



PICTURED ABOVE: ALAN ARMSTRONG REMEMBERED (SEE PAGE 2)

Centre for Research in Inclusion

11: Summer 2021

About us

The Centre for Research in Inclusion (CRI) in the Education School at the University of Southampton is committed to internationally significant research towards the inclusion of children, adults, families, and practitioners in education. We work with a strong network of collaborators in research that addresses inclusion and engages with the needs of participants and research users. CRI is unusual in working with teachers, young people, disabled and other marginalised groups to carry out the research. See our [Centre for Research in Inclusion video](https://tinyurl.com/yc28fpur) [<https://tinyurl.com/yc28fpur>].

CRI Global News

Global Accessibility Teachers' Coffee Hour

On 20th May, CRI's [Teaching Accessibility](#) team partnered with US initiative [Teach Access](#) to celebrate the 10th annual [Global Accessibility Awareness Day \(GAAD\)](#) by hosting an international gathering of accessibility educators. Guests joined from the UK, Ireland, Austria, Spain, Portugal, Australia and the US, representing 16 universities and colleges. Together, we

explored the challenges of teaching accessibility, our approaches and shared values. We all benefited from lively discussions and the opportunity to learn from both aspiring and experienced accessibility teachers.

Celebrating the 10th annual Global Accessibility Awareness Day (GAAD)



Global Critical Conversation

[Professor Kiki Messiou](#) was invited to be one of the experts on a panel at 'Global Critical Conversations: Can educational inclusion, equity and excellence co-exist?' organised by Monash University, Australia, earlier this year.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GTief0LydkU>. Kiki has also been invited to be one of the speakers at the "Including All - Teachers and Learners" Conference organised by the MiSP (Mindfulness in Schools Project) organisation this June. <https://mindfulnessinschools.org/misp-conference-2021/>

World Qualitative Research

[Professor Melanie Nind](#) recently led a key workshop at the 5th World Conference on Qualitative Research (WCQR) to support social researchers adapting research methods for the pandemic. Melanie has been invited to join the Scientific Committee for the [6th WCQR 2022](#). She has also been awarded honorary gold membership of the Asian Qualitative Research Association and is on the editorial steering group for *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research in the Asian Context*.

Supporting Inclusion in Ireland

CRI doctoral researcher Sadhbh O'Dwyer is teaching a module on Inclusion and SEN for pre-service teachers at the University of Limerick: 'It's a fantastic opportunity to engage with pre-service teachers on concepts of inclusion. I have found that the act of teaching others is helping me reframe my own thoughts about inclusion for my thesis. I am so grateful to my CRI colleagues for the knowledge they have shared with me, knowledge that I can now share with others in Ireland.'

Remembering Alan Armstrong

Readers who have watched the [CRI video](#) will have seen Alan Armstrong from Barod talking with pride about his association with the Centre. Alan died this year from Covid-19. He will be greatly missed by his colleagues at the University of Southampton. He wrote a paper with some of us: [TimeBanking: Towards a co-produced solution for power and money issues in inclusive research](#). Alan leaves a legacy of great ideas for doing research inclusively, not least the distinction between the space where academics involve “users” of research, the space where activists involve academics, and the new spaces he invested in where people work together.



Alan with some of the CRI team

[Angeliki Katramadou](#) and [Abigail Croydon](#) are acting as evaluators in the project.



Freirean learning circle and Brazil bingo!



Big ideas

CRI doctoral researchers have been supporting an initiative to make big ideas accessible to people with learning disabilities and to encourage them to reflect on their own experiences in the light of the big idea. In the series of workshops, 'Big Ideas that Shaped the World of Disability', [Sadhbh O'Dwyer](#) and Dr Hilra Vinha introduced participants to the ideas of Paulo Freire. Brazilian artist, Breuno Macedo, produced the image of a Freirean learning circle, which led to a game of Brazil bingo! (pictured). This followed a workshop in which Professor Tom Shakespeare used a game of snakes and ladders to facilitate understanding of the social model of disability.

