



## **Students as pedagogic consultants:**

First steps from niche experiences and pockets of good practice towards impactful legacy

Dr Lia Blaj-Ward & Assia Jebali

# Who we are

Dr **Lia Blaj-Ward**

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Nottingham Trent University, UK



**Assia Jebali**

Postgraduate Student,  
École Nationale d'Ingénieurs de Tarbes, France



**Brief background notes:  
Our collaboration**

# The starting point for our collaboration

- staff volunteering activity (June 2019 & February 2020): Lia hosted at her university a teenager from an all-girls school on a week of work experience at NTU
- to redesign the June 2021 iteration, in a pandemic context, Lia enlisted the support of Assia (six-month exchange student at NTU) through advertising a student pedagogic consultant role
- the pedagogic consultancy provided by Assia was funded by NTU's Trent Institute for Learning and Teaching as a one-off, niche project and was an **extra-curricular** experience for Assia.

# Our paradox

# Our paradox

How do we scaffold and scale up student pedagogic consultancy in a sustainable way, offering reassurance to staff and students about the value and feasibility of co-creation both within and outside the curriculum?

**Details of our collaboration  
(November 2020 – January 2021)**

# Core SaP insights which underpinned our collaboration

- Healey & Healey (2019): Four forms of SaP; pedagogic consultancy arguably the least well developed of the four. Students are expert in the experience of being students.
- Snelling et al. (2019): Connect SaP with co-creation/design thinking, as scaffolding to underpin the partnership experience; design thinking “challenges participants’ beliefs and assumptions and nurtures an empathetic approach to designing solutions with the end user in mind.” (p. 63).



# Pedagogic consultancy: Advert

## The project involves

### Designing a work experience week at NTU for a Year 10 student

- Planning a five-day schedule of work experience activities on the NTU City Campus (to take place in June 2021).
- Using Sustainable Development Goals 4, 5 and 13 as guiding principles for the activities.
- Building hope and raising career aspirations in a Nottingham-based young person from a less advantaged background.



# Why Assia?

**Perspective and empathy:** Assia was completely new to the NTU campus and only a semester-long visitor herself (Oct 2020 – Jan 2021), therefore uniquely positioned to empathise with the teenage work experience participant to be welcomed in June 2021.

**Background knowledge and prior experience:** The work experience week for the teenager was to be guided by SDGs 4, 5 and 13: Assia has a background in Engineering (with a focus on technology and women's health) and prior experience of mentoring younger people.

# Our collaboration process, using design thinking as non-designers (IDEO)



**FRAME A  
QUESTION**



**GATHER  
INSPIRATION**



**GENERATE  
IDEAS**



**MAKE IDEAS  
TANGIBLE**



**TEST  
TO LEARN**



**SHARE  
THE STORY**



Think carefully about the actual needs of the users of your designed solution.

Assia reviewed the 2019 and 2020 iterations of work experience week and helped me reflect on what elements and principles were important to keep or add new to the June 2021 iteration

(change from five-day, 9-5, in person on-campus experience to a five-day mainly virtual experience with some online meetings, online safeguarding measures, tasks for the student to complete by herself and only one in person on-campus meeting)



Go out into the world and seek inspiration by observing and discovering what people really need.

Lia shared with Assia some content to potentially include in the 2021 iteration, which Assia reviewed with help from family and friends

Assia put herself in the shoes of a work experience participant; reflected on her own experience as a teenager prior to choosing a university course and as an exchange student at NTU in socially-distanced mode; explored the NTU campus; met with the NTSU President; looked for a focus for the in person on-campus meeting.



**GENERATE  
IDEAS**

Use the inspiration you gather to help push past the obvious to come up with fresh solutions to your problem.



**MAKE IDEAS  
TANGIBLE**

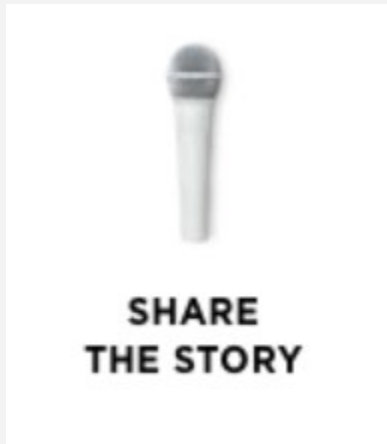
Build rough prototypes and find what's working and what's not.



