

Module Induction

GAM705: Major Project

FALMOUTH
UNIVERSITY



Outline of this part

- Aim and Structure
- Different Kinds of Project
- Assessment and Submissions
- Where to find what?
- FAQs

The Staff

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Technicians

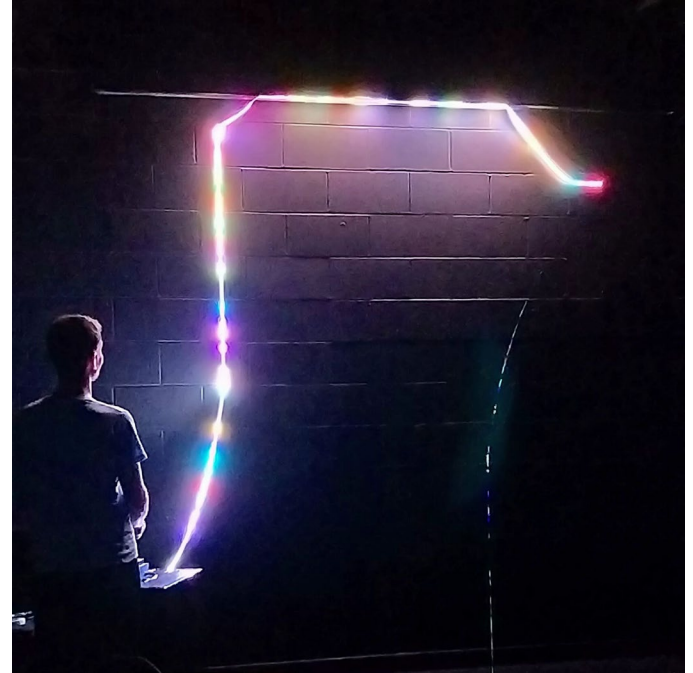
Aim and Structure

What is the module about?

You'll be exploring **research** and putting it into **practice** in the context of game development.

Work on a **major creative piece**. You'll be expanding and consolidating your skills through an extended project:

- Expand on another module's project (with *significant* amount of original content)
- Work on a brand-new project
- Contribute to an ongoing external project (with *significant* personal contribution)

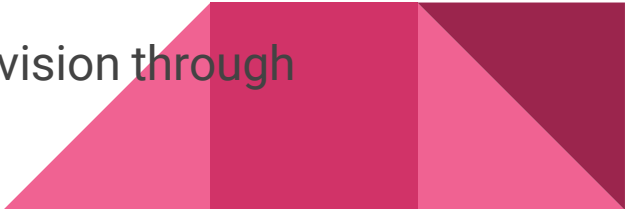


What is the module about?

