

## **Project 10: Raising the profile of the Visual Cognition research group**

### **REASON FOR FUNDING:**

The Visual Cognition research group was established in 2018 and we are a relatively small group (compared to similar disciplines at other universities). We are very keen to expand the research that we conduct and to maintain a high standard of work, but many of us have heavy teaching and admin loads. Consequently, the group does not have a high profile and we lack visibility within and outside the University. To be in a strong position to apply for external funding it is important to raise our profile and increase our visibility. With this internal funding we aimed to build and strengthen our links with non-academic partners, and to broaden the potential impact of our research by sharing our skills with other academics across the University.

### **USE OF FUNDING:**

We used the funding to:

1. Host a workshop at which we shared our primary research topics, provided information about the methods we use and the equipment we have within the Psychology department, and demonstrated the skills and expertise of the group. We invited academics from within the University, staff from key areas, such as research impact and the partnerships team, and non-academic partners. We did want to have a face-to-face workshop, but it had to be online.
2. Pay a "research ambassador" who helped in designing and establishing a website for the group so that we could increase our visibility and share our achievements (<http://hub.salford.ac.uk/visualcognition/>). Our RA also identified non-academic partners and designed a set of methods cards that we could provide to attendees of the workshop.
3. Print methods cards showcasing the common techniques that we use, why they are beneficial, and why it is useful to have expert support when using each method (i.e. trying to encourage non-academic partners to get in touch if they wanted to use a particular method).

### **OUTCOMES AND FUTURE IMPACT:**

We had fewer attendees than hoped but we wanted to have the website available before we sent out invites so that anyone interested had an overview of the group to help in deciding whether to attend. The website took a long time and a lot of work to develop and release, however as a group we feel that this will significantly raise our visibility and will help in attracting funding and PGR students.

Following the workshop, we sought feedback from attendees via an online questionnaire. Since the workshop, individual members of our team have been contacted by attendees (staff within the University and one of the non-academic partners) and this may lead to future working partnerships and funding applications.

The work completed as part of this funding has benefitted the group because it was a valuable experience working together to organise the event, and the website helps us to showcase our work. It has also benefitted the RA who is starting a PhD in September. He has gained knowledge and skills relating to impact and engagement and has subsequently helped apply to the ESRC Festival of Social Science.

Whilst attendance was low, we do feel that we have raised our profile with several external organisations, and with the partnerships office and we hope that in future they will think of us as projects and opportunities arise. Raising the profile of the group will increase our visibility within the University and expand the scope for future research.