



Arts & Humanities
Research Council

AHRC
Whitefriars, Lewins Mead
Bristol
United Kingdom BS1 2AE
Telephone +44 (0) 117 987 6500
Web <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/>

**AHRC and BBC
Knowledge
Exchange
Programme;
Knowledge
Infusion**

Knowledge Infusion FINAL REPORT

Reference:

University Partner

Organisation	Cardiff University
Department	Cardiff School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies

Title of Project [up to 150 chars]

WHAT DO CHILDREN WANT FROM THE BBC? CHILDREN'S CONTENT AND PARTICIPATORY ENVIRONMENTS IN AN AGE OF AGE OF CITIZEN MEDIA – KNOWLEDGE INFUSION

Start Date and Duration

Start date

16 February 2009

Duration

3 months

Academic details

Title	Dr
Forename(s)	Cynthia
Surname	Carter
Date of Birth	30 January 1959
Address 1	Cardiff School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies
Address 2	Cardiff University
Address 3	King Edward VII Avenue, Bute Building
Town:	Cardiff
Country:	UK
Postcode:	CF10 3NB
Telephone:	02920
E-mail:	cartercl@cardiff.ac.uk
Current post:	Senior Lecturer

Title	Professor
Forename(s)	Stuart
Surname	Allan
Date of Birth	2 November 1962
Address 1	The Media School
Address 2	Bournemouth University
Address 3	Weymouth House, Talbot Campus
Town:	Poole
Country:	UK
Postcode:	BH12 5BB
Telephone:	01202 966703
E-mail:	sallan@bournemouth.ac.uk
Current post:	Professor

Title	Professor
Forename(s)	Máire
Surname	Messenger Davies
Date of Birth	14 March 1945
Address 1	Centre for Media Research, School of Media, Film and Journalism
Address 2	University of Ulster
Address 3	Cromore Road
Town:	Coleraine
Country:	UK
Postcode:	BT52 1SA
Telephone:	028324069
E-mail:	M.Messenger-Davies@ulster.ac.uk
Current post:	Professor

Title	Dr
Forename(s)	Kaitlynn
Surname	Mendes
Date of Birth	23 April 1983
Address 1	Department of Media, Film and Journalism (from 1 July 2009)
Address 2	De Montfort University
Address 3	Clephan Building, The Gateway
Town:	Leicester
Country:	UK
Postcode:	LE1 9BH
Telephone:	
E-mail:	kmendes@dmu.ac.uk
Current post:	Lecturer

(Please add further boxes, if necessary, to capture details for all project partners.)

BBC Partner details

Name of contact	Title	Mr
	First name	Ian
	Surname	Prince
Job Title	Journalist Mentor	
Department	BBC Persian TV Channel	
Telephone number		
Email address	Ian.prince@bbc.co.uk	

Post-doctoral Research Assistant details

Title	
Forename(s)	
Surname	
Date of Birth	
Address 1	
Address 2	
Address 3	
Town:	
Country:	
Postcode:	
Telephone:	
E-mail:	
Current post:	

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Please outline the activities undertaken. In particular please highlight any changes to the activities as proposed in your application or the personnel involved.

Members of the project team delved into the issue of news provision for teens, a notable gap in the BBC's provision of news for citizens between *Newsround* and adult news, respectively. There already appears to be an acknowledgement within the BBC that this audience is under-served and that something must be done to address this gap.

We revisited the secondary schools which participated in the first part of the study in Coleraine, Cardiff, Glasgow and Bournemouth speaking to first year students about this issue through in-depth focus group interviews. Taking some of the findings drawn from the teens who participated in the first study, we undertook these interviews with year 7 students - a group not included in our initial research. This group represents the transitional audience – one which is coming to the end of the target audience for *Newsround*, but not yet ready for adult news. As such, they are in a unique position to look back and forward to their position as a news audience. Some of the older year 6 children and the younger year 8 children indicated to us in the first part of the project that they felt they didn't fit into the *Newsround* television bulletin audience anymore, but didn't yet feel ready to simply move from *Newsround* to adult news. In our proposal, we suggested that we would undertake focus groups with these young people. However, after a meeting with our BBC partner, we decided to develop a pitch sheet that they would use in groups to come up with ideas for a news service for young teenage audiences. We also decided that it would be helpful to have a short questionnaire in order to secure basic demographic information about our research participants, along with a brief range of questions about their news interests and use, their views on politics and citizenship. We handed out questionnaire to students when we visited the school, asking them to fill it in over the course of the following week and to hand it in to the school for posting back to us. Thus, during the one hour session we had with students in each of the five schools, we explained that we wanted them to imagine that their group had been hired by the BBC to come up with a news programme idea grup (in each school we had one group of approximately 6-8 students). In most schools, students had approximately 40 minutes for this task, and 10 minutes at the end of the session to pitch it to us (in each city, the PI and one other academic partner participated in the fieldwork). This data will be used to form the evidential basis for a series of talking-points with key BBC personnel actively involved (now or in the past) as producers, editors or journalists in the provision of news and other non-fictional media, including websites for young teenaged audiences. We have established a network of BBC personnel whom we would like to interview in order to include their views in this process (amongst others as they arise).

