THE PLANETARY COLLEGIUM

Founding director:
Professor Roy Ascott

University
Plymouth
England

Mission

The Planetary Collegium is concerned with advanced inquiry in the transdisciplinary space between the arts, technology, and the sciences, with consciousness research an integral component of its work. It sees its influence extending to new forms of creativity and learning in a variety of cultural settings. Far from eschewing the study of esoteric or spiritual disciplines, it seeks to relate ancient, exotic, even archaic knowledge and practices to radically new ideas emerging at the forward edge of scientific research and speculation, and thereby to new forms of art and cultural expression. It seeks dynamic alternatives to the standard form of doctoral and post-doctoral research while producing, if not exceeding, outcomes of comparable rigour, innovation and depth. The Planetary Collegium is designed to produce new knowledge for the new millennium; new language, new systems, new structures, new behaviours, and new insights into the nature of mind, matter and human identity. It takes a constructive and pro-active approach to the social, technological and spiritual aspirations of the emerging planetary society, while sustaining a critical awareness of the retrograde forces and fields that inhibit social harmony and cultural transformation.

The Collegium emerges from the successful experience of CAiiA-STAR in its gathering of doctoral and post-doctoral researchers of high calibre whose work transcends orthodox subject boundaries, and whose practices are at the leading edge of their field. It works toward the projection of advanced research into the post-institutional space of the 21st century – a century in which the old academic structures are being replaced by research organisms fitted to the telematic, post-biological society. It combines the physical face-to-face transdisciplinary association of individuals with the nomadic, trans-cultural requirements of a networking community. It is seen as a network of nodes strategically located across the planet, with each node eventually embodied in an architecture of unique distinction.

As an evolving organism, the Collegium can be understood by the questions it seeks to answer: How might new technologies and the metaphors of science be employed in the education of the artist? How might the insights of the artist contribute to the advancement of knowledge in science and to technological development? How can the accrued wisdom of exotic or ancient cultures be allied to the search for meaning and values in a post-biological society? How might new technologies serve to support and sustain cultures that lie beyond the Western paradigm? How might the Net serve the needs of interactive, non-linear, transdisciplinary learning, and engender creative thought and constructive action? How might new discourses be initiated which will bring critical, aesthetic and moral perspectives to bear on emergent fields of practice? While stretching to the full the constructive and expressive potential of electronic, telematic, and interactive digital media, how might the Collegium pursue developments in post-biological research, molecular engineering, neuro science, and nano technology, while identifying artistic and spiritual strategies that optimise human capabilities, and seed new visions of a planetary society.

From its Hub at the University of Plymouth, England, the Planetary Collegium is currently negotiating to develop its network to include nodes worldwide. Z-Node opened in 2004 in Zurich at Hochschule für Gestaltung und Kunst. The Collegium plans to incorporate additional nodes over the next five years.

www.planetary-collegium.net
Description

Founded on 1st May 2003, under the direction of Professor Roy Ascott, the Collegium is a world-wide transdisciplinary research community whose innovative structure involves collaborative work and supervision both in cyberspace and at regular meetings around the world. It has evolved from CAiiA-STAR, an integrated research platform which combined, CAiiA, the Centre for Advanced Inquiry in the Interactive Arts established by Professor Ascott in 1994, at University of Wales College Newport, and STAR, the Science Technology and Art Research centre, which he established in 1997 at the University of Plymouth.

The Planetary Collegium has a transdisciplinary perspective which seeks the integration of art, science, technology, and consciousness research within a post-biological culture, and is involved in advancing the parameters of creative practice in consort with developments in telematics, Mixed Reality, Alife, architecture, hypermedia, agent technology, nanotechnology, transgenics, data imaging, intelligent environments, generative music, technoeics). It is a community of closely connected doctoral candidates and graduates, post-doctoral researchers, advisors, associates and supervisors. These high level professionals are committed, through collaboration and shared discourse, to pushing the boundaries of their art. For these reasons the level of research is extremely high and the methodologies employed are extensive and rigorous.

