and guided by Ulster University staff.

If you are enthusiastic about improving educational attainment and ambition for young people or adults from under-represented groups across Northern Ireland, then get in touch to discuss the possibilities of working with an ambassador from Ulster University.

On pages 14-21 we showcase four Civic Ambassador projects academic partners undertook with community partners this year. For further information on the Civic Ambassadors contact Anne Mooney.



HOME START CERAMICS WORKSHOP

Michael Moore, Reader in Fine and Applied Art Ceramics, at Belfast's School of Art designed and delivered, a new and exciting programme of remote Ceramic Workshops.

The four-week course introducing hand built ceramic techniques was presented through live, online demonstrations and interactive workshops. All sessions, supported by recorded presentations enabled participants to access the course at a time suitable to them.

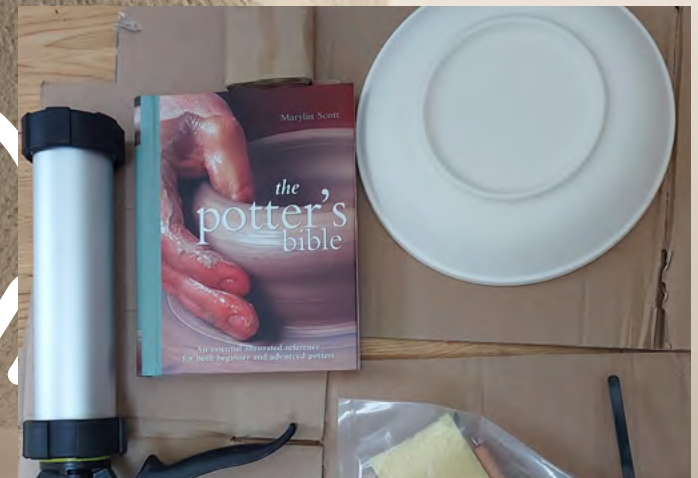
The **free** programme brought together representatives from the Belfast community groups, HERe NI, the Ashton Centre, Arts for All, New Lodge Duncairn Community Health Partnership and Home Start North Belfast.

"With the excellent teaching, I feel I have achieved another string to my bow and hopefully will be able to pass this on to a group of interested parents"

Participants Feedback

"The quality of teaching and delivering online was superb and pitched at the right level. The recordings proved extremely useful to reinforce what we had been taught earlier in the week"

Participants Feedback



ARCHILAB: COMMUNITY INSPIRED ARCHITECTURE IN NORTH BELFAST



Working in partnership with community stakeholders across North Belfast, The Archi Lab project led by Mike McQueen, Lecturer in Architecture, at Belfast's School of Architecture and the Built Environment, forged links and engaged with local groups in addressing civic regeneration.

Aimed at affording an opportunity for individuals and groups to share their positive ambitions and to contribute to extended community engagement, the collaboration also helped inform Ulster University students' work, through proposing spatial solutions to the ground-level issues in local neighbourhood areas.

Funded through Ulster University's widening access fund, and building on work in previous years, the project has led to the design and creation of a model, capturing images of local areas and iconic buildings surrounding our new and exciting Belfast campus. With an exhibition planned for later in the

year, the introduction of live and community-based issues in this context offers further exciting opportunities for enhanced learning and partnerships.

"Through the generosity and engagement of community and statutory stakeholders in recent years, North Belfast has proven to be a rich context for our architectural studio's ambitions for research, design and dialogue based on real-life issues. We hope that the planned exhibition can extend this work and make visible the amazing creative potential that local stakeholder ambitions offer in this key part of our city"

Mike McQueen



SPORTS FOR U

WITH BRAIN INJURY MATTERS

Ulster University academics Dr Katy Pedlow a Lecturer in Physiotherapy within the School of Health Sciences and Dr Niamh Kennedy, Lecturer in Psychology have been working in partnership with Brain Injury Matters NI, a charity dedicated to supporting those who have been affected by Acquired Brain Injury.

The collaboration resulted in designing a physiotherapy and exercise led intervention programme Sports For U, for service users aged 16+ wishing to improve their levels of physical activity and health knowledge.

