Designing the Design of the Internet of Things
Fully Funded PhD RCA & Microsoft Research Cambridge

The Royal College of Art’s Innovation Design Engineering and Microsoft Research Cambridge invite applications for a fully funded Doctoral Award ‘Designing the Design of the Internet of Things’ beginning October 2015. The PhD will be based in the RCA’s School of Design with periods of study at Microsoft’s Cambridge Research Centre.

The Internet of things (IoT) is a widely used term yet members of the general public struggle to understand what it is and how this cluster of technologies may impact their lives in the future. Designing the Design of the IoT is concerned with a practice based design research approach exploring fundamental aspects of the Internet of things. The motivation for this research concerns the roles and responsibilities that designers have in shaping this emerging technology space and to yield insights into the uncertainty that remains around a number of issues including security and privacy, socio-cultural impact and appropriate design methods and practices.

The aim of this research is to design and build a series of interactive design experiments that engage with significant design questions in the Internet of Things that identify the variety of creative design methods that could be used to explore the research questions described below:

1. Computer files are unitary and inflexible and this limits our capacity to engage across an increasing range of devices. How can we explore new types of concept for the computer file to liberate improved interactions in the IoT?

2. How and when can designers working in the Internet of things engage with digital technologies to explore new interaction concepts?

3. How can designers understand their agency and the impact of their design decisions through exposing users to data capture in a variety of contexts within which users may desire different level of exposure?

The successful candidate will be expected to:

- Develop and realise practical projects that explore the main research questions, test ideas and their development through models and prototypes.
- Investigate state of the art projects, research, practices and emerging concepts in the field.
- Undertake contextual investigations including surveys of recent work in the IoT and related contemporary projects.
- Develop and build design projects. They should have the necessary technical skills in developing and coding, prototyping and electronics.

This full-time PhD is registered at the RCA and co-supervised by Prof Ashley Hall (IDE) and Richard Banks (Microsoft) and funded for three years from October 2015 covering tuition fees for UK Home and EU students only, a £13,500/year stipend, £1,000 laptop and £1,650 conference budget.

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How to Apply
Please ensure that you meet all eligibility and entrance requirements of the Royal College of Art here [http://www.rca.ac.uk/studying-at-the-rca/apply/entrance-requirements/mphil-phd-entrance-requirements/] Candidates must create an account and apply via a form that can be accessed at [https://applications.rca.ac.uk/]

IMPORTANT: When reaching “Course Details” under “Course” you must select “Designing the Design of the Internet of Things”

Applications Closing Date: April 3rd 2015
Interviews From: April 15th 2015