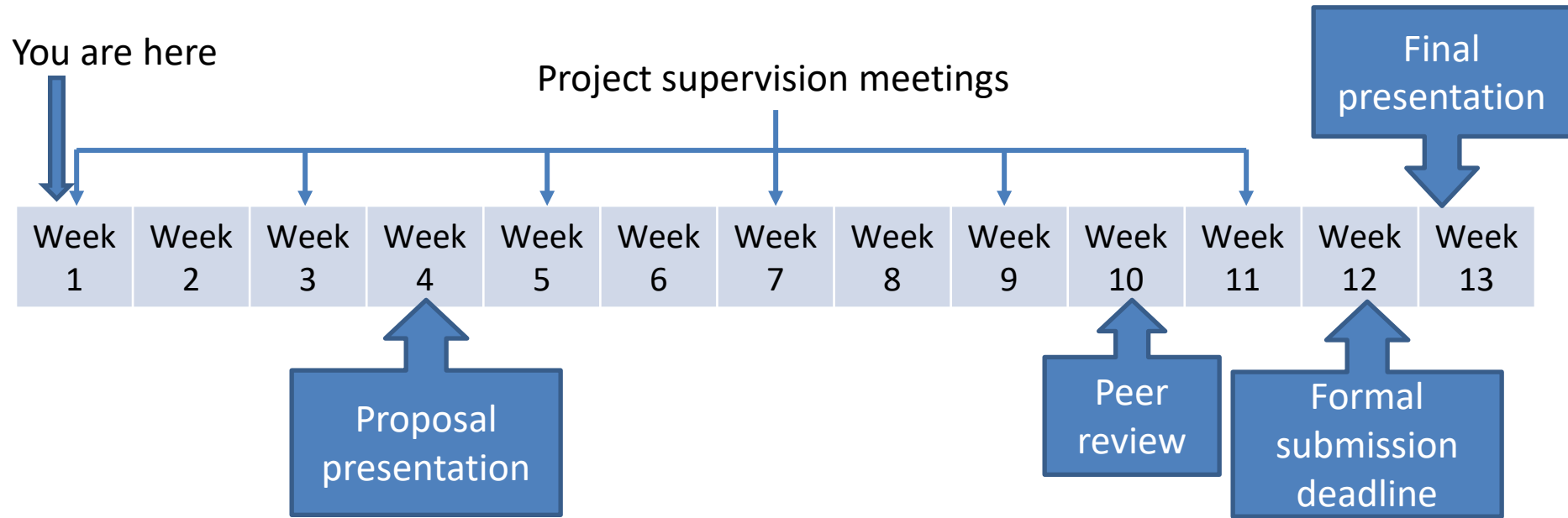
- You'll begin by proposing your project through a **pitch and proposal**, and getting **green light** from staff members.
- **Research** will help guide your vision and will help you foresee scope and viability.
- Coming up with a **solid proposal and plan is key** to ensuring that your project will be achievable within the weeks the module runs.



Supervised Practice of Individual Projects

- Your Major Project is about your **individual work** (even if it's part of a team project).
 - Your **supervisor is a mentor / advisor**, but the Major Project is based on your intellectual and professional independence (self-directed work).
 - We are here to support you, but the onus is on **you** to apply your specialist skills and direct your own work through the project.
 - **Group crits and peer-reviews** will complement supervision through additional feedback and guidance from your peers.
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Module Roadmap



Timetabled sessions

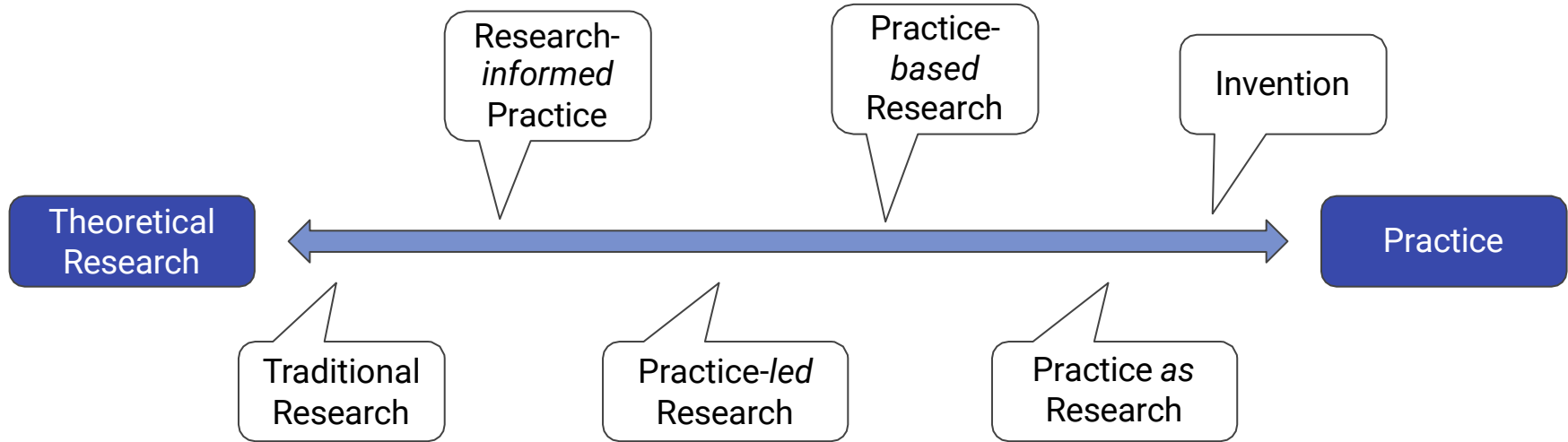
- As always, check **MyTimetable** for timetable information
- Some sessions (e.g. supervision meetings) are **online** only
- Other sessions (e.g. studio practice, presentation seminars) are **hybrid** – you may attend either on campus or online
- Also check LearningSpace for asynchronous video lectures and other useful resources