Our BBC partner has recently brought to our attention that shortly he will no longer be working at the BBC. As we were not able to undertake interviews with BBC personnel within the project timeframe of three months, we have been planning to organise this part of our fieldwork over the coming few months. However, with the immanent departure of our BBC partner, this might make our plans to do so more difficult.

Please summarise the ways in which the above activities have embedded the research findings of the KEP project through targeted or niche research (this may also produce pilots or prototypes). Please refer to specifically to the target audiences as identified in your KI application.

In the first phase of the project, it was made very clear to us with the final year primary and secondary school students that while *Newsround* is appreciated, most felt that it was no longer the kind of news provision that they needed as young citizens. Many mentioned that they did not feel comfortable moving from *Newsround* to adult news, the latter being too 'boring' or mostly irrelevant to their lives and interests. That does not mean to say that they are not interested in the news – we found that most are. But what they are not interested in is news that marginalises and often ignores young people's ideas and opinions about the world. Many are also clearly unhappy that adult news tends to demonise young people, and only rarely highlights young people's achievements and aspirations.

In the second phase of the project, we were able to explore with young people in what we refer to as the 'transitional' audience – those young people at the upper end of the *Newsround* target audience (8-12 year olds) and those just falling outside of it – their own ideas about whether or not it might be a good idea to have a news service for their age group. In speaking directly to young people about this possibility, and eliciting their ideas in self-directed brainstorming sessions where they were asked to formulate a programme idea, we have already ascertained that the young people we talked are enthusiastic about such a possibility. Coming as they do from members of the target audience themselves, we feel that we are in a much stronger position now to indicate what young people think about the news, what kind of news service they think would engage them as young citizens, and what it would look like (which platforms, schedule, presenters, content, interactivity, and so on). We believe we now have a solid basis for discussing a range of ideas with the BBC coming, as it were, from its potential audience and thus more likely to succeed were such a provision to be considered.

What specific challenges were raised by the project? How were these challenges overcome?

What 'good practice' advice can you provide to others working on collaborative projects of this nature?

The main challenge of this research was to undertake the fieldwork, both schools visits and interviews, in the very short period of time allowed for the project (three months). This aim proved to be overly ambitious. However, we did manage to finalise most of the schools fieldwork. What we had not anticipated was that several of the schools failed to send back completed questionnaires and any additional ideas from participants with regard to programme ideas that occurred to them after our visit. We have spent several weeks now attempting to obtain this data from schools, who are claiming that the exams schedule has made it difficult for them to ensure questionnaires were posted back to us (we left stamped, self addressed envelopes with the schools and assigned one student to act as the manager to ensure that questionnaires were returned to us promptly). We will continue to pursue this, going back to the schools (at least those that are located in cities near us) in person if need be.

Another challenge raised by the project was how to coordinate academic and BBC partners during what turned out to be an extremely busy period for us all, for a range of different reasons (job changes, other academic research demands, etc.). We were only able to meet once in person at the BBC in London at the beginning of the project. However, we have kept in close contact on email and telephone, so this has not proved to be a problem.

We found in the initial project as well as this follow up one that partners from several universities and the BBC require extra management, in what were sometimes rather challenging circumstances (both BBC partners from the first project left at different stages in our research or in the immediate period after the official project end, and our one BBC partner in this follow up study is due to leave the BBC shortly). Principal Investigators need to ensure that they have clear forward planning/risk assessment to address such issues.

Did the extension to the collaborative/IP agreement to reflect these new activities have any new impact on the partnership? Please highlight any challenges that this posed.

None of which I'm aware, other than the obvious point that as our two original BBC partners left the BBC (one during the initial project and the other shortly after its end), we had to quickly find a new BBC partner for the second phase of our research. Luckily for us, we had already met our new BBC partner, former *Newsround* editor Ian Prince during the original project, so he was well acquainted with its aims and objectives. We were not able to secure his participation until January 2009, which is why we asked to start the project one month later than the original timeframe envisaged by the AHRC/BBC for the follow up project.

