

JANUARY 2022

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NEWSLETTER

WELCOME



Welcome to the first official first newsletter for 2022! Everyone at the Academy hope everyone had a wonderful, relaxing and safe festive season with loved ones. May 2022 be a bigger and better year!

What a delight to be able to be in our second official calendar year of operation for the BMW Group + QUT Design Academy. This year is set to bring a host of new and exciting additions and changes to the Academy, with a special focus on Research and Special Projects. There will be a strong focus on expanding our Research capabilities and projects this year around several areas including Human-Machine Interfaces, Human-Robot Interaction and Design Expertise. Further, we will be significantly expanding our footprint and capabilities with a new research lab that will accommodate our fantastic new technical equipment provided by BMW Group. This new lab and resource will allow us to conduct cutting-edge research, undergraduate and postgraduate projects and host design workshops for internal and external people.

Beyond this, we will continue to foster design excellence through our Internships Program. As usual we will recruit 4 design interns this coming semester and we will be giving a special presentation on this to QUT design students (check out our Instagram for detailed information about this and to register). Also, as the federal government begin to open up international travel, it's exciting to announce that we will begin to send interns to BMW Group and idealworks in Munich this year.

To read more about our plans and vision for 2022 make sure you read our Feature Article in this month's newsletter. We are extremely excited about 2022 and the announcement of these and other initiatives! Make sure you stay tuned.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rafael Gomez'.

Dr Rafael Gomez
Founder & Academy Lead

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.

Another Year of Talented Interns

As we hit the ground running at the start of the year, we are already preparing for our Semester 1 intake of Academy Interns. We are revising our current list of project offerings, and we can also say that we'll be adding some automotive specific projects, too. We're excited to say that we will continue our collaboration with the Infotainment (on-board integration and validation) team at BMW this year and have more live projects for our Interns to work on.

BMW Group Internship Program

As travel restrictions and the pandemic are slowly easing, we are also planning for our BMW Group internship program to resume this year. We have a dozen very eager students with a variety of skillsets and backgrounds that have applied for positions in Germany, and while not confirmed just yet, we are optimistic that we will be sending some of them over to Munich in the coming months.

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.

Masters of Philosophy (MPhil)

James Dwyer, our Resesarch Associate, is now two thirds of the way through his MPhil scholarship and has made excellent progress in several areas. With his first study (a survey) wrapping up soon, he will begin to analyse and discover some real-world design opportunities for the implementation of social cues in autonomous mobile robot (AMR) behaviour in the industrial context. While this is something we have seen previously in non-mobile industrial robots, this is a new area of application for AMRs and should yield some interesting discoveries. Based on the findings of this initial study, James will go on to develop a Virtual Reality prototype to test and further develop these ideas.

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.

A Busy Year Ahead

Our team of Design Associates have kicked off the year with a new Special Project for BMW Group. Details are of this are under wraps for now, however we will be able to show this off once completed in the near future.

We have also resumed our own projects (mentioned in our Decemeber newsletter) where we are creating some digital experiences for an announcement coming soon. All we will say for now is that the project is coming together well and will certainly impress.

Lastly, we held a planning meeting with idealworks this month and have confirmed projects that will see us through to the middle of the year. Again, these are all confidential for now but will be released in due time - we look forward to sharing these with you all!

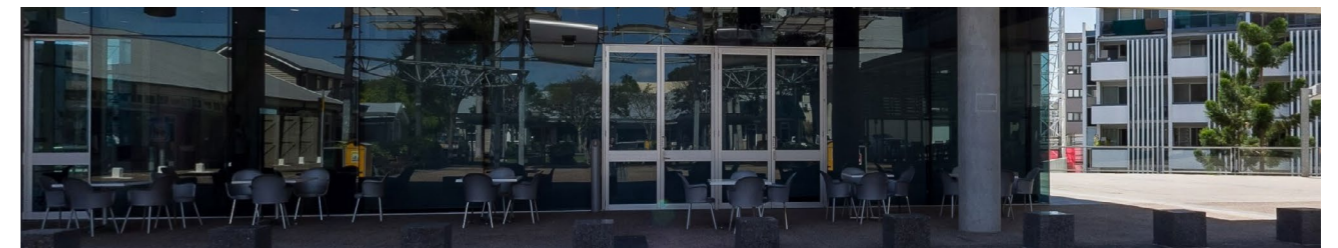
FEATURE



GEARING UP FOR 2022!

