REF2014
Research Excellence Framework

Institution: University of the West of Scotland
Unit of Assessment: UOA36
Title of case study: **"We Are the Media": Enabling Media Citizenship**
1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words) Research from the Creative Futures Institute (CFi) has generated original understandings of how social media has triggered change within the practice of journalism. The evidence shows how findings from 3 inter-related projects were a catalyst for skills development and generated new contributions to civil society and the creative community. Impact is demonstrated across 15 organisations where new community media collectives were developed around the Vancouver 2010 Olympics (W2 Centre & True North Media House) and London 2012 Olympics (#media2012 & #CitizenRelay). UWS research led these organisations to invest £115,000 additional funds and implement these findings in their current work.
2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words) Researchers at UWS analysed the processes of news production, the findings of which articulate a shift in the relationship between citizens, institutions, and the professional media. These discoveries have led organisations to change their orientation towards society, become media producers, build their community, and influence how the professional media report stories. **Investigating new types of journalism at mega-events** Between 2008 and 2010 **Prof Miah** (appointed 2002-present) worked with Dr Beatriz Garcia (University of Liverpool) and Dr Tina Zhihui (Communication University of China) to study the use of 'alternative media' at the Olympics **[1],** continuing **Miah's** early Games research from Salt Lake City 2002 to Beijing 2008. The primary output of this was the first comprehensive overview of non-traditional media coverage at the Games. Findings revealed how 'citizen journalists' were gradually occupying the places that were typically reserved for professional reporters. The research examined changes in the kinds of reporting that takes place, as a result, and the transformation in people's perceptions of the media elite that it provokes. **The challenge of citizen journalism to standard media narratives** Subsequently, **Miah** carried out deeper studies into the narratives of citizen journalists at mega-events, in collaboration with **Prof McGillivray** (appointed 2010-present) **[2]** and with support from CFi PhD student Ana Adi (2007-2010) **[3]. Prof McGillivray's [4]** wider work with **Prof McPherson** and UWS Executive Dean Prof Foley also informed the research into the role of mega-events within society, as vehicles of contested social change and tools for re-examining cultural and media policy. Together, these investigations focused on how citizen-led stories challenge the narratives of traditional media and create new opportunities for citizens to engage with socio-political and cultural discussions. Moreover, they found that the journalism of citizens during the Olympic Games are key drivers of political and social issues. Their findings note how such journalism disrupts the otherwise highly controlled Olympic environment. Furthermore, it reveals how such interventions play a crucial part in articulating the wider social anxieties that are created by the imposition of mega-events on society; such as by drawing attention to injustices or political compromises in the process of hosting such events. **New expertise in journalism** Alongside this work, between 2009 and 2010 Ewan Crawford (appointed 2004-present) **[5],** Dr **Robertson** (appointed 1984-present) and Dr Elizabeth McLaughlin (appointed 2010) studied the effect of social media on changes in media practice. Crawford examined concepts of expertise in online newspaper opinion pages; his findings explain the emergence of a new kind of democracy emerging as a result of this media change.

Robertson and McLaughlin's **[6]** research into political blogs show how social media brought into question the role of experts. This analysis demonstrates that social media gives experts their own platforms for broadcasting, where previously they may have been restricted to promotion via a media organisation's own platform. In a world where everyone has their own broadcast channel, the research shows how claims over what counts as expertise become more contested, fragmented, and consequently, more democratised.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

