BMW GROUP + QUT
DESIGN ACADEMY

OCTOBER 2021

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# NEWSLETTER

BMW GROUP   QUT

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WELCOME

It's exciting to be at this stage of the year, with so much having been achieved already. In October we saw our Impact Lab students complete their projects with fantastic outcomes. Read about the Impact Lab projects in our Feature section in this newsletter. We are also nearing the end of our time with our super talented Academy interns this semester. They are currently working hard towards submission deadlines and awaiting presenting their final projects to colleagues at BMW Group from two different divisions. Furthermore we were excited to discuss a new special project with colleagues from BMW Group focused on the future of robotics within the logistics contexts. The collaboration continues to grow and all of these projects further inspire the team to greater heights. It's remarkable to know that the projects we are working on are shaping the future of a world leading company like BMW Group.

As we head towards the end of the year we are preparing for our huge announcement early in 2022. It's taken a while for all the pieces to get into place, but it will all be worth it in the end. The announcement is a very important and significant step forward for the partnership between BMW Group and QUT and underscores the strength and commitment that both parties have for this cooperation.

All the best,

Dr Rafael Gomez
Founder & Academy Lead

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PROGRAMS
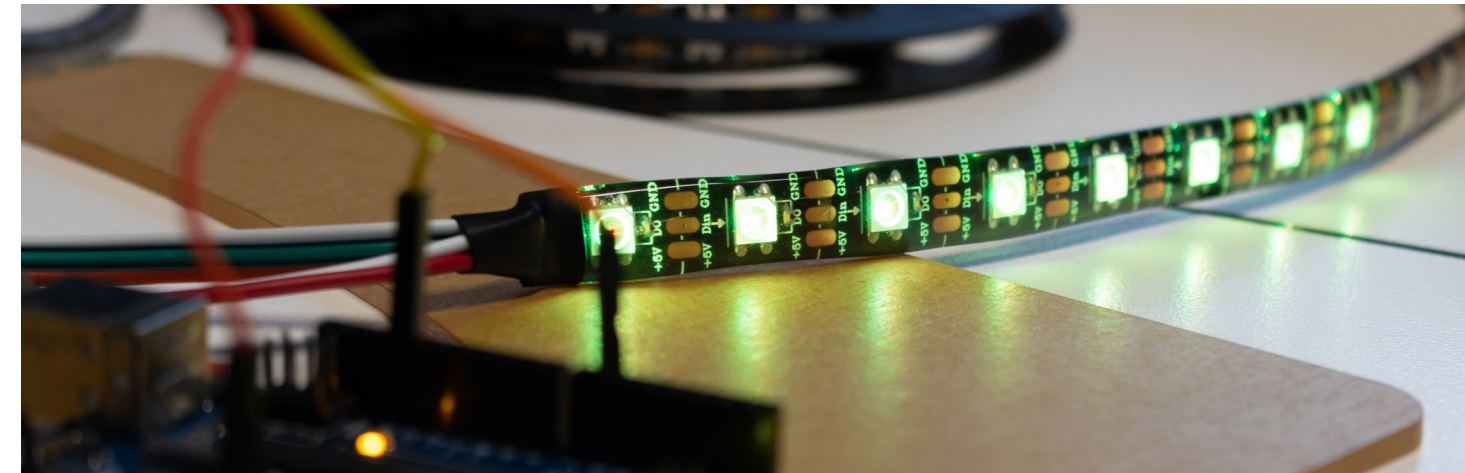
INTERNSHIPS

The Internship program focuses on Fostering Design Excellence. It offers high-performing QUT design students an opportunity to advance their learning through real-world projects, and provides a pathway for paid internship placements at BMW Group in Munich, Germany.

2021 Semester 2 Internships almost finished

Our Academy interns are currently making the final revisions and putting the finishing touches on their work, as they are due to complete their projects and present them to Academy and BMW Group staff early November. In our next newsletter we will share the students' completed work in more detail.

Impact Lab 4

This month our Impact Lab 4 students completed their projects and presented their work to us. We are incredibly amazed with the level of work that was submitted in each of the projects, and with the skills and professionalism they displayed we know that they will have no trouble finding employment when they graduate at the end of the year.

Daniel Fisher designed an Academy corporate gift for us, which consisted of a leather wrapped NFC tag and folder card case; Sophie Burton designed new Academy branding (see the next page for a sneak peek); and Scarlett Curtis designed an internal management app for projects, tasks, documents and inventory. All students presented accurate mock-ups or a working prototype for their designs.

We are so impressed by their work that we are currently working on deploying or making each of their designs. Daniel will be working with us to put his corporate gift into production by the end of the month, meanwhile Sophie's branding is being finalised so that we can launch it early next year along with our big announcement (not long to go now!). We will explore how we can realise Scarlett's management app next year and integrate it within the Academy.

Daniel Fisher   Sophie Burton   Scarlett Curtis

Industrial Design Capstone Unit

Isaac Bonora has been busy developing his design for an idealworks iw.hub interface and communication method. Since he presented the initial concept a few weeks back, he has made great progress and is now testing materials and prototypes in order to refine his design.

Isaac is also part of the committee responsible for organising the final year exhibition. We encourage you to check out @id.index.21 on Instagram - this account is documenting the process, projects and work of the 2021 graduating cohort of QUT Industrial Design students (Bachelors and Honours).

RESEARCH

The Research program centers on Exploring Knowledge Horizons. We have initiated a progressive research agenda for PhD and MPhil students to conduct world-class research through the Academy.

Preparing for 2022

In the last issue of our newsletter we mentioned that our Research Associate James Dwyer had been drafting his survey for the first study in his Masters research. This month he has finished the survey and is preparing for it to be deployed early November. This survey will add to existing knowledge around advances in human-robot interactions.

