Universitat Pompeu Fabra
Barcelona
Departament de Comunicació

Master in Digital Culture and Emerging Media

CHALLENGE-ORIENTED FINAL PROJECTS

DiCEM | Challenge-oriented Final Projects

Edition 2023-24

The Master in Digital Culture and Emerging Media offers the students the opportunity to do a challenge-oriented project for their Master's Degree final project. The Master's Degree coordinator and the teaching staff have defined these projects aiming for optimal interaction and equilibrium between several factors: (a) the academic and social interest of the proposed topics and objectives, within the context of contemporary digital culture; (b) the particular strengths, experiences and current interests of the teaching staff; and (c) the specific interests of the partners of the Master's Degree.

These challenge-oriented projects are **carried out in groups** (2-3 students), **each participant having a clearly defined role** (see the specifics of the project proposals). The final evaluation of these projects will include both an **individual mark (50%) and a group, shared mark (50%)**.

The offer of challenge-oriented projects may change in each edition of the Master's Degree. Those students interested in taking part in one of these proposals must first formalize an expression of interest (individually) through the corresponding online form (due to be active in November-December; students will be informed about the procedure in due course).

DiCEM's challenge-oriented projects. Edition 2023-24

Challenge #1. Exhibition script
[a project proposal co-designed with the CCCB]

Outline and objectives

This challenge consists of the conceptualization and development of **an exhibition script for the CCCB (Center of Contemporary Culture of Barcelona), including some contents and museographic resources related to digital media and digital culture**. **The topic of the exhibition shall be decided by the CCCB** and the script must be adapted to the

real spaces of the center, as well as follow the cultural 'personality' and general museographic style of the center.

<u>Output</u>

The group of students engaged in this project will carry out a **research report** and an **exhibiton script (written document)** for the CCCB.

<u>Basic aspects of the workflow</u>

The work process will start with a kick-off **meeting with a representative of the CCCB**, who will assist the students on the initial orientation and definition of the project. Optionally, by the middle of the process, a second meeting could be held between the students and the CCCB's representative whereby they may assess the evolution of the project and give more feedback to the students. The students must take notes at the meeting/s and include the information and decisions they made deriving from them in a written report of the work process.

<u>On the theoretical and research background of this project</u>
This project has two key aspects of its theoretical and research background:

(A) Topic-related research.
    The students shall carry out some research into the topic of the exhibition.
(B) Theoretical background and state of the art of (selected) digital media/resources for the exhibition.
    The students must include some museographic proposals related to digital media in their exhibition script; these resources must be contextualized in the theoretical section of the final document, as a state of the art on these digital media resources and their potential in museum exhibitions. Proper academic references must be included.

These two points must be properly developed and discussed in the final document of the project.

<u>Participants and roles</u>

This project is to be carried out by a **group of 2-3 students**. All of them may collaborate as they wish in any area of the project; however, in terms of the final evaluation, each significant section must be signed individually by (only) one student, as the main author.

Roles (concerning individual evaluation):

1) One/two student(s) responsible for the theoretical and research background of the project (see points A and B above) plus, optionally, a certain part of the script (this role must be covered   by   at   least   one   student).
In case of two students adopting this role, they must specify clearly the main individual

authorship of each section, by signing them individually. 2) One/two student(s) as main responsible(s) for the development of the exhibition script (this role must be covered by at least one student). In case of two students adopting this role, they must specify clearly the main individual authorship of each part of the work, by signing them individually.

According to this outline, the students must specify clearly their respective roles within the final document of the project. See the document of guidelines for the master's degree final projects on the master's website (regarding practice-based research).

Structure of the document

See the information on the **modality 'practice-based research'** in the document of guidelines for the final projects, available on the master's website.

On confidentiality and I.P.

Industrial/intellectual property rights shall belong to the student.

The student shall keep all information that it may receive from the entity confidential, provided that the entity indicates its confidential nature. The student commits not to use the results of the project as part of an academic publication (or any other kind of publication) without having prior permission from the entity.

Regarding the possible publication of the results obtained by the student by the entity, the entity and the student shall formalize the corresponding transfer of rights contract or a written declaration of the student in favor of the entity.

The fact of participating in this Master's 'challenge' does not imply that the results obtained need to be ideal or useful for the entity. The project constitutes the student's work and does not imply any formal obligation on their behalf towards the entity proposing the challenge. In the same vein, the fact of proposing a challenge does not imply any obligation by the entity to use/implement the result obtained by the student.

Limit of groups and selection criterion:

This challenge is limited to two groups (of 2-3 students). If requests from students exceed this limit, the selection criterion will be their average grade in the first trimester of the master's degree.