'This project has been invaluable in strengthening links between Ulster University and charitable organisations. We have gained knowledge in understanding what people with acquired brain injury would like to see included in an intervention programme in addition to exploring how to embed civic engagement projects into the undergraduate curriculum for Health Science courses. We look forward to building upon this programme later this year.'

Dr Katy Pedlow



SPORTS FOR U

EYE CARE ADVICE WITH SURE START

EYE CARE ADVICE WITH SURE START

Having identified a gap in their service provision in the form of eyecare advice and information for their service users, Sure Start based in Omagh and Armagh collaborated with academic staff from Optometry at Ulster University to design and deliver a programme aligned to their needs.

Supported by widening access funding, Dr Julie-Anne Little and Dr Julie McClelland from Ulster's School of Biomedical Sciences conducted online workshops with Sure Start colleagues representing Health

Visitors, Speech and Language therapists, Early Years Workers, Assistants and Leaders, and Play Workers.

The interactive sessions provided the group with information on the professionals involved in eye care, the development of vision, common eye disorders, how to sign-post parents to appropriate services, promote eye, and vision health. Participants were also directed to Ulster Vision Resources which provide a useful bank of information on eyecare for both parents and professionals.

100%

of participants agreed or strongly agrees that the sessions were useful and that they gained new knowledge during the workshops.

87%

of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they felt confident advising a parent about concerns relating to their child's eyes or vision following the training.

**"A VERY
INFORMATIVE
SESSION"**



SCIENCE SHOP

Ulster Science Shop opened in 1995 and throughout this time we have offered real world connected learning projects to under and post graduate students across our four Faculties and campuses.

This year has been a real challenge, but both our community partners who, generate the projects and our academic partners, embraced the situation and adapted to engaging online. We are proud that students and staff completed the projects as course work modules or final

year dissertations for a range of community and voluntary partners.

For the first time 45 MBA students at our Birmingham campus undertook a project with a Northern Ireland environmental charity. We also renewed our partnership with the Department of Hospitality Management engaging first year Culinary Arts and final year International Travel and Tourism Management students in two projects for partners in Belfast and Causeway Coast and Glens.



Science Shop 2020-2021

Throughout the pandemic the Science Shop continued to support community partners across Northern Ireland developing real world connected learning projects for Ulster students.



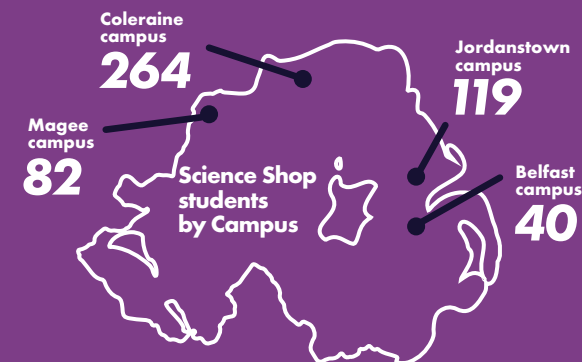
The Charity Chop

UUSB 1st year students at Magee supported academic Éamonn O'Ciardha cut his long hair to raise £7,100 for Foyle Search and Rescue, Foyle Down Syndrome Trust, Foyle Hospice and Pink Ladies Cancer Charity.



Annual Science Shop Digital Media Award

Andy Reid, Rachel Burke and Glen Anderson final year BSc (Hons) Interactive Media students who completed a project with Connect who deliver community learning through engagement.



The Science Shop
Knowledge • Ideas • Results

For more information:

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Designed by Emma Hetherington,
Community Engagement Intern Student

A SPORTING CHANCE!

The Science Shop has engaged with 10 sports clubs and two sports governing bodies working in partnership with students studying Public Relations, Communications Advertising and Marketing and Sports Coaching and Performance.

Ten part time undergraduate and postgraduate Sport Performance and Coaching students completed a range of work-based learning opportunities with a variety of clubs across Northern Ireland including sport clubs

Rossario Football Club
Portadown Rugby Club
Newtownbuler GAA Club
Northern Knights Cricket
Netball Northern Ireland

A class of post graduate Public Relations students worked in partnership with Northern Ireland Sports Forum to develop a PR strategy to increase awareness of the Forum, exploring the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, promoting key messages and identifying opportunities for engagement in sport and physical recreation.