1. **Miah, A.** Garcia, B. and Zhihui, T. (2008). We Are the Media: Alternative Voices and Non-Accredited Media at the Olympic Games. In Dayan, D. and Price, M. Owning the Olympics: Narratives of the New China. University of Michigan Press pp.320-345.
   Subsequently, Miah was invited to speak at the Canadian new media industry conference Northern Voice (2009), detailing his work on how online activism was utilised around Beijing 2008 (Adi & Miah 2011). This talk reached the new media elite in Vancouver and laid the ground work for the 2010 impact. His later published book 'The Olympics' (Routledge) was translated into Russian in 2013 by the Russian International Olympic University (a sport management training organisation), one of only two books to be chosen. The previous year, the book selection was of Baron Pierre de Coubertin's memoirs (founder of the modern Olympic movement).
2. **McGillivray, D.** & Jones, J (2013) Events and Resistance, In: R.Finkel., D.McGillivray., G. McPherson and P. Robinson (eds) Research Themes for Events, Oxon: CABI. This article describes the work surrounding the #CitizenRelay project, one of the major projects of our impact during 2012.
3. Adi, A. and **Miah, A.** (2011) Open Source Protest: Rights, Online Activism and the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games. In Cottle, S. and Lester, L. Transnational Protest and the Media. Peter Lang. pp213-224. This work builds on the research around Beijing and explains in detail how non-sporting journalism affects the media narratives around the Olympics.
4. **McGillivray, D.** (2013). Digital Cultures, Acceleration, and Mega Sporting Event Narratives, Leisure Studies, 1-14. doi: 10.1080/02614367.2013.841747.
5. **Crawford, E**. (2009). A new sort of democracy: the opinion pages in the Scottish daily quality press, Journalism 10(4) 451-472. doi: 10.1177/1464884909104951.
6. **Robertson, J. & McLaughlin, E.** (2010). The Quality of Discussion on the Economy in UK Political Blogs in 2008, Parliamentary Affairs, 64(1), 2011, 106–128. doi: 10.1093/pa/gsq014.

Note: UWS REF researchers in **bold**, underlined for non-REF UWS staff. All publications are available on request from the HEI. References [4]-[6] are in peer-reviewed journals supported by international editorial advisory board of experts in the field.

Key grants and funding
2005-2007: British Academy, research into the Non-Accredited Media at the Torino 2006 and Beijing 2008 Olympic Games £7740 (**Miah** & Garcia)
2011-2012: Creative Scotland funding for Citizen Relay £15,000 (**McGillivray**)
2011-2013: Creative Scotland funding for London 2012 Cultural Programme Impact Study £40,000 (**McGillivray & McPherson**)
2013: Big Lottery Fund awarded £167,977 to the Digital Commonwealth project, led by **Professor McGillivray**

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Our research insights into new forms of journalism were a catalyst for impact across three projects. In each, detailed below, the impact was realised through building relationships with media professionals, social media entrepreneurs, citizens, and journalists. Combined, they evidence the impact of our research on (citizen) journalism.

Changing media practice - establishing an independent citizen media centre (Vancouver 2010)

Following our insights into citizen journalism at the Beijing 2008 Olympics **[3],** our researchers were brought to Vancouver and inspired the CEO of Vancouver's W2 Centre and other leading media professionals to develop two bespoke media communities to apply our research findings and champion citizen journalism as a civic contribution to the Games **[A].**

This initial collaboration received £50,000 investment from the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad **[B, D]**, which enabled three senior creative programmers for London 2012 (South West, Scotland, and North West) and two technical producers (from TenantSpin) to travel to Vancouver 2010 and produce, curate, and deliver *"the world's first independent social media centre for the Olympics" (Mayor of Vancouver)* **[A].** Without Miah's research findings, these collaborations and subsequent activities would not have taken place.

Changing media practice – establishing a citizen journalism network (London 2012)

This new partnership between Vancouver and London led the collaborators to invest into **Miah's** proposal to create a nationwide citizen journalist network for the London Olympics, dubbed #media2012 **[D, E]. Miah's** research argues that this was the next step for citizen journalism, to fulfil its civic role **[1].** Numerous arts organisations, including Cornerhouse (Manchester), FACT (Liverpool) and Watershed (Bristol), strategised for two years before London 2012, to plan citizen media activity. This work developed social media skills in community media organisations, which would contribute to realising what **Miah** argues as a crucial mechanism for democratising participation through mega-events, so as to empower citizens **[1].**

The long-term impact of this project is evidenced in the work of Russia's 'SochiReporter', which has taken forward these principles ahead of the Sochi 2014 Olympics **[C]** and **Miah's** appointment as mentor for the IOC Young Reporters Programme, which aims to enhance the economic benefits of the Olympic Games by developing the skills of novice reporters. During 2012, #media2012 also influenced the work of an artist who created a painted/montage visual artwork symbolising its contribution **[D].**