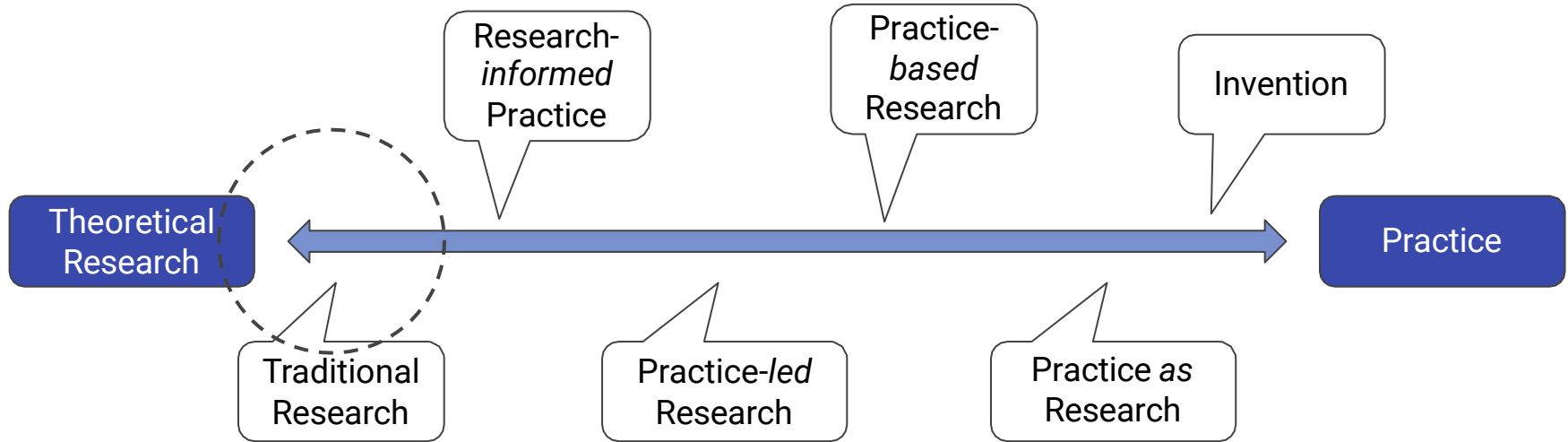


Many Kinds of Projects

The Spectrum of Research



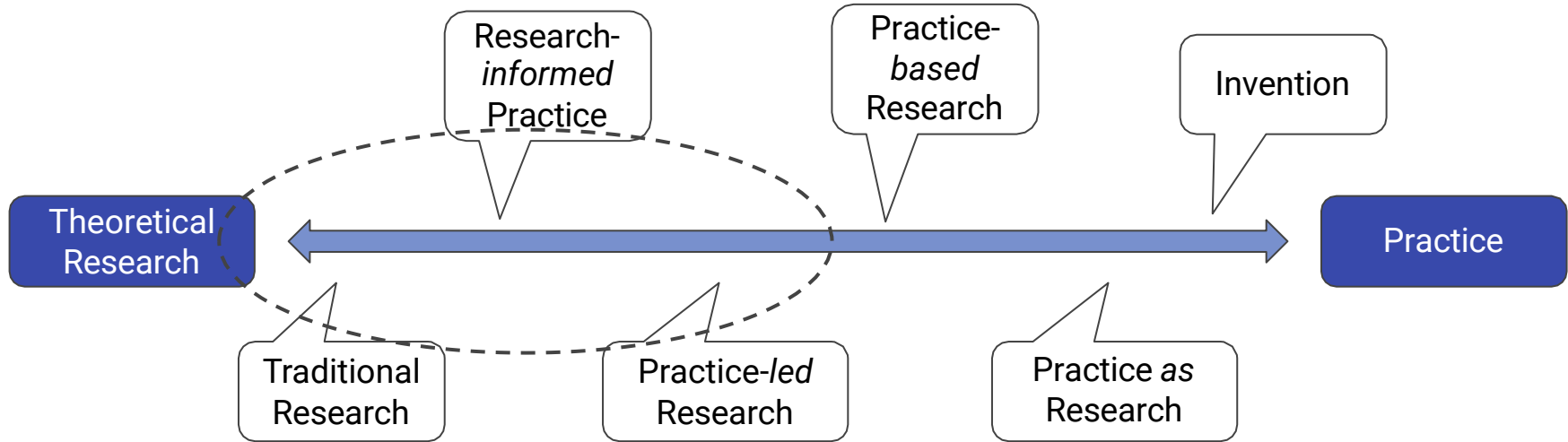
The Spectrum of Research



Purely theoretical research:

