

JENNIFER MANUEL

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INTERESTS & BACKGROUND

My research interests lie in the field of Urban Planning, particularly focused on citizen participation and community-led planning. Within this, I have a particular interest and expertise in Action Research, aiming to develop and use participatory processes and tools that can support civic engagement and real-world impact. My recent research sits at the intersection of planning and the highly cross-disciplinary field of Human-Computer Interaction whereby I developed advanced knowledge of participatory methodologies and conducted research to consider the design of digital tools to support neighbourhood planning. Throughout my research, I feel it is important to engage with a range of stakeholders, centring their experiences as experts in their own lives, and doing so through a range of interactive and creative methods. Prior to my PhD, I gained significant experience working collaboratively with communities to deliver citizen-led projects including one of the first 17 neighbourhood planning frontrunners; developing funding bids; managing research, heritage and engagement projects; and evaluating community impact. My role as Project Coordinator in a heritage organisation also developed my interest in documenting and engaging citizens in the histories of place, policy and action in relation to the built environment and particularly social and cultural histories. The thread running throughout my career is my passion for citizen engagement in decision-making both formally and informally, and the ways in which we can understand, celebrate and further improve participatory practices.

EDUCATION

EPSRC Doctoral Student
Architecture, Planning &
Landscape and Open Lab,
School of Computing
Newcastle University
2016-Present

Re-Designing Neighbourhood Planning and the Role of Civic Technology
My research aims to explore the appropriateness of neighbourhood planning as a citizen-led policy tool and the role that civic technology could play. Through technology deployments, interactive workshops, and co-design, I engaged with citizens from across the North East. I argue the need to re-design the neighbourhood planning process to create a just citizen-led process and I provide principles for the design of technology.

MRes in Digital Civics
Distinction
Open Lab, School of Computing,
Newcastle University
2015-2016

This programme introduced HCI, exploring the role of digital technology in civil society, focusing on advanced qualitative research methods, interaction design, and designing technology. My thesis explored the use of participatory video with neighbourhood planning groups as a way to capture stories about place that could inform planning policy.

MA in Town Planning
Merit
Newcastle University
2013-2015

My thesis explored and compared the challenges faced by urban planners and practitioners in health commissioning to engage citizens in local decision-making. I reported a similarity in the challenges faced and the need for professionals to learn from one another across sectors.

Diploma in Town Planning
Distinction
Newcastle University
2012-2013

The programme built on the BA(Hons) and industrial placement. Modules included a consultancy project working with clients, a linked research project working in partnership with an academic, and specialist modules such as Conservation and the City.

BA(Hons) 2:1 in Town Planning
Newcastle University
2008-2011

This programme included learning on Planning Theory, Planning Processes, Economics of Development, the history and context of our planning system through Shaping Towns and Cities, as well as project work through Strategies into Action.

TEACHING

Module Leader
Architecture, Planning &
Landscape
Newcastle University
2019-Present

20-credit module TCP3053 Development Management
I am responsible for creating new content, organising relevant external speakers, delivering lecture material and developing the written and oral assessments. During Covid-19 closures, I was responsible for moving content online, supporting students and suitably re-designing assessments. I am responsible for re-designing the structure for the coming academic year to meet the Flexible Learning model, completing the MOF and other administrative tasks, as well as developing a whole range of new, interactive content that explores the changing nature of the planning system as set out in Planning for the Future White Paper.

Teaching Assistant
Newcastle University
2016-Present

Throughout my PhD I have undertaken teaching and marking across several modules at a range of different stages as detailed below:

TCP1027 Shaping Towns and Cities (2020) – leading two seminar groups through discussions of the themes introduced in the lectures, encouraging feedback and engagement, all delivered through the Flexible Learning model.

TCP3061 Contemporary Planning Issues (2021) – delivering teaching on digital tools for planning, providing structure reading and research tasks, delivering an interactive workshop to further explore the topic.