A final year Communications Advertising and Marketing student in partnership with Irish Football Association (IFA) undertook a dissertation investigating the barriers to engagement, the impact of less funding for the Northern Ireland Women's Football Team, and exploring how to increase support for women's football in Northern Ireland.



Thanks to all our Sporting Clubs and Governing Bodies and our academic partners, Dr Phil Ramsey, Tandy Haughey, Robin Gregg, Dr Ben Clement and Dr Aodheen McCartan

Bronagh McNicholl who completed the IFA project said..

"I really enjoyed The Science Shop project; it made it so much easier doing something that felt like it genuinely was of importance and could make a difference!"

Since 2009, Project Social has engaged 79 Science Shop partners including social enterprises, health and mental health charities, community development partnerships, educational, disability and youth groups, sport clubs and religious partners. This unique partnership provides real world connected learning projects for final year Interactive Media students.

Project Social is a problem-based learning solution using a partnership approach between University staff, Science Shop partners and students. Students develop complete Media packages including, visual identities and branding, websites, promotional materials and merchandise, and other digital solutions. This year 20 students engaged with community partners

to develop 8 bespoke solutions.

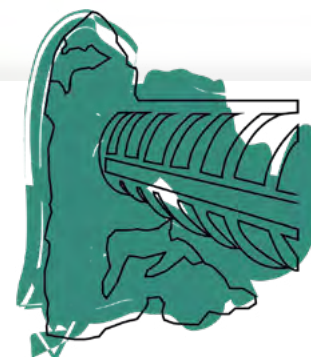
Embracing a digital first approach and moving the learning space online the students produced outstanding work for partners surpassing that of previous years. To celebrate the student's achievements, showcasing this year's creative media solutions, Graphic Design students on Placement with the Community Engagement team developed a celebratory video in place of our normal End of Year Show. Check out www.project-social.co.uk

Thanks to Adrian Hickey our academic partner and our Science Shop partners Causeway Coast and Glen Heritage Trust, Kilcooley Together, Forum for Adult Learning NI, North Antrim Geopark, First Steps Women's Centre and St Columb's Hall.

2021 WINNERS SCIENCE SHOP MEDIA AWARD



Andy Reid
Rachel Burke
Glen Anderson



ANTRIM GEOPARK



CHARITY CHOP RAISED £7,100

Through the Science Shop 1st year Ulster University's Business School at Magee campus completed the ACES module raising funds for local Charities. This year these future business leaders joined forces with well-known lecturer, Dr. Éamonn Ó Ciardha to devise Éamonn's Charity Chop which seen Éamonn shed his signature long locks in March 2021.

While COVID-19 has presented huge challenges around fundraising in 2021, especially for charities, the students did not let that stop them as they came up with creative and novel fundraising ideas for the 'Charity Chop'.



Funds raised were shared with Foyle Search and Rescue, Foyle Down Syndrome Trust, Foyle Hospice and Pink Ladies Cancer Charity.

Thanks to....
Dr. Éamonn Ó Ciardha
Professor Malachy O'Neill,
Caroline Morrison,
Edel Griffith and
Myra McAuliffe

INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

This year for first time MBA students from both our Jordanstown and our Birmingham campus engaged with Groundwork NI. In completing their Innovation and Entrepreneurship module, led and delivered by Dr Kristel Miller and Dr Shirley Davey, the students in small teams, examined and analysed the business model for Groundwork NI 'Grow Box' and the "Bonfire Beacon"

Cara Cash-Marley, Chief Executive of Groundwork NI explains

"The students demonstrated a clear understanding of the work our Charity does, they had taken time to learn about the work we do, and on the opportunities that exist for us. My sincere thanks to all involved giving thoughtful and insightful ideas for our new business opportunities"

A participating student remarked:
"We were engaged right from the start, I really enjoyed the experience of working on this project."



GROUNDWORK
CHANGING PLACES
CHANGING LIVES

PSYCHOLOGY AT WORK

This is the second year of the Psychology at Work Module offered to final year undergraduate students at the Coleraine campus. Engaging with ten community, voluntary and statutory partners, **164** students used their knowledge and skill to explore projects brokered with **10** partners including; NSPCC, ChildLine, Women's Aid Armagh and Down, Public Health Agency, Abbeyfield and Wesley, SPACE NI, Inspire Wellbeing, Nexus, La Dolce Vita and MindWise.