- Ex: Studying game decision graphs using modal logic.

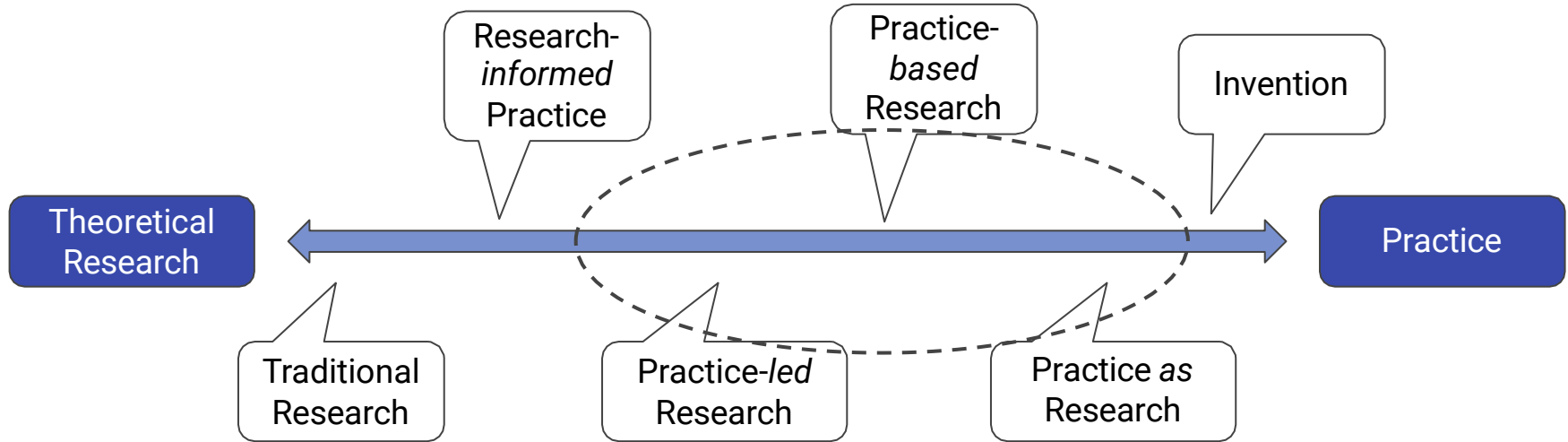
The Spectrum of Research



Design and effect measuring through experimentation:

- Ex: A/B test measuring player engagement.

