**Research Wales Innovation Fund**

**Civic Mission and Public Engagement: template for case studies**

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| **Institution:** | Cardiff Metropolitan University | |
| **Civic Mission Theme (select from drop down list) :** | Social enterprise and innovation | |
| **Vision for Research and Innovation Pillars (select those that apply):** | Excellence  Place  Innovation  Collaboration | |
| **Title of case study / project / initiative:** | **Enhancing the quality of life of people living with dementia through the design of hand-held playful objects** | |
| **Summary description: (max 150 words)**  LAUGH research at Cardiff Met University aims to enhance the quality of life of people living with dementia through the design of hand-held playful objects. This research has been supported over the last 5 years by an AHRC standard grant (2015-18) and Welsh Government SMART Expertise funding (2018-2020), and by the University. It has resulted in a new university spinout company, supported by Alzheimer’s Society, providing the commercialisation of research-led innovation and making this available to those who need it most in society. It has resulted in a new design research approach [Compassionate Design](https://www.laughproject.info/home-2/toolkit-for-designers/) published as a toolkit to guide designers in creating new products for people living with dementia. Findings from the research reveal ways in which playful objects can increase individual wellbeing outcomes with a positive impact on both physical and mental health, can reduce falls, increase communication and boost happiness:  <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-50237366> | | |
| **Project / initiative impact: (max 200 words)**  [Describe the actual impact of initiative, including insights gained, and positive outcomes (whether planned or unforeseen)]  This initiative is in the early stages of its potential impact, but work is underway to maximise reach.  LAUGH research addresses the urgent need to understand ways of designing to increase pleasure and provide comfort for people living with dementia. Over 170 people from 70 organisations contributed early in the initiative to co-create appropriate products for dementia care and to provide guidance to the industry - this resulted in a new design research approach [Compassionate Design](https://www.laughproject.info/home-2/toolkit-for-designers/) published as a toolkit to guide designers in creating new products for people living with dementia.  The initiative evolved to a scaled-up study in partnership with the NHS and an international care provider to trial one of the designs in a multiple setting. Evidence so far indicates **a positive effect on the wellbeing** of people living with dementia who have participated in the trial.  The potential for impact has been formally recognised - one of the designs was a finalist in the 2018 UK Care Awards in the category ‘Outstanding Dementia Care Product of the year’, and additionally the AHRC selected LAUGH research as one of four UK research projects that ‘demonstrate the importance of arts and humanities research in health, care, and medicine’. | | |
| **Future activity: (max 150 words)**  [Is the project now sustainable, or are there plans for follow-on projects – if so how will these be funded?]  The LAUGH project has resulted in a new university [spinout company,](http://www.hug.world/) supported by Alzheimer’s Society, providing the commercialisation of research-led innovation and making this available to those who need it most in society. | | |
| **Quote(s) e.g. from external project partner: (around 60 words)**  [There is potential for HEFCW to publish this case study – please provide a quote that helps demonstrate the impact of engagement]  **This quote is from the daughter of a care home resident who trialled one of the LAUGH Project’s playful objects called the HUG:**  "Every time I came to visit I seemed to be losing a little bit more of her. The smiles were less frequent, the recognition of me was slipping away." After using the object, the resident’s daughter reported "I walked in and Mum was holding the HUG in the dining room and her face was just happy... almost serene and it was lovely. The icing on the cake was the music. All my mum's favourite songs are there."  Danny Langhorn from Sunrise Senior Living, a partner on the SMART Expertise project said: "The HUG is not intrusive to them, it's not a person... they're not feeling threatened. They're just able to sit there, listen and in their own time start feeling comfortable." | | |
| **Contacts:**  **(website; contact name; email; phone)** | | <https://www.laughproject.info>  [www.hug.world](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.hug.world%2F&data=02%7C01%7Cmtaylor%40cardiffmet.ac.uk%7C55c3f11538ce4a54047108d819b0ab21%7C189dc61c769b40488b0f6de074bba26c%7C0%7C0%7C637287593860865376&sdata=%2BKy82UBFJlEB2HEeem%2Bi2mPTCXqryrVmbE6Bo2JAJpM%3D&reserved=0)  Prof. Cathy Treadaway  [ctreadaway@cardiffmet.ac.uk](mailto:ctreadaway@cardiffmet.ac.uk)  Tel: 02920 417014 |

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| **How did the activity help support the Well-being of Future Generations Act goals (select those that apply):** | A prosperous Wales  A resilient Wales  A healthier Wales  A more equal Wales  A Wales of cohesive communities  A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language  A globally responsible Wales |
| [Briefly outline how the project helped support the goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015]  The project has addressed several of the goals detailed in the Act.  Firstly, the project has improved the health and wellbeing of Welsh people living with dementia who have taken part in the SMART Expertise funded trial – contributing to **a Healthier Wales.** Anecdotal evidence preceding the trail indicated that residents in care facilities experience increased wellbeing, and some evidence of physical health improvements were also observed, including a reduction in the incidence of falls in the users. The full trial results are pending but early indications are that the anecdotal evidence observed will be verified in greater numbers.  The project also has resulted in a new Welsh business, who intend to develop supply chains in Wales and result in new jobs, contributing to a more **Prosperous Wales.** | |