Associate Professor Dr Rafael Gomez
Founder + Academy Lead

As we slowly emerge from the last two years of life with lockdowns, social distancing and no International travel, it is exciting to consider the partnership with BMW Group running on all cylinders! With that in mind, 2022 is going to be a year of significant growth and expansion for the BMW Group + QUT Design Academy across several areas. As we head into 2022, let me give you some insights about the exciting goals and initiatives we have for this coming year.



Academy Transformation

It is with excitement that we officially announce that we are relocating our offices from Gardens Point Campus to Kelvin Grove Campus. This move flags a significant expansion of resources, space and technical capabilities.

We have already signed on a new Technical Associate, Mike Lepre, to join the team. Mike brings a wealth of knowledge across technical skills, workplace health and safety and administrative procedures within QUT, his expertise will be invaluable to our development goals. Further, as we move into our new premises at Kelvin Grove we are more than doubling our footprint with two design research spaces to help cater for new equipment and resources. With this expansion comes a new major resource provided by BMW Group to boost our capabilities across all our Programs, helping to achieve current aims and establish far more ambitious future goals that we previously thought. All of these new changes are a signal of the exciting transformation happening this year.



New Cooperative Partnerships

The seeds of our external engagement initiatives in 2021 are starting to bear fruits. We have been expanding our networks in the previous 12 months and this year we hope to announce several high-end partnerships as part of the BMW Group + QUT Design Academy. For example, we continue to expand our partnerships internally with other QUT Faculties, such as Business and Engineering, to provide opportunities for other students beyond design to be able to undertake the Internship Program and potentially travel to BMW Group and idealworks to work as interns in Germany. We are also cultivating another exciting partnership with some extraordinarily talented designers on the development of a new initiative that will focus on tackling visionary ideas for future mobility systems. Our partners are global leaders in their respective fields and will help expand our current capabilities in a new and exciting domain. Additionally we are carefully consolidating a network of global leading companies to support the next phase of the Academy. We will be sure to keep you up to date on these and any other partnerships that we forge in the coming year.



Research Program

After officially launching our Research Program in early 2021 we are really looking forward to further growth of research projects and higher-degree positions 2022. We have established our long-term agenda with three research domains across Human-Robot Interaction, Human-Machine Interface and Design Thinking; each with specific sub-topics. Already we have secured interest from BMW Group employees wanting to conduct

PhD research projects with Academy, and we look forward to continuing those conversations with BMW Group colleagues. Further, as mentioned above, we also have a significant technical resource provided by BMW Group that will be utilised to conduct cutting-edge research and help attract high-performing students nationally and internationally. There will be a concerted effort to secure between 2-3 fully-funded PhD scholarship positions in 2022-2023 period to bolster the Research Program now and into the future.



Internship Program

As borders open up we are once again thrilled for the opportunity to be able to send students to BMW Group and idealworks in Germany. The teams we are working with across both BMW Group and idealworks are very enthusiastic for more of our talented students employed in their departments and divisions making a real difference. We are also expanding our internship program at the Academy by continuing to offer various opportunities for students to enhance their design skills and capabilities through work integrated learning positions, as well as unique project offerings in the Industrial Design degree. With our new research spaces and special technical resources the project options we will have on offer are expanding - with some incredibly exciting and cool projects across industrial design, interaction design and games students.

As you can note from the above we are extremely excited about this coming year. It is encouraging to note that our partnership with BMW Group and idealworks has continued to expand during the previous year in the midst of the challenging global situation. As we emerge out of that fog, we are incredibly enthusiastic and energised for what the future holds. We hope you enjoy the next part of this odyssey with us!

BRIEFINGS



ACHIEVEMENTS

- Work commenced on a new Special Project for idealworks and BMW
- Date confirmed for our big announcement coming soon. Planning and work for this even continues to progress