Examples of the projects undertaken by small student teams include: for the Public Health Agency, the students examined the issues around the formation of an ethics committee.

With partner Abbeyfield and

Wesley, the students examined how working from home has had an impact on non-front-line staff; including lack of in person contact with colleagues, potential added pressures of remote working and attitudes towards the wider organisation.

In partnership with MindWise the students explored the current implications of providing online services. Potential barriers to seeking online help, as well as engaging new and current clients.

Thanks to all our community partner organisation and to the academic team who deliver this module, Professor Melanie Giles, Dr James Houston and Dr Orla Parslow-Breen from the School of Psychology



DESIGN WITH DATA

Through the Science Shop 2nd year BSc Interactive Media students worked in collaboration with FactcheckNI on ways to translate and communicate with audiences using Data Storytelling.

The module develops technical and design skills and critical engagement with quantitative and positivist methods.

FactcheckNI secured £5,000 through the Open Data Funding for a 4 month student internship secured by Ethan Hill, who will work on a data communication project which targets mis/dis/mal-information around the pandemic.

Thanks to FactcheckNI and our academic partner Alan Hook.



"Trusted and accessible data has an important role to play in countering mis/disinformation. Our collaboration with Ulster University staff and students demonstrated how talented and imaginative designers can bring the data we write about to life."

FactCheckNI's Executive Director Dr Orna Young

ÉCONOMUSÉE – ARTISANS AT WORK

The Science Shop working in partnership with The Causeway Coast and Glen Heritage Trust put forward an innovative and exciting project with the Économusée Artisans Network.

With Ulster academics, Dr Peter Bolan and his colleague, Maria Simone-Charteris from the Department of Hospitality Management and 17 final year International Travel and Tourism Management students to help review and develop digital content for micro food businesses in the Causeway Coast and Glen region.

Tierna Mullan representative from the Économusée Artisan Network explains **"The Économusée project is a complex one, however the students demonstrated their ability and understanding from the beginning, showing strong leadership, using their own initiative to liaise with various Économusée Artisans. The final Digital Strategy report was clear, consistent, well researched and exceeded our expectations."**

Thanks to all the Économusée Artisans who participated in the research.



TICK THE BOX £92,000



The focus on the educational progression and attainment of young people from a care background has increased significantly in recent years with greater emphasis placed by higher and further education institutions on proactively engaging and supporting this cohort of young people.

In 2018/19, 20% of young people achieved 5 A*-C GCSE passes or higher at the time of leaving care, with only 0.19% of the overall undergraduate population of Northern Ireland's domiciled students were care experienced. Ulster University is

committed to supporting access to Higher Education and has raised care experienced enrolments from three in 2008/09 to ninety two in 2020/21. We actively partner with Fostering Network in their annual Tick the Box campaign. This promotes the services offered to students who attend Ulster University for applicants at the UCAS stage to inform universities that they are care experienced. In doing so, in confidence, students will have a named contact throughout their time at Ulster. This additional support, includes £1,000 per annum bursary.

ULSTER HAS DISTRIBUTED £495,000 IN BURSARIES SINCE 2008

For further information contact Paul Cassidy

Schools Outreach Acedemy- Pathways Guide

In the coming weeks we will launch a Pathways online resource on the University of Ulster Schools Outreach Acedemy for children looked after. This will allow post primary pupils to access online resources at their own pace. Young people will be informed of:

- UCAS application process
- Ticking the box as a care experienced student
- Financing university and budgeting
- accommodation
- wellbeing services
- Ulster's commitment to care experienced students

1,000 LAPTOPS

ULSTER'S TECH FUND INITIATIVE 20/21

Recognising the challenge of moving to a digital first teaching operation highlighted the need that some students struggle to access remote online learning through the pandemic.

The Widening Access and Participation team in partnership with Student Wellbeing and Development and Alumni Relations Office bought 1,000 laptops to distribute to students across all four faculties and campuses.

Initially it was anticipated we would offer students who were eligible for an access bursary and who lived in Deciles 1 to 4 the opportunity to apply for support. However, as the scheme evolved, we were able to offer all students eligible for an access bursary, the opportunity to apply, regardless of their home address.