Planetary Collegium Hub

The Hub of the Collegium is situated in the University of Plymouth, England. The specific structure of The Collegium’s Research Programme at Plymouth (see below) is indicative of the research structure throughout the network. The registration of doctoral candidates and the awarding body of doctoral degrees at Plymouth extends to all nodes in the network. The Director of studies at any node is employed by the University of Plymouth. Professor Ascott is Director of the Collegium worldwide, and Director of Studies at the Plymouth Hub.

The Zurich Node

The Zurich Node (Z-Node) of the Collegium is based in the Hochschule fuer Gestaltung und Kunst, Zurich (HGKZ). The Director of Studies of Z-Node is Professor Jill Scott PhD of the Cultural Studies Institute at HGKZ. Doctoral candidates at Z-Node are based at HGKZ (onsite or online) and supervised by Professor Scott and colleagues associated with the Hochschule. Candidates are registered in the University of Plymouth and on successful completion of the programme and submission of the thesis, will be awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by the University of Plymouth. The research programme in every respect reflects that in operation at the Plymouth Hub, where all submissions and theses are finally examined. Members of the Collegium meet once a year at the annual international research conference, Consciousness Reframed.

The Doctoral Research Programme

Online Research

Online doctoral candidates attend three mandatory ten-day face-to-face Composite Sessions each year. Typically, each session involves three days of individual research updates presented for discussion by the group; a three stage critique by all members of the group in respect of each others work; individual supervisory tutorials; a two-day public symposium; and a one-day cultural visit. Online candidates are required to attend all nine sessions over three consecutive years. Candidates are expected to give 28 hours per week to their research at their home base.

Onsite research

Onsite doctoral candidates are required to be resident in the University of Plymouth for a continuous three year period, to meet regularly at research seminars, and individually with their supervisors, in the development of their independent research, and to participate in the Collegium’s annual public conference. They may from time to time be able to participate in composite sessions of the Online programme.

Composite Sessions

The Collegium is regularly invited to hold its Composite Sessions at universities and media centres abroad. These sessions and conferences have been hosted by Artspace Media Centre, Dublin (1997); La Beneficia Cultural Centre, Valencia (1998); CYPRES, Marseilles (1999); Federal University, Rio de Janeiro (1999); University of Arizona, Tucson (2000); the Ecole National Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris (2000), Fondazione Fitzcarraldo, Turin (2001), Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, Barcelona (2001). University of California DARNet, Santa Cruz and Los Angeles (2001). University of Arizona, Tucson (2002); Curtin University, Perth (2002);
IAMAS, Ogaki, Japan (2002). The Hochschule fuer Gestaltung und Kunst, Zurich (2003); Image Technology Center, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro – at Paracatu and Fortaleza (2003); Ciber@rt, Bilbao (2004). Additionally, CAIIA-STAR initiated and co-sponsored the international conference Invenção in Sao Paulo, Brazil (1999) in collaboration with the ITAU Cultural Centre, the International Society for Electronic Arts (ISEA), and the journal Leonardo.

The Fall 2004 Composite Session is hosted by the Digital Media Studio, Central Academy of Fine Arts; China Electronic Music Center, Central Conservatory of Music; Department of Digital Art and Design, School of Software, Peking University; Institute of Digital Media, Beijing Normal University.

Research Reporting Procedures
In addition to reports to their supervisors, doctoral candidates are required to submit progress reports to the University of Plymouth Research Committee at regular intervals. Principal amongst these reports, and additional to annual progress reviews, is the Transfer Report (3,000-5,000 words) which, accompanied by an External Assessor’s Report, is presented the University Research Committee, to support the transfer from MPhil to full PhD status. After a minimum of three year’s full time research a candidate is eligible to submit a thesis for Final Examination, which includes a viva voce examination. The final submission may consist in either a written thesis of no more than 80,000 words, or a thesis consisting in two parts: a digital portfolio of practical work which has been initiated, researched and developed exclusively within the research period, and a linked narrative of no less than 35,000 words. The Examining Board includes an External Examiner (appropriately qualified and experienced in the UK at the doctoral level), an expert from within the University, the Director of Studies, and an independent Chair.