Do the partners have plans for further collaboration? Yes No

(If yes, please specify below)

Nothing specific at the moment, although there are several strands of the research which we would like to follow up as soon as we are able. At the moment, we are concentrating on analysing the data more fully, both from the original and follow up projects, with a view to a range of publications of both a scholarly and journalistic nature, as well as continuing to present research findings at conferences.

We are also committed to arranging interviews with pertinent BBC personnel as we stipulated in our follow up project, which we hope to undertake in the coming months. It is our hope that our current BBC partner will be able to help facilitate this for us, even if leaves the BBC before we are able to finalise this part of our research.

BBC Partner comments (Please provide additional comments on any of the above.)

News, current affairs, and factual programming for young people is something I have been involved with for a number of years.

My most recent project, launching a young people's programme on the BBC Persian Channel, illustrates just how vital this is for young people, particularly in the light of recent events in Iran.

The programme offered the audience access to information on health, social, drugs, relationship issues etc. as well as offering them a platform for their views. These were all things which have not been available to them in their own countries.

I am looking forward to seeing the results of the research and hope it will eventually bear fruit within the BBC's schedules.

As Newsround was the most watched children's programme in the UK for the a number of years until relatively recently, it shows that news and current affairs can be delivered in a way which is popular with the audience.

It can be shown to engage the audience and create a sense of exploration at a crucial time of development of young people.

Just this week there is a letter in Ariel from a BBC regional journalist asking just the questions raised in the research – why is there no provision and what can be done to address this?

I believe that with the BBC's existing resources that such a service could be delivered in a very cost effective way. I will continue to assist the research project for as long as I remain at the BBC.

Declaration

I declare that the information contained in this report is to the best of my knowledge correct and accurately reflects the conduct and outcomes of the project.

Academic Partner

Signature	Date 18 June 2009
Print name	Dr Cynthia Carter

BBC Partner

Signature	Date 19.6.09
Print name : Ian Prince	

If you would like to provide confidential comments on any aspect of your involvement with this project, please do so by email to: j.pollock@ahrc.ac.uk

Budget Statement

(Please explain any variations between actual and forecast expenditure. You should attach a copy of any correspondence authorising significant virements.)

None. See budget attached. Not yet finalised, as not all expenditures noted on this budget statement.

	Paid to Date	Actual Expenditure
DI - Staff		
DI - Travel and Subsistence		
DI - Other Costs		
DA - Investigators		
DA - Estates Costs		
DA - Other Directly Allocated		
IC - Indirect Costs		
Total		

I confirm that the grant has been spent in accordance with the terms and conditions of awards.

Award-holder's signature

Date: 23 June 2009

Head of Department signature

Print name (including title)
Date:

Institutional authorisation (for example Head of the Research or Finance Office)

Signature		Institutional stamp:
Print Name (including title)		
Position		
Date:		

Please enclose any relevant publicity material that has arisen as part of the Fellowship or its outputs (if not previously supplied).



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Start Date and Duration

Start date **Duration**

Academic details

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Telephone:	02920
E-mail:	cartercl@cardiff.ac.uk
Current post:	Senior Lecturer

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Current post:	Professor

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Postcode:	LE1 9BH
Telephone:	
E-mail:	kmendes@dmu.ac.uk
Current post:	Lecturer

(Please add further boxes, if necessary, to capture details for all project partners.)

BBC Partner details

Name of contact	Title	Mr
	First name	Ian
	Surname	Prince
Job Title	Journalist Mentor	
Department	BBC Persian TV Channel	
Telephone number		
Email address	Ian.prince@bbc.co.uk	

Post-doctoral Research Assistant details

Title	
Forename(s)	
Surname	
Date of Birth	
Address 1	
Address 2	
Address 3	
Town:	
Country:	
Postcode:	
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I declare that the information contained in this report is to the best of my knowledge correct and accurately reflects the conduct and outcomes of the project.

Academic Partner

Signature	Date 18 June 2009
Print name	Dr Cynthia Carter

BBC Partner

Signature	Date 19.6.09
Print name : Ian Prince	

If you would like to provide confidential comments on any aspect of your involvement with this project, please do so by email to: j.pollock@ahrc.ac.uk



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Forename(s)	Máire
Surname	Messenger Davies
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E-mail:	kmendes@dmu.ac.uk
Current post:	Lecturer

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BBC Partner details

Name of contact	Title	Mr
	First name	Ian
	Surname	Prince
Job Title	Journalist Mentor	
Department	BBC Persian TV Channel	
Telephone number		
Email address	Ian.prince@bbc.co.uk	

Post-doctoral Research Assistant details

Title	
Forename(s)	
Surname	
Date of Birth	
Address 1	
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Please outline the activities undertaken. In particular please highlight any changes to the activities as proposed in your application or the personnel involved.

