Department	School of Computing
Supervisors	Michael Smyth
Project Title	**Remix Culture and AI tools for Creativity**

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project will explore the changing nature of creative production from the context of data driven AI tools in the Creative Industries. In particular, the research will interrogate the exponential growth of searchable and retrievable data; the growth of publicly available Artificial Intelligence (AI) based tools that can manipulate and endlessly re-purpose such data into new forms and the allure of nostalgia.

For example, in the time that it takes to attempt to recall the name of a TV programme from our past, it is now possible to view original footage on a myriad of different platforms and services. These tools have the effect of making time plastic and stretchable, where the past has never been more accessible. Fisher (2013) refers to this as *"technologised"* time, where the past and the future are subject to ceaseless de and recomposition. In a recent article by Lauren Cochrane she describes a similar situation in terms of how we are experiencing an acceleration of nostalgia, which she characterises as being *"trapped in what we might call a Revival Spiral"* (Cochrane, 2022). The Revival Spiral is perhaps better characterised by a seemingly increased longing for the recent past.

The goal of the research will be to characterise whether the creative process is changing as a result of the democratisation of AI tools such AI tools (eg Midjourney or Dall.E 2) and to speculate on the nature of creative practice and whether access to the same search engines and algorithms will have the effect to *"flatten the zeitgeist"* (Cochrane, 2022) leading to a monoculture across the generations.The research will focus on the relationship between the past and the present and how that interaction influences design thinking when speculating about possible futures. It will argue that the growing influence of nostalgia, supported by the exponential growth of data creation and consumption, together with the democratisation of sophisticated tools, has the potential to introduce the unintended effect of flattening the very creativity that is central to design.

Perspective applicants are encouraged to contact the Supervisor before submitting their applications. Applications should make it clear the project you are applying for and the name of the supervisors.

Academic qualifications
A first degree (at least a 2.1) ideally in Computing or Design with a good fundamental knowledge of Design Methods and Artificial Intelligence.

English language requirement
IELTS score must be at least 6.5 (with not less than 6.0 in each of the four components). Other, equivalent qualifications will be accepted. Full details of the University's policy are available online.

Essential attributes:
- Experience of fundamental Human Computer Interaction
- Competent in Interaction Design
- Knowledge of Creative Practice
- Good written and oral communication skills
- Strong motivation, with evidence of independent research skills relevant to the project
- Good time management

Desirable attributes: An interest in the relationship between creative practice and data-driven technologies.	
Indicative Bibliography	Cochrane, L. (2022) *The Revival Spiral,* The Face, Spring 2022. https://theface.com/culture/the-revival-spiral-1990s-2000s-noughties-nostalgia-indie-sleaze-y2k-tiktok-fashion-dark-academia-regencycore-the-sopranos-supreme Fisher, M. (2013) The Metaphysics of Crackle: Afrofuturism and Hauntology, *Dancecult: Journal of Electronic Dance Music Culture* 5(2), 42–55. Smyth, M. (2022) Remix Culture: the comfort of nostalgia in uncertain times, Medium, https://medium.com/p/b7e13a5851d5
Enquiries	For informal enquiries about this PhD project, please contact Michael Smyth (m.smyth@napier.ac.uk)
Web page	https://www.napier.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/research-degrees/application-process