Research Supervision
Each candidate has a minimum of two supervisors, comprising a Director of Studies from within the Collegium, and a Second Supervisor, who may be either from the University of Plymouth, or an expert based in another university or research establishment of appropriate academic standing. An expert external Advisor may also be appointed.

?? Supervisors and Advisors include:

Professor Roy Ascott (Technoetics) University of Plymouth
Dr. Guido Bugman (Robotics) University of Plymouth
Dr. Angelo Cangelosi (Alife) University of Plymouth
Professor John L. Casti (Complexity) Santa Fe Institute/Technical University, Vienna
Mr. Brian Eno, (Music), London.
Professor Linda Henderson (Art History) University of Texas at Austin
Dr. Peter Jagodzinski (HCI) University of Plymouth
Dr. Carol Gigliotti (Art and Technology) Emily Carr School of Art, Vancouver
Dr. Ranulph Glanville (Architecture/cybernetics) CyberEthics Research
Mr. Steve Grand (AI/Alife) Cyberlife Research Ltd. Somerset.
Dr. Roger Malina (Astrophysics) Laboratoire d’Astronomie Spatiale, Marseille
Dr. Eduardo Miranda (Digital Music) University of Plymouth
Dr. Christiane Paul (Hypermedia/net art) Whitney Museum, New York
Mr. Mike Phillips (Emerging Media) University of Plymouth
Dr. Michael Punt (Film and new media theory) University of Wales College, Newport
Professor Tom Ray (Artificial Life) University of Oklahoma
Professor Francis Rousseaux (Informatics) Université de Reims
Mr. Chris Speed (Hypermedia) University of Plymouth
Dr. Evan Thompson, (Philosophy) York University, Canada
Dr. Kristine Stiles (Art and Art History) Duke University, North Carolina
Dr. Simon Waters (Electroacoustic Music) University of East Anglia

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PhD graduates


Bill Seaman (Professor, Head of Digital Media Program, Rhode Island School of Design, USA). Thesis: Recombinant Poetics; Emergent Meaning as Examined and Explored within a specific Generative Virtual Environment) 1999. PhD University of Wales


Victoria Vesna (Professor and Chair, Design/Media Arts, University of California, Los Angeles, USA). Thesis: Networked Public Spaces: an investigation into Virtual Embodiment 2000. PhD University of Wales

Miroslaw Rogala (Professor and Chair, Computer Graphics and Interactive Media, Pratt Institute, New York. USA). Thesis: Strategies for Interactive Public Art: dynamic mapping with (v)user behaviour and multi-linked experience) 2001. PhD University of Wales


Christa Sommerer (Associate Professor, International Academy of Media Arts and Sciences, Gifu, Japan). Thesis: Creating Complexity through Interaction: the Application of Complex System and Origin of Life Theory to Interactive Art Works) 2002. PhD University of Wales

Eduardo Kac (Associate Professor, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, USA). Thesis: Telepresence and Transgenic Art. 2003. PhD University of Wales.


Current Online PhD candidates

Donna Cox Professor, National Center for Supercomputing Applications, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Char Davis Immersence, Montreal

Margaret Dolinsky, Assistant Professor, Henry Radford Hope School of Fine Arts and Research Scientist, University Information Technology Services at Indiana University, Bloomington

Maia Engeli Guest Professor, Universität für angewandte Kunst, Vienna.

Diane Gromala Associate Professor, School of Literature, Communication, & Culture Georgia Tech, Atlanta

Norbert Herber Visiting Lecturer, Indiana University, Bloomington

Margarete Jahrmann Professor for Media Art/Mediapoiesis, Hochschule fuer Gestaltung und Kunst, Zurich.