Members of the project team delved into the issue of news provision for teens, a notable gap in the BBC's provision of news for citizens between *Newsround* and adult news, respectively. There already appears to be an acknowledgement within the BBC that this audience is under-served and that something must be done to address this gap.

We revisited the secondary schools which participated in the first part of the study in Coleraine, Cardiff, Glasgow and Bournemouth speaking to first year students about this issue through in-depth focus group interviews. Taking some of the findings drawn from the teens who participated in the first study, we undertook these interviews with year 7 students - a group not included in our initial research. This group represents the transitional audience – one which is coming to the end of the target audience for *Newsround*, but not yet ready for adult news. As such, they are in a unique position to look back and forward to their position as a news audience. Some of the older year 6 children and the younger year 8 children indicated to us in the first part of the project that they felt they didn't fit into the *Newsround* television bulletin audience anymore, but didn't yet feel ready to simply move from *Newsround* to adult news. In our proposal, we suggested that we would undertake focus groups with these young people. However, after a meeting with our BBC partner, we decided to develop a pitch sheet that they would use in groups to come up with ideas for a news service for young teenage audiences. We also decided that it would be helpful to have a short questionnaire in order to secure basic demographic information about our research participants, along with a brief range of questions about their news interests and use, their views on politics and citizenship. We handed out questionnaire to students when we visited the school, asking them to fill it in over the course of the following week and to hand it in to the school for posting back to us. Thus, during the one hour session we had with students in each of the five schools, we explained that we wanted them to imagine that their group had been hired by the BBC to come up with a news programme idea grup (in each school we had one group of approximately 6-8 students). In most schools, students had approximately 40 minutes for this task, and 10 minutes at the end of the session to pitch it to us (in each city, the PI and one other academic partner participated in the fieldwork). This data will be used to form the evidential basis for a series of talking-points with key BBC personnel actively involved (now or in the past) as producers, editors or journalists in the provision of news and other non-fictional media, including websites for young teenaged audiences. We have established a network of BBC personnel whom we would like to interview in order to include their views in this process (amongst others as they arise).

Our BBC partner has recently brought to our attention that shortly he will no longer be working at the BBC. As we were not able to undertake interviews with BBC personnel within the project timeframe of three months, we have been planning to organise this part of our fieldwork over the coming few months. However, with the immanent departure of our BBC partner, this might make our plans to do so more difficult.

Please summarise the ways in which the above activities have embedded the research findings of the KEP project through targeted or niche research (this may also produce pilots or prototypes). Please refer to specifically to the target audiences as identified in your KI application.

In the first phase of the project, it was made very clear to us with the final year primary and secondary school students that while *Newsround* is appreciated, most felt that it was no longer the kind of news provision that they needed as young citizens. Many mentioned that they did not feel comfortable moving from *Newsround* to adult news, the latter being too 'boring' or mostly irrelevant to their lives and interests. That does not mean to say that they are not interested in the news – we found that most are. But what they are not interested in is news that marginalises and often ignores young people's ideas and opinions about the world. Many are also clearly unhappy that adult news tends to demonise young people, and only rarely highlights young people's achievements and aspirations.

In the second phase of the project, we were able to explore with young people in what we refer to as the 'transitional' audience – those young people at the upper end of the *Newsround* target audience (8-12 year olds) and those just falling outside of it – their own ideas about whether or not it might be a good idea to have a news service for their age group. In speaking directly to young people about this possibility, and eliciting their ideas in self-directed brainstorming sessions where they were asked to formulate a programme idea, we have already ascertained that the young people we talked are enthusiastic about such a possibility. Coming as they do from members of the target audience themselves, we feel that we are in a much stronger position now to indicate what young people think about the news, what kind of news service they think would engage them as young citizens, and what it would look like (which platforms, schedule, presenters, content, interactivity, and so on). We believe we now have a solid basis for discussing a range of ideas with the BBC coming, as it were, from its potential audience and thus more likely to succeed were such a provision to be considered.

What specific challenges were raised by the project? How were these challenges overcome?

What 'good practice' advice can you provide to others working on collaborative projects of this nature?