Challenge #2. Exploring Exergaming and Full-Body interaction through Extended Reality, XR

[a project proposal codesigned with IDEAL - Center of Digital Arts]

Outline and objectives

Extended Reality (XR) involves the development of immersive interactive media such as virtual reality, augmented reality and mixed reality, which involve Full-Body interactions. XR has an extraordinary potential for widening the spectrum of human activity, communication and interaction in digital environments. Beyond the usual disembodiment found in desktop interactions, XR opens new research and experimental horizons. **As a cultural center specialized in immersive media, IDEAL - Center of Digital Arts is an ideal place from which to experiment with XR's potential**, pushing the boundaries beyond the classic Human-Computer Interaction mind-body split. Along these lines, this project consists of the **exploration of the potential of XR for Exergaming interactive activities**, through the elaboration of a research report and a creative proposal for IDEAL, revolving around Full-Body Interaction innovation based on XR technologies. The project will focus on a topic selected in agreement with a representative of the center, and it will be limited to a given room and/or installation setup as proposed by them.

Output

The group of students engaged in this project will carry out a **research report** and an **Exergame prototype** for IDEAL, making the most of XR technologies and dealing with the selected topic and setup. The prototype will be developed with feedback from a representative of IDEAL, and it must include all suitable visual documentation and materials accompanying the text (e. g., storyboards, mood boards, mockups, etc.).

Basic aspects of the workflow

The work process will start with an **initial meeting with a representative of IDEAL**, with whom the students will select the interaction models to work on. In addition, the IDEAL's representative will introduce the students to the spaces and technological resources involved, and he/she will provide them with the corresponding orientations regarding how to develop a suitable prototype for the centre, and the kind of interactive experiences that are most appropriate for the audience groups, technological devices and spaces involved. At some point, by the middle of the process, a second meeting could be held between the students and the IDEAL's representative in order for him/her to assess the evolution of the project,

giving feedback to the students so that their work will have a real/realistic value for IDEAL. The students must take notes at the meeting/s and include the information and decisions they made deriving from them in a written report of the work process.

<u>On the theoretical and research background of this project</u>
This project has two key aspects of its theoretical and research background:

> (A) Practice-based research.
> The interaction script and experience design proposal will require a previous/parallel research work on Exergaming, which the script will be based on.
> (B) Theoretical background and state of the art on the uses of XRFull-Body Interaction in the field of Exergaming.
> A research work must also be carried out in order to map out significant precedents and landmarks on contemporary uses of XR. Proper academic references must be included. This part of the work may serve both as an initial mapping to explore possible creative formulas for the project and a 'theoretical' background on the resources and creative proposals finally adopted.
> These two points must be properly developed and discussed in the final document of the project.

<u>Participants and roles</u>

This project is to be developed by a **group of 2-3 students**. All students may collaborate as they wish in any area of the project, but in terms of the final evaluation there must be an individual responsible for certain areas of the work, who will receive his/her individual part of the evaluation based on that area.

Roles (concerning individual evaluation):

1) One/two student(s) responsible for the theoretical and research background of the project (see points A and B above) (this role must be covered by at least one student). In case of two students adopting this role, they must specify clearly the main individual authorship of each section, by signing them individually.
2) One/two student(s) responsible for the conceptualization and development of the interaction script, design and prototypation (this role must be covered by at least one student). In case of two students adopting this role, they must specify clearly the main individual authorship of each part of the work, by signing them individually.

According to this outline, the students must specify clearly their respective roles within the final document of the project. See the document of guidelines for the master's degree final projects on the master's website (regarding practice-based research).

Structure of the document

See the guidelines for the **modality of practice-based research** in the document of guidelines for the master's degree final projects, available on the master's website.

On confidentiality and I.P.

Industrial/intellectual property rights shall belong to the student.

The student shall keep all information that it may receive from the entity confidential, provided that the entity indicates its confidential nature. The student commits not to use the results of the project as part of an academic publication (or any other kind of publication) without having prior permission from the entity.

Regarding the possible use of the results obtained by the student by the entity, the entity and the student will have to formalize the corresponding transfer of rights contract or a written declaration of the student in favor of the entity.

The fact of participating in this Master's 'challenge' does not imply that the results obtained need to be ideal or useful for the entity. The project constitutes the student's work and does not imply any formal obligation on their behalf towards the entity proposing the challenge. In the same vein, the fact of proposing a challenge does not imply any obligation by the entity to use/implement the result obtained by the student.

Limit of groups and selection criterion:

This challenge is limited to two groups (of 2-3 students). If requests from students exceed this limit, the selection criterion will be their average grade in the first trimester of the master's degree.