The Community Engagement Team based at Magee, actively engaged in the distribution of laptops to eligible students who either studied on campus or who lived closest to the campus to collect their new laptop. This activity was replicated by the Schools Partnership team on our other three campuses too.

During Covid, the Department of Economy provided additional funds to alleviate student hardship, this allowed Ulster to offset the cost of this initiative, and as a direct result, we will extend the Tech Fund to all eligible widening access students in 2021-2022.



SOCIAL WORK TRAINING

WITH HSCT

Partnership with Multi Agencies for Looked After Children

As a member of the Regional Strategic Multi-Agency Group on Attainment and Progression in Education and into Employment for Looked After Children group, we produced and published Pathways to Further and Higher Education for Looked After and Care Experienced Young People.

As part of a strategic review into resources for care experienced young people entering Higher Education, we held a number of engagements with social workers, graduates, current students and potential students on their individual budgeting

experiences. Engaging with the young people, helped to develop an evidenced informed report for the Regional Strategic group, reflecting the financial experiences of our youth prior to entering, during and after leaving Higher Education.

Training outreach with Social Workers, Pathways Advisors and Young People.

This year we facilitated information sessions with 18 pathways advisors and social workers across the region. This engagement led to development of 10 bespoke online advice workshops, supporting foster carers and potential future students.

UNITED TO FUND ACCESS TO LEARNING

Ulster University, Ulster Community Investment Trust and Santander Universities have united to fund access to learning, at a time when young people need to study at home during COVID-19.

Ulster University in partnership with Ulster Community Investment Trust and Santander Universities, raised funds to support community groups and schools in Derry~Londonderry.

Thomas McCallion, Manager of On Street Community Youth said:

"Many young people face the unfortunate position of not having the relevant IT equipment at home or the internet capability to meet the demands of learning via online educational materials. Ulster University, Santander Universities and the Ulster Community Investment Trust

deserve recognition for working closely with the community sector to help address this very real problem."

Harry McDaid, Chief Executive, Ulster Community Investment Trust (UCIT) said:

"Our collaboration with those who value social capital, and respond to where it is most needed, is at the heart of all that we do."

Matt Hutnell, Director, Santander Universities, said:

"Santander is committed to supporting higher education and local communities across the UK, so we're pleased that our funding was able to be redirected to where it is most needed at this critical time."



PLANTING SEEDS OF HOPE

Ulster University's Magee campus collaborated with local community groups to 'plant seeds of hope', with the help of Groundwork NI, our Community Fellows, Roisin Mc Laughlin of North West Community Network and Maureen Hetherington of The Junction.

Community Engagement Officer Paul Cassidy distributed 50 plant boxes to local community groups including R.E.A.C.H. Across, Foyle Women's Information Network, The Cathedral Youth Club (in the Fountain Estate) and Ballymagroarty Hazelbank Community Partnership (BHCP).

Dr Malachy Ó Néill, Provost at Ulster University's Magee, explains:

"To inspire hope in our local communities, we decided to replicate the Planting Seeds of Hope initiative at our Magee campus. The residents of Fr Mulvey Park Care Home and Belmont Cottages really enjoyed receiving the planting boxes and the interaction with the young people from the community groups so seeds of hope and positivity were sown in more ways than one by this Ulster University initiative."



CREATIVE COLLABORATIONS

This year Holly Sherrard and Emma Hetherington were engaged as Media Design placement and intern students. Throughout the course of the year they have worked collaboratively on numerous projects. Video work included creating a contemporary fast paced motion graphic for the Interactive Media end of year show, creating and editing videos for School of Law Pro Bono Week and Pinset Mason Schools event. They edited videos for the Charity Chop and Culinary Arts skills videos.

They also worked on numerous infographics highlighting the range of activities that the

Community Engagement team undertook. In partnership with the Social Justice Hub they created publicity and recipe cards for the Breakfast @ Home Club.

The largest project that Holly and Emma undertook this year was for Project Social. They revamped the current website, created a new visual identity, developed a motion graphic and collated and archived all of the projects completed through the Science Shop over the last 12 years.

Check out some of their design outputs on these pages.