New open access papers

You don't need access to the university library to read these papers – you can download them free of charge.

Horton S (2021) Empathy cannot sustain action in technology accessibility. *Frontiers in Computer Science*. 3:617044. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fcomp.2021.617044>

Parsons, S. (2021) The importance of collaboration for knowledge co-construction in 'close-to-practice' research. *British Educational Research Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3714>

Additional recent publications from CRI

Parsons, S., Kovshoff, H., Karakosta, E., & Ivil, K. (2021) Understanding holistic and unique childhoods: knowledge generation in the early years with autistic children, families and practitioners. *Early Years*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09575146.2021.1889992>

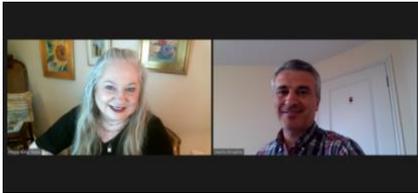
Tansley, R., Parsons, S., & Kovshoff, H. (2021) How are intense interests used within schools to support inclusion and learning for secondary-aged autistic pupils? A scoping review. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08856257.2021.1911520>

And for the Spanish speakers

Alba, C, & Nind, M. (2020) El giro inclusive en la investigación socioeducativa [The inclusive turn in socio-educational research], in *Caminos y Derivas Para Otra Investigación Educativa y Social* [Paths and Drifts for Educational and Social Research], edited by Sancho Gil, J.M. et al. Barcelona: Octaedro.

Researching despite the lockdowns - A photo story!

CRI's [Dr Vasilis Strogilos](#) and Professor Peggy King-Sears from George Mason University in Washington DC worked together on their research project 'Co-teaching between Special and Mainstream teachers: A Meta-synthesis of Qualitative Research'.



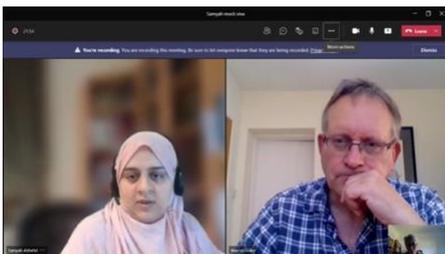
Vasilis and Peggy working together on their research project.

[Professor Melanie Nind](#) has been meeting with Kathrin Lemmer and Andreas Köpfer, Professor for Inclusive Education and Learning, University of Education, Freiburg, Germany. Together they are exploring the ways in which children create and use school and research spaces for inclusion.



Melanie skyping with Andreas and Kathrin

Supervisions continued. While missing in person contact, most supervisors and doctoral researchers have continued meeting online.



Samyah in Saudi Arabia in a mock PhD viva with her supervisors

Melanie joined the COVID-19 Qualitative Research Network at the University of Southampton. The group met regularly to support each other with the potentials and pitfalls of using/moving to remote methods, the challenges of research ethics during COVID-19 times, recruiting participants and the changing pace of research. The focus was often on participant and researcher well-being and our work with under-served populations. Participants' cats often joined in too!



The COVID-19 Qualitative Research Network at the University of Southampton.

[Dr Cristina Azaola](#) from CRI and Dr Yuritzin Flores Puig from the Latin American Centre for Rural Development have been discussing collaborative work with rural youngsters in relation to their education, work expectations and attachment to their localities. Watch this space to see what happens next!



Dr Cristina Azaola from CRI and Dr Yuritzin Flores Puig from the Latin American Centre for Rural Development

Despite the stories these pictures tell of the lifeline offered by digital platforms Zoom, Skype and Microsoft Teams, not all research contacts were online this year. For some, data collection could take place outdoors. Here doctoral researcher Abigail Croydon photographed and video recorded James, a person with learning disabilities, working at the Longshaw Estate in the Peak District. You can see James, National Trust volunteer, and Andrew his personal assistant sweeping the café terrace at Longshaw Estate as well as on their litter-picking walk across the Estate. Abigail will use the photos and video to prompt discussion about the work people have found to suit their unique circumstances, using the support of a personal assistant to do that work, and the learning for all involved.



