

Partnerships in Learning & Teaching - PLaNT Project Application Form 2019 - 2020 18-2019

Lead student contact details

Name: (name removed)
School: Biological Sciences
Degree programme: BEng Biomedical Engineering
Year group: Part 1
Email: (details removed)

Lead staff members contact details (co-leads from two sections of SBS)

Name: Professor Rachel McCrindle and Professor Amanda Callaghan
School: Biological Sciences
Email: r.j.mccrindle@reading.ac.uk and a.callaghan@reading.ac.uk

Project title

iApply – an iSpy Inspired Interactive Careers Passport and Mobile App for Specific Careers

Project team name and details

Project team name: SuGAR (Successful Graduate Applications Resource)
Other members of the team (including students and/or staff)
Include name, year group and degree programme of student partners
Dr Renee Lee (Placements Coordinator) SBS Mrs Victoria Godsell (Careers Consultant) SBS Part 1, 2 and 3 Student Reps plus students from BEng/MEng Biomedical Engineering Part 1, 2 and 3 Student Reps plus students from BSc Zoology and BSc Ecology Employers invited to focus groups/codesign activities

Project summary (up to 100 words)

The DHLE data and Graduate Outcomes have been the weakest metric in SBS. Despite excellent resources provided by Careers with good student engagement, it is evident that students need encouragement to research specific careers and engage in careers-focussed activities, both general and specific. The aim of iApply (based loosely on i-Spy books) is to design a series of innovative **specific** careers resource booklets and a mobile app that encourages students to engage in a progressive career-focussed journey of activities. Gamification elements are associated with completion of activities promoting in-cohort, between-cohort and between-course competitions to increase engagement in careers activities, signpost students to career possibilities, and increase their chances of obtaining graduate positions.

Project objectives, anticipated outcomes and outputs/deliverables (bullet points)

Please note the anticipated benefits for students, staff, department/school, institution etc.

Objectives

- To co-design with our students, and selected employers, a series of innovative career-specific resource booklets and a mobile app that encourages students to engage in a progressive careers-focussed journey of activities throughout their period of study at Reading and into their first graduate careers.

Outcomes (anticipated benefits)

- Students: an easy to use resource to ensure they maximise careers opportunities as they progress through their degree; a means of recording their careers engagement; a way of keeping track of activities undertaken that will be useful for their CVs and for discussing at interview, particularly with regards to specific career areas.
- Staff: a resource that can be used as a point of discussion in tutor meetings; a way of identifying students who are not engaging with the careers process; a way of identifying students who might benefit from additional advice to realise the careers that are open to them.
- SBS: being the School leading on the employability agenda within the University; highly satisfied students (links to NSS and TEF); excellent employability figures and scores; a means of staying more engaged with our alumni; increased applications to SBS courses.
- Institution: being a University that is leading student employability in the UK; overall benefits from increased SBS NSS, TEF, DHLE employability stats; visibility as a leader in the field through presentations at national conferences; potential for innovative entry to careers awards

Outputs

- Two printed iApply booklets (Careers in Biomedical Engineering and Careers in Wildlife Conservation) for piloting with SBS students which are based on the concept of i-Spy books which were (and still are) developed for children on a range of subjects. As objects listed are spotted, the book provides a record of the event with the opportunity to gain points, varying according to how unusual the sight, or in this case, how important the skill – example features are indicated in Figure 1 (with appropriate changes to be made during the co-design process so suitable for a university aged/skilled audience).

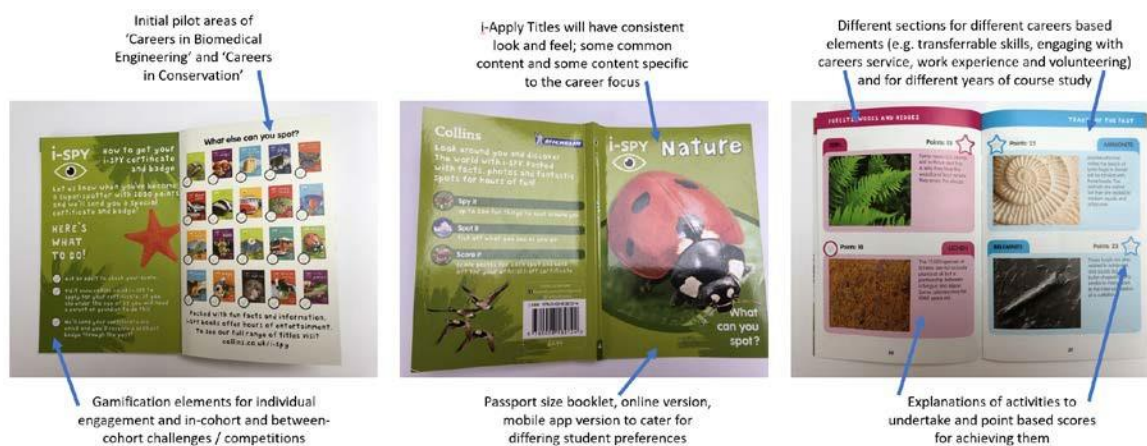


Figure 1 – Translation of i-Spy concept to i-Apply booklet (and app design)

- Focus group data (from students and employers) to inform co-design and development of physical/online booklet (produced as part of PLaNT project).
- Co-design of a mobile app version of the booklet (funding to develop the app will be applied for in the T&L awards in February 2020)
- Feedback via a Google Docs survey on the booklets and app design from the wider SBS student community, SBS Board for Teaching and Learning, employers and staff in general
- T&L Blog posts on the project

Project description (up to 500 words in total)

Describe the proposed project including each of the following:

How will students work as partners with staff in the design and delivery of the project?