James is still working hard Research Assistant work and will also be supporting our Design Associates on an in-house project on the coming weeks.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

The Special Projects program pioneers world-first projects by Advancing Cutting-Edge Technologies. It is tailored for professional design graduates to work on advanced R+D projects for real-world applications. These projects are established by BMW Group in Munich and are supported by the Special Projects team at the academy.

Additional Special Projects for 2021

This month our team of Design Associates started on a new project for idealworks, this time focusing on it's fleet management application called AnyFleet. We are working on some of the visualisation for the app and aim to have this completed before the end of the year.

In addition to this, we have also begun discussions and planning for another project set to commence early 2022. For this we are collaborating with a Robotics team within BMW AG - the same team that previous interns from QUT have been placed in while working in Munich. We will share more details of this project in future as it comes to fruition.

Lastly, our Design Associates are spending the remainder of their time working on some visuals that will support our announcement early next year. James Dwyer is also involved with this Academy project. Details of this will remain undisclosed for now, but once released we will create some detailed blog posts which provide insight into how these were made.

‒ FEATURE

IMPACT LAB 4

Dr Rafael Gomez
Academy Founder + Lead

This semester we have had the wonderful opportunity to host 3 talented design students through the Impact Lab Studio 4. Students applied for positions into this program to work on real world projects relevant to BMW Group + QUT Design Academy aspirations.

The aim of the Impact Lab 4 is focused on the concept of Purpose; providing students with an opportunity to explore and define their design purpose and identity, foster career aspirations and expand professional networks. The intent is to help support the transition from student to design professional through real world practices. The projects offered included a new brand guide for the academy studio and technical spaces, a prototype information and communication management system, and the design of a unique and novel corporate gift. Student were provided with project briefs and they work on these throughout the semester, providing regular updates to the Academy team. At the end of the project they presented their final designs to the team as real industry clients.

The selected students were Sophie Burton and Scarlett Curtis, Visual Communication students; and Daniel Fisher, an Industrial Design student. These three students were chosen for their professional attitude, attention to detail and evident skills displayed in their submissions.

We asked the students for some thoughts on their experiences through the Impact Lab program and here is what they said:

Why did you select this project?

"I wanted to explore designing a product that had embedded emotional value and utility beyond the value of the product's materials"

"I chose to apply for the BMW Group + QUT Design Academy project as I believed it would be an amazing opportunity to challenge myself in my final semester of uni, and potentially form great relationships with real world clients"

"With the majority of my UX/UI design experience being within the healthcare sector, I was really excited by the opportunity to work on a high-level project in a totally new industry"

What approach did you take for the work you conducted?

"I explored the project from a number of perspectives and refined my concept to the most feasible and effective solution that best fits the brief"

"Throughout the project I prioritised the needs of the client and ensured to cater my solution towards the comments made in feedback sessions"

"Being able to work so closely with the team helped me to become more comfortable designing independently, in addition to greatly increasing my confidence in the final design solution"

What did you learn that you didn't know before as a result?

"As designers, we operate in ambiguous contexts where solutions are undefined, and it's up to us to distill what information we can and turn ambiguity into clarity"

"This greatly influenced the success of the project and taught me valuable professional communication skills. As this was my first experience designing for a real client, this pushed me to design outside of my 'regular style' and to create something that felt like a successful collaboration between myself and the client"

"Before this project I had not previously worked on an application for PC, so it was really interesting to see how I had to change my design thinking to create a solution for an unfamiliar platform"

It is wonderful to see that all students were able to approach this experience in a professional manner, and also take away new skills and knowledge that will have an impact on their professional careers.

It's also interesting to note that the reasons why students selected this project; to explore designing products with emotional value, to challenge themselves, and to expand their application of design in new ways. This highlights the variety of reasons and incentives that drive student choices applying into the BMW Group + QUT Design Academy Impact Lab project. It is a real world engagement

We hope that this provides some insights as to why future students would choose this program and the benefits you might gain as a result. Students working through the Impact Lab projects work with the Academy team as they would with a real world client, but are provided with excellent teaching support by design professionals who act as design tutors In the subject. Furthermore, they engage with the Academy team and are able to access inside information about special projects and unique initiatives that are not publicly available.

— BRIEFINGS

ACHIEVEMENTS

– New space acquired for Academy design studio in 2022
– Additional Special Projects for 2021 initiated
– All three Impact Lab 4 projects selected for implementation

BMW GROUP PARTNER UPDATE

Dylan Sheppard
Digital Design Lead, idealworks

October marks a big month for both idealworks and the Academy, as we enter the final short months before the end-of-year break. As our projects in Munich ramp-up, so to do the developments with the Academy.

At idealworks this month we continue our rollout to new customers, expanding our reach into FMCG and intra-logistics applications, with a wide variety of deployments outside of automotive. This exciting stage called for kick-off of new projects within the Academy, leveraging the expertise at QUT to develop concepts for visualisation techniques and design schemes of virtual factory maps. Designers were tasked with exploring concepts for codifying areas of interest within a 3D web rendered environment. We're looking forward to developing these ideas further and rolling out these cutting-edge features soon.

In other exciting news, results are coming back from our collaborative research work with BMW Group Tech Office Munich, idealworks, and the Academy. Stepping into the world of synthetic data generation and realtime

rendering, the team at the Academy have been working on asset creation, data management, and material design - all contributing to what will soon become one of the largest open source data sets for industrial environments. Stay tuned for details on the publication shortly!

Lastly, as we round the corner towards German winter - we are shaping up for a big new year at idealworks and the BMW Group, both with our teams growing, and the borders (hopefully) opening offering exciting opportunities for interns come 2022.

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