TCP1027 Shaping Towns and Cities (2016) – leading a seminar group through the module to develop students' study skills and marking three written assessments.

TCP1014 Planning Processes (2016, 2017) – available during multiple sessions of the course to answer questions as well as leading a seminar group through interactive sessions and marking essays.

TCP2023 Understanding Sustainable Development (2016) – marking written assessments focusing on issues of transport and land use.

TCP2031 Digital Civics (2016, 2017, 2018) – supported this new module through the development of seminar content to lead students through a technology design process with real-world clients. Led seminars, delivering presentations and interactive activities, as well as supporting the small groups in their projects. Seminar content focused on developing research skills and methods, introducing user-centred design as a concept, and supporting students to engage with citizens. Further supported in 2018 as an Academic Mentor for students.

In addition to teaching in APL, I have also supported MRes modules within Open Lab:

CSC8605 Interaction Design (2018) – supported the module through the use of neighbourhood planning as a case study for the assignment. Led lectures to demonstrate the use of Bootlegger, a participatory video tool, and to provide the context of neighbourhood planning to students unfamiliar with the discipline of town planning.

CSC8601 Introduction to Digital Civics (2017) – speaking to students in a seminar format providing information and answering questions about my MRes and PhD projects to show the relation to Digital Civics and the considerations of using technology in neighbourhood planning.

EMPLOYMENT

Brochure Design & Admin
Support
Newcastle University
2018-2019

Worked with the Global Urban Research Unit (GURU) to develop and design their 25th anniversary brochure, celebrating the achievements and work of the research group. Preparing materials for print and web display, working alongside GURU's Director to collect information. Developed and designed materials for the Association of European Schools of Planning Head of School and GURU25 Conference including a new GURU25 logo, banner stands, programmes, and booklet.

Research Coordinator
Involve North East
2012-2015

Developed, conducted and reported research and engagement projects relating to specific health topics and service pathways for NHS secondary care services. Designed and developed educational programmes for Newcastle University medical students to develop their awareness of the wider determinants of health including issues of poverty, cultural challenges, and environmental factors. Liaised with NHS primary and secondary care, local authorities and third sector organisations to conduct research, managing information and data governance across organisational boundaries. Developed engagement and research resources, including questionnaires, schedules, leaflets, online resources and information sheets, all using plain English. Engaged with members of the public and service users through a variety of participatory methods. Conducted thematic data analysis, coding data and writing analytic reports. Presented research to commissioning organisations, senior health professionals and third sector organisations. Designed materials for the organisation to promote our work, including managing the website and social media content and, as a delivery partner, doing the same for Healthwatch Newcastle.

Project Coordinator
North of England Civic Trust
2011-2012, 2014

Working in a project-focused manner I developed and delivered engagement projects, community-led planning projects and participatory activities in community settings. This included one of the first 17 neighbourhood plans in England and supporting the development of community-led Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plans. Throughout this work, I designed engagement materials, organised and delivered interactive workshops and participatory activities, and support citizens to take action in their area. Developed funding bids, including a £1.9 million Heritage Lottery Fund bid, with extensive supporting documentation, and supported the delivery of a range of funded heritage-led regeneration projects. Developed Heritage Risk assessments for vacant buildings, produced Conservation statements for iconic buildings such as the Engineering Research Station in Killingworth, and developed Character Appraisals for conservation areas. Developing such policy documents involved a range of historical research which focused not only on the built environment aspects but the social and cultural history that was significant including oral history. Led on the archival research to support such documents using a range of sources within Tyne and Wear Archives, and beyond. Delivered professional development lectures to professionals and academics and presented at other conferences and events. Supported the organisation and delivery of large and small scale events, including the Heritage Skills Festival and engagements related to Townscape Heritage Initiative projects. Used my graphic design skills to design posters, newsletters and other interactive materials such as community heritage trails. Responsible for the website for the organisation as well as re-developing the Trust's branding to standardise their impact and positively promote their work, including managing social media.