Outline and objectives

Hangar is a cultural institution specialized in art research and production, offering support to artists. As an artist run space for co-creation, for more than 25 years, Hangar has focused on collective development and democratization of tools, building transversal communities of practice and knowledge around open-source technologies. Along these lines, **this challenge consists of reexamining Hangar's past and present cultural activity, as a practice and knowledge ecosystem, through the metaphor of composting.** Following Donna Haraway's uses of the idea of humus (Haraway, 2016): Compost, like humus, is a pile of various residual waste strata in a retro-contamination situation so that they become nutrients. The challenge **involves the elaboration of a research report and a creative proposal for Hangar, based on a hybrid Media Studies and Art-based research perspective.** The project will focus on a topic selected by the students in agreement with a representative of the center, and it will be limited to a given platform and/or installation setup approved by Hangar.

HANGAR. ORG
centre de producció i recerca artística_

Output

The output is double: The group of students engaged in this project will carry out a **research report** and a **prototype** for Hangar, making use of open-source technologies and dealing with the selected topic and setup. The prototype will be developed with feedback from a representative of Hangar, and it must include all suitable visual documentation and materials accompanying the text (e. g., sketches, storyboards, mood boards, mockups, etc.).

Basic aspects of the workflow

The work process will start with an initial meeting with a representative of Hangar, with whom the students will select the interaction models to work on. In addition, the Hangar's representative will introduce the students to the spaces and technological resources involved, and he/she will provide them with the corresponding orientations regarding how to develop a suitable prototype for the center, and the kind of interactive experiences that are most appropriate for the communities, technological devices and spaces involved. At some point, by the middle of the process, a second meeting will be held between the students and the

Hangar's representative in order for him/her to assess the evolution of the project, giving feedback to the students so that their work will make sense in the context of Hangar. The students must take notes at these meetings and include the information and decisions they made deriving from them in a written report of the work process.

On the theoretical and research background of this project

Keywords: Art-based research, Media Studies (software studies & Infrastructure studies), Science and Technology Studies, Cultural critique, Emerging media, Collective archives, co humus, composting.

This project has two key aspects of its theoretical and research background:

(A) Practice-based research.

The interaction script and experience design proposal will require a previous/parallel research work on Media studies (including Software studies and Infrastructure studies), which the script will be based on.

(B) Theoretical background and state of the art on the collective uses of open-source digital media for community archives. A research work must also be carried out in order to map out significant precedents and landmarks on contemporary uses. Proper academic references must be included. This part of the work may serve both as an initial mapping to explore possible creative formulas for the project and a 'theoretical' background on the resources and creative proposals finally adopted.

These two points must be properly developed and discussed in the final document of the project.

Participants and roles

This project is to be developed by a group of 2-3 students. All students may collaborate as they wish in any area of the project, but in terms of the final evaluation there must be an individual responsible for certain areas of the work, who will receive his/her individual part of the evaluation based on that area.

Roles (concerning individual evaluation):

1) One/two student(s) responsible for the theoretical and research background of the project (see points A and B above) (this role must be covered by at least one student). In case of two students adopting this role, they must specify clearly the main individual authorship of each section, by signing them individually.

2) One/two student(s) responsible for the conceptualization and development of the interaction script and design (and, optionally, prototypes) (this role must be covered by at

least one student). In the case of two students adopting this role, they must specify clearly the main individual authorship of each part of the work, by signing them individually.

According to this outline, the students must clearly specify their respective roles within the final document of the project. See the document of guidelines for the master's degree final projects on the master's website (regarding practice-based research).

Structure of the document

See the guidelines for the modality of practice-based research in the document of guidelines for the master's degree final projects, available on the master's website.

On confidentiality and I.P.

Hangar encourages the use of open-source, free software. Through GNU and creative commons licenses, Hangar's position is nevertheless compatible with UPF general IP policy states that Industrial/intellectual property rights shall belong to the student.

The student shall keep all information that it may receive from the entity confidential, provided that the entity indicates its confidential nature. The student commits not to use the results of the project as part of an academic publication (or any other kind of publication) without having prior permission from the entity.

Regarding the possible use of the results obtained by the student by the entity, the entity and the student will have to formalize the corresponding transfer of rights contract or a written declaration of the student in favor of the entity.

The fact of participating in this Master's 'challenge' does not imply that the results obtained need to be ideal or useful for the entity. The project constitutes the student's work and does not imply any formal obligation on their behalf towards the entity proposing the challenge. In the same vein, the fact of proposing a challenge does not imply any obligation by the entity to use/implement the result obtained by the student.

Limit of groups and selection criterion:

This challenge is limited to two groups (of 2-3 students). If requests from students exceed this limit, the selection criterion will be their average grade in the first trimester of the master's degree.