



Filip Bigos
Productions

Proposal: Online Identities at SUARTS Freshers' Fair 2014

Proposed by: Filip Bigos

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For the attention of: Joe Easeman, Chris Follows

Summary

This is a proposal to have a stall presenting DIAL and its college communities within the Online Identities project at the 2014 Freshers' Fair organised by SUARTS.

The fair is attended by thousands of new students every year, and there is a lot of potential for securing substantial interest from students in this project if presented well and in an easy-to-understand manner.

This is a proposal only, and it is open to suggestions and amendments. Personal experience of running engagement projects within SUARTS and stalls at Freshers' Fair can be offered.

Outline

According to Student Communities at UAL survey carried out by SUARTS in May 2012, students at UAL not only aspire "to be a part of an international art and design scene but actively [want to] situate themselves within it", with 85.3% of students highlighting the importance of community belonging.¹ DIAL's Online Identities project creates communities which not only bring students together, but also provides them with a unique opportunity to engage with fellow students while working on their own self promotion as entry level professionals.

As beneficial as the project may be, recent findings have shown that unless students are engaged within an activity in the first few weeks of the academic year, it is quite hard to get them involved in an activity afterwards due to their university commitments.² Freshers' Fair and Freshers' Week have, in this case, proved that they are a very valuable place to gain students' interest, with many societies multiplying their membership numbers on the day.³

Hence holding a DIAL stall at the 2014 Freshers' Fair would provide the right means to reach thousands of young students who need to start working on their online self promotion.⁴ The stall could be organised through the Students' Union during summer:

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¹ SUARTS. (2012) *Student Communities at UAL*. Published report. SUARTS.

² Mentioned in a debate during an LCC College Away Day, 11 June 2014 focused on student communities within college

³ Bigos, F. (2014) *UAL LGBTQ Report on Autumn and Spring Terms 2013/2014*. Published society report. SUARTS,

⁴ Mentioned in a debate during COPYyourself Meeting #2, 6 June 2014 by Marie-Louise Annan

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The stall could offer:

- Sign up sheets for college communities
- Promotional leaflets (no bigger than A5) explaining the project
- Some of the resources DIAL and CLTAD will have produced by then
- Sweets

The stall would require some preparation and ideally two people to comfortably man the stall on the day. Large amounts of freebies are discouraged on the basis of personal experience - students love them, but throw them away unless they are of good quality. Sweets and interactive stalls attract attention and make more of an impact than freebies.

Outcomes/aims

1. Raise awareness of the project across UAL.
2. Encourage students to join the college communities and expand these.
3. Have a tangible deadline for the launch of the project and all the resources, so it can be fully functional.