PUBLICATIONS & REPORTS

All publications are peer reviewed academic outputs.

- 2020 **Jennifer Manuel** & Geoff Vigar. Enhancing citizen participation in planning through participatory film-making. *Environment and Planning B: Urban Analytics and City Science*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2399808320936280>
- Jennifer Manuel** & Clara Crivellaro. Place-Based Policymaking and HCI: Opportunities and Challenges for Technology Design. *In Proceedings of the 2020 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI '20)*, pp.1-16. New York, NY: ACM. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3313831.3376158>
- Kiera Chapman, Alexander Wilson, **Jennifer Manuel**, Andy Inch & Malcolm Tait. What role should technology play in planning? In: *The Right Answers to the Right Questions?* [online] pp.46-51 [Available from Town and Country Planning Association](#) *not peer reviewed
- 2018 Ian G Johnson, Aare Puusaar, **Jennifer Manuel** & Peter Wright. Neighbourhood Data: Exploring the Role of Open Data in Locally Devolved Policymaking Processes. *In Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction 2 (CSCW)*, pp.1-20. New York, NY: ACM. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3274352>
- 2017 **Jennifer Manuel**, Geoff Vigar, Tom Bartindale & Rob Comber. Participatory Media: Creating Spaces for Storytelling in Neighbourhood Planning. *In Proceedings of the 2017 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI '17)*, pp.1688-1701. New York, NY: ACM <https://doi.org/10.1145/3025453.3025745>
- Ian G Johnson, Alistair McDonald, Jo Briggs, **Jennifer Manuel**, Karen Salt, Emma Flynn & John Vines. Community Conversational: Supporting and Capturing Deliberative Talk in Local Consultation Processes. *In Proceedings of the 2017 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI '17)*, pp.2320-2333. New York, NY: ACM <https://doi.org/10.1145/3025453.3025559>
- Select Citizens' Challenges of Creating and Enacting Evidence and Policy in Neighbourhood Planning
Planned *Citizens access to and use of evidence, and writing of policy highlight the tensions still present*
Articles *between technical and lay knowledge, and the privileging of scientific 'data' over lived experience.*
- Co-designing Digital Participation in Neighbourhood Planning
Reporting on co-design workshops to discuss the (dis)affordances of technology for participation, highlighting the capacity issues of citizens and planners in designing digital participation.

INVITED TALKS

- 2020 Royal Town Planning Institute, South East Virtual Event
Virtual Tools for Co-Design [available here](#)
- The Impacts of Civic Technology, Reykjavik, Iceland. [Cancelled due to Covid-19]
Civic Technology and Citizen Policymaking: What is the real impact?
- CHI 2020, Hawaii, USA. [Cancelled due to Covid-19]
Place-Based Policymaking and HCI [available here](#)
- 2019 Royal Town Planning Institute, North East
Civic Technology and Planning: Representative and Effective?
- Royal Town Planning Institute, North East
Civic Technology and Neighbourhood Planning
- 2018 Planning Aid England, North East Volunteer Event
Neighbourhood Planning in the North East
- 2017 Royal Geographical Society, London, UK
Participatory Media
- CHI 2017, Colorado, USA
Participatory Media: Creating Spaces for Storytelling in Neighbourhood Planning [available here](#)
- The Impacts of Civic Technology, Florence, Italy.
New Media Neighbourhood Planning

GRANTS & AWARDS

- 2020 David Robins Fund for Urban Planning Research [Submitted pending review]
Funds (£5000) to understand the impact of a policy process and compile best practice.
- 2020 Selected as a Future Digileader
Awarded by KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm University and the Research Institute of Sweden based on academic achievement and direction of digital research.
- 2015 EPSRC Studentship, Centre for Doctoral Training in Digital Civics, Open Lab, Newcastle University
Awarded based on academic achievement and research direction and included stipend and significant research costs.

ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES & SERVICE

- **GURU Podcast Guest and related blogs, 2020**
As part of the GURU Podcast series, I critically discussed the issues of justice in relation to open data and technology mentioned throughout the Planning for the Future White Paper, highlighting the issue of solutionism and the assumption that data and technology are neutral practices. From this, writing a series of blogs for Neighbourhood Planners London and other venues to further explore the topic.
- **Co-organiser: HCI Summer Festival – virtual international festival with Open Lab, NORTHLab at Northumbria University, HCID at City University, 2020**
With many conferences cancelled due to Covid-19, we held a virtual conference which included interactive workshops, presentations, panel sessions, demos, digital zine making and an online walk.
- **Co-organiser: Civic Tech and Making Places Workshop – virtual international workshop, 2020**
As part of the HCI Summer Festival, we organised an interactive workshop to bring together researchers, professionals and practitioners with an interest in place to share a range of place-based civic tech work and think about future work to build a community of practice.
- **Visiting Researcher: Engagement Lab, Emerson College, Boston, USA, May-June 2018**
Worked on Civic Media Project to support community journalists to measure their community engagement and impact, producing a tool to promote sustainable community relationships.
- **Organiser: Unrest Film Screening, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK, 2017**
Organised a free community screening of Unrest – an award-winning documentary uncovering important issues about the lack of medical education, treatment guidelines and the need for more research to support those with Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. Over 150 people attended including medical students, academic researchers, third sector organisations and NHS health professionals.
- **Co-organiser: Digital Economy Network Social Justice Workshop, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK, 2016**
As part of an international social justice research community in HCI, this workshop aimed to encourage participants to think about the role of social justice in their research through interactive activities such as a reflexive field visit, design iterations and the production of a zine.
- **Supported a range of projects including:**
 - Metro Futures – supporting co-design workshops with citizens using participatory video
 - Not Equal – virtual interactive workshop facilitation to support citizen panels to review academic research proposals and make decisions on funding. Exploring social justice, technology, how to review research proposals and collaborative writing.
 - Local Government Association Conference Exhibition – representing Open Lab and Newcastle University to promote our research and work, develop and maintain relationships with a range of political and third sector organisations.
- **Reviewer for the following publication venues:**
 - ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (most prestigious venue for HCI)
 - Computer Supported Cooperative Work (premier venue for HCI)
 - Simulation and Gaming: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Theory, Practice and Research

OTHER

- Graphic design: Significant design experience in a professional capacity including freelance work for a range of clients. Developed engaging and designed community newsletters for heritage-led regeneration projects, materials for GURU at Newcastle University, and a wide range of other designed materials which can be seen in my [online portfolio](#).
- Website management: Experienced in managing websites for specific projects or for organisations including Involve North East, Healthwatch Newcastle and North of England Civic Trust. I was responsible for the content management systems, developing new material, showcasing work, developing engaging materials using my graphic design skills, and ensuring up to date content was continuously posted.
- Design and software: Adobe Creative Cloud (Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign), Microsoft Office
- Digital fabrication: laser cutting, designing and building prototypes
- Work-related training including:
 - Investor Readiness and Access to Finance, 2018
 - NVivo, 2018
 - Evidencing Learning and Teaching Skills (route to Associate Fellowship of the HEA), 2017
 - Qualitative Inquiry, 2017
 - Making Participatory Budgeting Work For You, 2015
- Membership: Licentiate RTPI, Student TCPA
- Member of fempower.tech, an intersectional feminist group raising awareness in HCI

REFERENCES

Professor Geoff Vigar

Deputy Head of School
School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape
Newcastle University

Dr Clara Crivellaro

Senior Research Fellow
Open Lab, School of Computing
Newcastle University

Dr Zan Gunn

Director of Planning
School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape
Newcastle University

Further details available on request.