Test your prototypes, gather feedback, and iterate.







Once you've arrived at the right solution, craft and share the story to introduce it to your colleagues, clients, and customers.

- we wrote a report which we asked the NTSU President to review
- Lia used Twitter to share highlights from the work experience week
- the work experience week participant produced a booklet which captures her experience
- Lia secured funding for a follow-on project with different participants
- we are sharing our experience here at the SaP Roundtable.



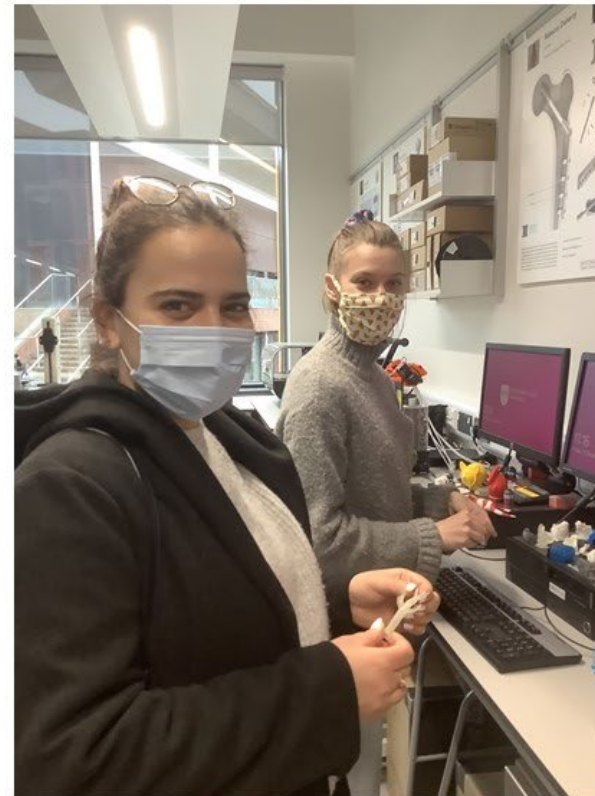
# Highlights from implementing the plan for the work experience week (June 2021)

# Slide from the advertisement for the work experience week participant

**If the circumstances allow and your parents are happy with this 😊**

We'll visit an NTU engineering research lab (on the Clifton Campus) to learn about innovative medical design for women's health.

You'll meet Assia (left) virtually and Hannah (right) in person. Assia is now in France and Hannah is doing research and teaching at NTU.













# *THE END OF MY JOURNEY*

I am looking forwards to the future. This is not a goodbye, but a see you soon.



# Exploratory reflections around our paradox

# Unpacking the paradox

How do we scaffold and **scale up** student pedagogic consultancy in a sustainable way, offering reassurance to staff and students about the **value** and feasibility of co-creation both within and outside the curriculum?

- Does **scaling up** involve larger numbers?
- Who decides whether the **value** of co-creation is best generated within or outside the curriculum?

# Scale up – not larger numbers initially

**deepen** - not larger numbers in the first instance, but growing and developing existing partnerships and disseminating outcomes

**diversify** - create a snowball effect by capturing and sharing insights from a wide range of partnership projects to generate interest and enthusiasm; allow students to propose partnerships (value to them will be greater) + create scope for partners external to the university to be involved.



# Value of partnership experience – greater within or outside the curriculum?

- **within the curriculum** and assessed – capture all students, “worth the effort they are putting into the partnership”
- **outside the curriculum** – equally valuable, allowing staff and students to take the principles of co-creation and try them out in a safe space; different participants at different stages of readiness to engage, defining what is most valuable to them – some will learn not by participating but by becoming more aware of how co-creation works.

Thank  
you!

You are very welcome to email [Lia.Blaj-Ward@ntu.ac.uk](mailto:Lia.Blaj-Ward@ntu.ac.uk) if you have questions or reflections you would like to share with us.

Additional images from the 2021 work experience week on Twitter:

[@LiaBlajWard](https://twitter.com/LiaBlajWard)