James working with his personal assistant at the Longshaw Estate in the Peak District



Developing accessibility teaching to ensure excellent digital experiences

Story: Andy Coverdale and Sarah Lewthwaite. Image credit: Mary Bellard - Students learn about accessibility at the TeachAccess Study Away, Silicon Valley, 2019

The research project [Teaching Accessibility in the Digital Skill Set](#) (2019-2024) (first introduced in *Issue 5*) is approaching an important and exciting stage. Led by [Dr Sarah Lewthwaite](#) and funded by UKRI as part of their Future Leaders Fellowships programme, the study aims to build a knowledge base that support teachers and trainers of digital accessibility in computer science, industry and related fields, to develop teaching and build understanding of the unique pedagogy of digital accessibility. In January, Sarah was joined on the project by Research Fellow [Dr Andy Coverdale](#) and Senior Research Assistant [Sarah Horton](#).

Digital technologies continue to transform daily life. Yet capacity for producing accessible digital tools, platforms and services has not kept pace with demand, exacerbating digital exclusion for disabled people and older populations. Digital divides have been heightened by the ongoing global pandemic, as society has become reliant on digital platforms to participate meaningfully. The resulting connectivity has been of huge benefit to some groups, however, excluding practices remain. Currently, there are growing legal, business and cultural imperatives for digital inclusion, informed by increased global accessibility policy and legislation underpinned by standards and guidelines. At the same time, there is growing demand for graduates with the knowledge and skills to produce accessible digital services, yet relatively little is known about how accessibility is taught and learned within Higher Education and industry. Our project is promoting evidence-based practice in the field and contributing to building capacity in the digital workforce by promoting pedagogical culture and conducting research through four overlapping workstreams.

As part of the first of these workstreams, the project team conducted a systematic literature review, synthesising twenty years of primary research studies (1999-2020) to establish what is known about how accessibility is taught in Higher Education and the workplace. Scoping of the wider literature, largely drawn from conference proceedings, revealed many descriptive, reflective, and experiential accounts of teaching, as well as reporting on curriculum and course design. We found a literature that indicates an emergent pedagogical culture in the Computer Sciences, however, the teaching of accessibility remains under-researched, and a relatively small literature (17 papers) was identified. We published our [research protocol](#) to promote transparency and educational research methods in computer science.

The team is now focused on developing the first of two Expert Panels. Following interviews with 14 educators from the UK, US, Germany, Australia, Ireland, Austria and Brazil, who are engaged in teaching accessibility across a range of university courses and curricula, the research team have identified a number of significant, interrelated themes around which the participants will be invited to further engage as an international community, prompted by key discussion points and challenges.

Interviewees spoke about the challenges of motivating and engaging students in the topic of accessibility, embedding it within the broader contexts of disability awareness and demonstrating impact through meaningful activities. Most students have limited experience with disability, and assumptions and biases that must be routinely challenged. Direct engagement with disabled and older users provides students with an effective and motivational learning experience.

Teachers also used video resources, simulation methods and 'personas' to seek to raise awareness of disability by exposing students to multiple experiences and perspectives.

Digital accessibility demands high levels of technical competence, procedural knowledge and conceptual understanding, yet the guidelines and related documentation used to guide practical design and evaluation activities are often seen as complex, abstract and difficult to navigate. Educators are adopting problem-based approaches to provide authenticity and context that make accessibility relevant and meaningful to students, while project work and links with industry can replicate 'real-world' practices, workflows and deadlines.

Interviewees also discussed the practical challenges of developing, selecting and organising course content, often across multiple curricula and computer science disciplines, where the perceived status and relevance of accessibility varies considerably and can be embedded in different ways. Very few had formal teacher training, drawing instead on personal learning experiences or mentors to influence their teaching practice. Many remarked on the need for greater knowledge sharing within faculty, where accessibility expertise and practices may be historically embedded or championed by a select few.

Further interviews will be conducted with those teaching and training in industry settings later this year to draw out the distinct issue for workplace learning and the impact of context. We look forward to updating you as the project continues to progress!