Out of the #media2012 collaborations, **McGillivray** developed #CitizenRelay (#CR), which drew on findings **[1, 2, 4]** to create a participatory media project funded by Creative Scotland **[F].** #CR built a structure within which individuals and unofficial organisations across Scotland could develop journalism skills. The impact of this was considerable, with #CR participants generating 20,000+ online visits during the Relay's week-long stay in Scotland. The production team produced 207 three-minute podcasts, over 100 YouTube videos, 805 Flickr photos, and 350 Instagram images (see http://www.citizenrelay.net). The consequence of this activity was a greater degree of participation and the creation of an alternative lens through which people could make sense of the Olympic programme. **[I].**

#CR developed new forms of media coverage and embedded the use of social media into media organisations. For example, the Camglen Radio station indicated how #CR *"was a milestone for us - cementing our ability to broadcast live programming from various locations within the communities that Camglen is set up to serve"* **[G].** #CR also influenced MediaTrustUK (funded by Big Lottery), helping to raise its profile in Scotland and meeting *"a central policy objective of increasing our reach and establishing links with hyperlocal sites"*. MediaTrustUK's director described *"#CR as 'a model for engagement….a project model that will act as a key reference point for future thinking."* **[H]**

#CR also had an impact on large media producers, notably Scottish Television, who recognised: *"there is no doubt that the extent and depth of the updates provided via the #citizenrelay project helped to provide a better quality of coverage to our readers'* and how it *'helped to inform our thinking about how we cover other subsequent mass participation events"* **[J]**

The project was reported by the BBC, the Guardian Datablog and STV local. **McGillivray** also worked with the National Libraries of Scotland and The National Archives to develop good practice

guidelines for archiving multimedia resources. The project's community is now actively engaged in delivering a legacy project for the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games, funded by The Big Lottery (£168,000) to create a 'Digital Commonwealth'.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

A. Feature length movie With Glowing Hearts (2010). *The movie was shot in Vancouver by Animal Films production during and leading up to the Olympics. It describes the work of the Olympic social media community. Professor* **Miah** *features in the film along with the collaborators developed at the Northern Voice event in 2009 (notably the CEO of Bryght Studios and innovation leader at Hootsuite). Trailer online at* http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FoFiZQqTQXQ *Full movie available on request. The quote from the Mayor of Vancouver is within the trailer, as is* **Miah's** *voice. The movie has been screened at numerous film festivals worldwide.*

B. North West London 2012 Cultural Olympiad programme.
This final programme for the North West Cultural Olympid foregrounds the #media2012 partnership in its opening page. #media2012 was the principal reporting community for the North West and became involved with a series of other cultural activities.

C. Testimonial from CEO of Sochi Reporter and #media2012 feature article in the official Sochi 2014 Olympic magazine. *This official translated the entire #media2012 Charter into Russian, a document that outlines the values of the project and describes, for the first time, a code of ethics for citizen journalism.*

D. #media2012 documentation, which indicates financial investment, meeting programmes, overview of activities, reference to the IOC's Olympic Review, and the visual art work created in honour of the project's contribution to civil society. *The project received a London 2012 PODIUM Bronze medal for its 'creative and cultural' achievements which were principally in engaging citizens in social media journalism. It was also shortlisted for a Coubertin award (from a field of over 200), for how it reinforced the Olympic values within civil society, as a project interested in critical dialogue.*

E. #media2012 Charter. *This document explains the basis for the collaboration and the values of the project, while also evidencing the aspirations and the achievements of the organisations involved with the network. In so doing, it evidences the organisations involved as its co-signers.*

F. Statement from London 2012 Creative Programmer for Scotland, who is also the arts officer of Creative Scotland. *She said about #CitizenRelay "It was also something beyond our skills and experience, Citizen Relay invested in and trained over 60 reporters, who then in turn trained others, in addition to this, the London 2012 team in Creative Scotland benefited from watching Citizen Relay grow and bubble and build"*

G. Statement from Producer of Camglen Radio about #CitizenRelay *said "Camglen Radio's involvement [with CitizenRelay] was a milestone for us – cementing our ability to broadcast from various locations within the communities Camglen is set up to serve."*

H. Statement from Director, MediaTrustUK about #CitizenRelay

I. #CitizenRelay documentation, *indicating impact statistics, online impact, impact on media and other partners.*

J. Statement from Community Editor, STV about #CitizenRelay