The main challenge of this research was to undertake the fieldwork, both schools visits and interviews, in the very short period of time allowed for the project (three months). This aim proved to be overly ambitious. However, we did manage to finalise most of the schools fieldwork. What we had not anticipated was that several of the schools failed to send back completed questionnaires and any additional ideas from participants with regard to programme ideas that occurred to them after our visit. We have spent several weeks now attempting to obtain this data from schools, who are claiming that the exams schedule has made it difficult for them to ensure questionnaires were posted back to us (we left stamped, self addressed envelopes with the schools and assigned one student to act as the manager to ensure that questionnaires were returned to us promptly). We will continue to pursue this, going back to the schools (at least those that are located in cities near us) in person if need be.

Another challenge raised by the project was how to coordinate academic and BBC partners during what turned out to be an extremely busy period for us all, for a range of different reasons (job changes, other academic research demands, etc.). We were only able to meet once in person at the BBC in London at the beginning of the project. However, we have kept in close contact on email and telephone, so this has not proved to be a problem.

We found in the initial project as well as this follow up one that partners from several universities and the BBC require extra management, in what were sometimes rather challenging circumstances (both BBC partners from the first project left at different stages in our research or in the immediate period after the official project end, and our one BBC partner in this follow up study is due to leave the BBC shortly). Principal Investigators need to ensure that they have clear forward planning/risk assessment to address such issues.

Did the extension to the collaborative/IP agreement to reflect these new activities have any new impact on the partnership? Please highlight any challenges that this posed.

None of which I'm aware, other than the obvious point that as our two original BBC partners left the BBC (one during the initial project and the other shortly after its end), we had to quickly find a new BBC partner for the second phase of our research. Luckily for us, we had already met our new BBC partner, former *Newsround* editor Ian Prince during the original project, so he was well acquainted with its aims and objectives. We were not able to secure his participation until January 2009, which is why we asked to start the project one month later than the original timeframe envisaged by the AHRC/BBC for the follow up project.

Do the partners have plans for further collaboration? Yes No

(If yes, please specify below)

Nothing specific at the moment, although there are several strands of the research which we would like to follow up as soon as we are able. At the moment, we are concentrating on analysing the data more fully, both from the original and follow up projects, with a view to a range of publications of both a scholarly and journalistic nature, as well as continuing to present research findings at conferences.

We are also committed to arranging interviews with pertinent BBC personnel as we stipulated in our follow up project, which we hope to undertake in the coming months. It is our hope that our current BBC partner will be able to help facilitate this for us, even if leaves the BBC before we are able to finalise this part of our research.

BBC Partner comments (Please provide additional comments on any of the above.)

News, current affairs, and factual programming for young people is something I have been involved with for a number of years.

My most recent project, launching a young people's programme on the BBC Persian Channel, illustrates just how vital this is for young people, particularly in the light of recent events in Iran.

The programme offered the audience access to information on health, social, drugs, relationship issues etc. as well as offering them a platform for their views. These were all things which have not been available to them in their own countries.

I am looking forward to seeing the results of the research and hope it will eventually bear fruit within the BBC's schedules.

As Newsround was the most watched children's programme in the UK for the a number of years until relatively recently, it shows that news and current affairs can be delivered in a way which is popular with the audience.

It can be shown to engage the audience and create a sense of exploration at a crucial time of development of young people.

Just this week there is a letter in Ariel from a BBC regional journalist asking just the questions raised in the research – why is there no provision and what can be done to address this?

I believe that with the BBC's existing resources that such a service could be delivered in a very cost effective way. I will continue to assist the research project for as long as I remain at the BBC.

Declaration

I declare that the information contained in this report is to the best of my knowledge correct and accurately reflects the conduct and outcomes of the project.

Academic Partner

Signature	Date 18 June 2009
Print name	Dr Cynthia Carter

BBC Partner

Signature	Date 19.6.09
Print name : Ian Prince	

If you would like to provide confidential comments on any aspect of your involvement with this project, please do so by email to: j.pollock@ahrc.ac.uk

Budget Statement

(Please explain any variations between actual and forecast expenditure. You should attach a copy of any correspondence authorising significant virements.)

None. See budget attached. Not yet finalised, as not all expenditures noted on this budget statement.

	Paid to Date	Actual Expenditure
DI - Staff		
DI - Travel and Subsistence		
DI - Other Costs		
DA - Investigators		
DA - Estates Costs		
DA - Other Directly Allocated		
IC - Indirect Costs		
Total		

I confirm that the grant has been spent in accordance with the terms and conditions of awards.

Award-holder's signature

Date: 23 June 2009

Head of Department signature

Print name (including title)
Date:

Institutional authorisation (for example Head of the Research or Finance Office)

Signature		Institutional stamp:
Print Name (including title)		
Position		
Date:		

Please enclose any relevant publicity material that has arisen as part of the Fellowship or its outputs (if not previously supplied).