Rachel McCrindle (BME lead) and Amanda Callaghan (Conservation lead) in conjunction with, Victoria Godsell (Careers) and Renee Lee (SBS Placements) will develop early 'raw' prototype booklet ideas.

Driven by (name removed) (Lead Student Applicant) and student reps from each of the degrees (Biomedical Engineering, Ecology and Wildlife Conservation and Zoology) a student focus group and co-design activity will be organised in collaboration with employers for each course.

The purpose of these activities will be to 1) gain feedback on the iApply concept and early prototype booklets; 2) gather student and employer input on what should be in the booklet/app and how it would best be presented to students for maximum uptake; and 3) co-design of the booklet/mobile app.

Based on the co-design activities, draft iApply Booklets (Careers in Biomedical Engineering and Careers in Wildlife Conservation) will be produced and printed by the University Media Unit as well as made available online. Designs for the app version will also be published for feedback.

Student reps will engage with their cohorts to distribute versions to all students together with an online survey for feedback, further suggestions, amendments and additions.

Students and staff involved on the project will review responses and amend booklet/app design accordingly.

Students and staff will jointly apply for T&L funding to create an online app version and to distribute to all students for start of 2021-22 academic year.

What does success look like and what are the anticipated impacts of the project?

- Students engage with the process and iApply resources.
- Employers are positive about the approach.
- An application is made to the T&L Development Fund to create the App version
- Students better understand skills and experience required for specific careers

When do you anticipate that you will be able to demonstrate this impact?

- From Summer term 2020 onwards (Booklet 2020 – App 2021)

How will you evaluate the project to determine its success? How will students be involved?

For success of iApply, we recognise the need for a student-focussed approach to be adopted. Student partners will be involved throughout the design, development and distribution process as indicated above and the wider student cohort in the piloting of the two initial iApply booklets produced.

- Short-term success measures — number of students involved and their feedback
- Mid-term success measures – number of students who engage with the booklets (and ultimately the app); engage with careers related activities; increase in take-up of placement/volunteering activities etc.
- Long-term success measures – improved KPIs related to student employability, TEF and 18-month DHLE Employment statistics.

How will the project outcomes be disseminated? How will students be involved?

Outcomes will be disseminated:

- To all students via the student reps
- To staff in SBS via the School Board for T&L and our Good Teaching Practice meetings
- To staff in the University through CQSD events and UTF/NTF CoPs
- To the wider education community through T&L conferences and Student as Partner Conferences (e.g. Advance HE STEM conference and British Ecological Society Careers Conference).

How does the project support your School/Department's Teaching and Learning Plan and the University's [Teaching and Learning Strategy](#)?

The iApply project links with SBS's Teaching & Learning Plan by ensuring that all our students are signposted to the range of careers appropriate to their degrees and that they are aware of the diverse range of opportunities and services that they can take up to achieve this. In particular low employability of Zoology students nationally has been highlighted in SPELT.

iApply also links firmly with the University's T&L Strategy 2018-2021 through offering students an outstanding learning experience by equipping them "with the aspirations, confidence and skills to become highly employable graduates who are sought after by employers, both nationally and internationally, and are able to respond to diverse opportunities and challenges" enables by supporting our students with iApply "to access and understand the value of work-based learning, career development, student mobility and global engagement opportunities"

Briefly outline plans for project-related activities to continue beyond this PLaNT project and/or for project outcomes to be realised in a sustainable way:

If the two pilot areas are successful it is intended that further booklets will be developed for other specific career areas in SBS.

If the approach is successful in SBS, we will look to transfer the approach wider across the University.

We will apply to the Teaching & Learning Development Fund (Feb 2020) to get the additional resource required to create a mobile app version of the booklets and to implement the designs generated by the students as part of the PLaNT project. Development of an app version will also allow the project outcomes to be easily updated as well as environmentally sustainable.

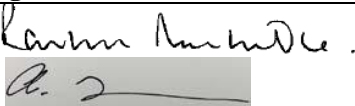
Project start date: January 6th 2020

Project end date: 30th June 2020

Budget details

Brief outline of project activities	Activity start date and end date	Approximate costs associated with the activity. (Note: All claims and/or expenses need to be arranged before 30th June 2020)
Initial designs and content	Jan 6 th – Jan 20 th 2020	
Focus Groups/Codesign activities (BME)	Week 20 th Jan 2020	£150 food/refreshments for focus groups/co-design activities/materials
Focus Groups/Codesign activities (Conservation)	Week 27 th Jan 2020	£150 food/refreshments for focus groups/co-design activities/materials
Application to T&L Development Fund	Feb 20 th 2020	
Initial Feedback from students	March 24 th 2020	
Amendment Phase	April 2020	
Printing and Distribution	June 2020	£200 Printing costs for booklets

Total funding applied for £500

Signature of lead student	Signature of lead staff member
(signature removed)	
Date 18th November 2019	Date 18th November 2019

Please submit your completed form to Martin Wise, CQSD: m.wise@reading.ac.uk