Pamela Jennings Assistant Professor, School of Art and Human Computer Interaction Institute, Carnegie Mellon University

Jim Laukes Independent Scholar, Tucson, Arizona

James Moore Independent artist, London
Sana Al-Murrani, Independent Architectural Theorist, Bagdad.
Marcos Novak Associate Professor, University of California, Santa Barbara (Registered at UWCN)
Kjell Yngve Petersen Independent artist, Copenhagen
Niranjan Rajah Independent scholar, Vancouver. (Registered at UWCN)
Thecla Schiphorst Associate Professor, Simon Fraser University
Yakov Sharir Associate Professor, Dance, University of Texas at Austin
Diana Slattery Academy of Electronic Media, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, NY
Karin Søndergaard, Independent artist, Copenhagen.
Ron Wakkary Associate Professor, Simon Fraser University
Claudia Westermann, Researcher, Hochschule fuer Gestaltung, Karlsruhe.
Simone Michelin, Professor, Federal University Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.(1999-2000)

⃗ Current Onsite PhD candidates

Geoff Cox Senior Lecturer, School of Computing, University of Plymouth
Joasia Krysa Senior Lecturer, School of Computing, University of Plymouth
Kieran Lyons Senior Lecturer, Interactive Arts, University of Wales (Registered at UWCN)

⃗ Post-doctoral research

Dr. Andrea Gaugusch, University of Vienna, Austria (2003-2004)
Dr. Dene Grigar, Texas Womens University, USA (2002-2004)
Prof. Katia Maciel, Federal University Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2001-2002);
Prof. Tania Fraga, University of Brasilia, Brazil (1999-2000).

⃗ Visiting Researchers in Residence

Luisa Donati, Federal University Campinas, Brazil (2002);
Lucas Bambozzi, São Paulo, Brazil (2000);
Carlos Fadon, Federal University São Paulo, Brazil (1999);
Nigel Helyer, Sydney College of the Arts, Australia (1997);
Teresa Picazo, University of Barcelona. Spain (1996);
Barbara Rauch, Independent Artist, Berlin, Germany (1996-97);
Alan Giddy, New Zealand (1995-96)

⃗ UNESCO-Aschberg Lauriats

Martha Patricia Nino Mojica, Bogota, Colombia. (2004)
Lalia Krotoszynski, São Paulo, Brazil (2002);
Lenara Verde, Porto Alegre, Brazil (2000);
Daniela Kutschat, São Paulo (1999);
Maria Diaz, Quito (1997)
Consciousness Reframed Conferences

The International Research Conferences *Consciousness Reframed: art and consciousness in the post-biological era*, were held at the Caerleon Campus of the University of Wales College Newport in 1997, 1998, and 2000, on each occasion attracting over 100 presenters from more than 25 countries. Additionally in 1998, an International Workshop *The Architecture of Consciousness* was also convened at the University of Plymouth. In August 2002, *Consciousness Reframed* was held in Western Australia, hosted by Curtin University, Perth. The fifth conference was held in Caerleon, July 2003. *Qi and Complexity* is the theme of the 6th *Consciousness Reframed* conference to be held in Beijing 24-27 November 2004.


University of Plymouth Registration Fees

**Academic Year 2004-2005.**

- **MPhil/PhD candidates (UK and European Union)**
  - Online: £1890.  Onsite: £3010

- **MPhil/PhD candidates (Non- European Union)**
  - Online: £4320.  Onsite: £8450

Further Information concerning applications, registrations and fees can be obtained from Research Administrator: Carole Watson C.Watson@plymouth.ac.uk, School of Computing, Communications and Electronics, Faculty of Technology, University of Plymouth, Drake Circus, Plymouth, Devon PL4 8AA, England. The Planetary Collegium Webmaster is Adrian Ward adrian.ward@planetary-collegium.net