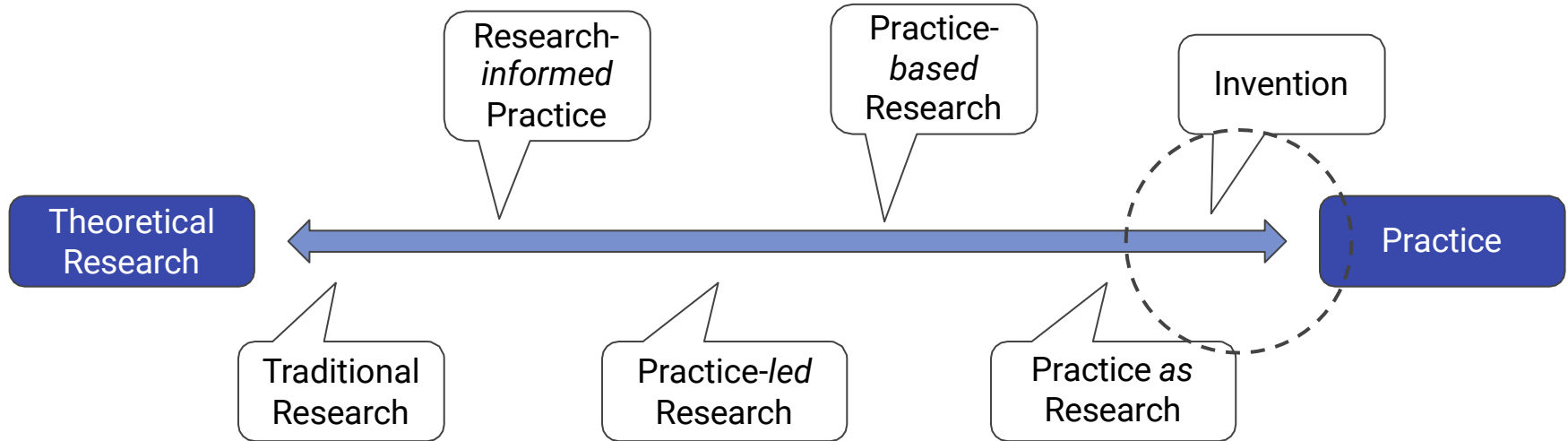
The Spectrum of Research



Documenting the process of creation:

- Ex: Using real-world stop-motion for a 2D game graphics.

The Spectrum of Research



Creation of a brand-new artifact:

- Ex: Original soundtrack composition for a game.

Assessment

Submissions and Deadlines

- **MyFalmouth** is the place to check for **official summative deadlines!**
 - 20th August → Summative Deadline (week 12)
 - Students with ECs/ADs can find their adjusted dates on MyFalmouth
- There are two **assessed presentations** (oral defenses)
 - You will present to your **supervisor, other tutors** and your **fellow students**
 - 21st/22nd June → Proposal Pitches (week 4)
 - 23rd/24th August → Final Presentations (Oral defense) (week 13)
- Formative sessions (See **MyTimetable**):
 - Group supervision meetings: every 2 weeks, starting today
 - Peer review: 2nd August (week 10)



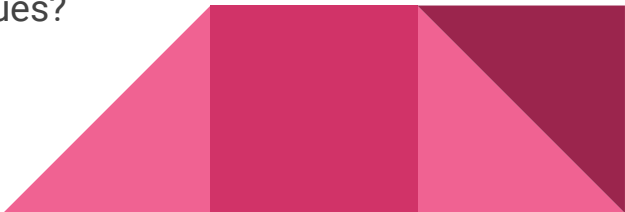
Submission Format

- **Final artefact** (Orientative: discuss with your **supervisor**):
 - In the case of **theoretical research**, the main artefact will be an academic dissertation, following the proper format.
 - If project involves **novel use of algorithms / coding techniques**, there should be a brief academic report providing context, relevance and novelty.
 - If a **game** is part of the main deliverable, the deliverable should be an executable build (and may include a research journal / report).
 - In the case of **practice-based res. / invention**, main deliverable can be a portfolio (may include a research journal / report).



Submission Format

- **Proposal Presentation**

- Worth **20%** of the module
 - **10 minute** presentation + 5 minute Q&A
 - What is your **project**? What is your **artefact**?
 - What is the wider **context** of your project within your specialism?
 - What key ideas / results (from **academic research** or **industry practice**) is your project built upon?
 - What **questions** are you seeking to answer?
 - Who is the **audience** for your artefact, and what **need** does it fulfil for them?
 - What are the key **legal, social, ethical**, and/or **professional** issues?
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Submission Format

- **Final Presentation (aka oral defense, aka viva)**
 - Along with the artefact itself, worth **80%** of the module
 - **15 minute** presentation + 5 minute Q&A
 - What did you do / make / write? Give a **demo** if appropriate
 - How did you **approach** the **development** of the project?
 - What questions did you **answer**?
 - Does your artefact fulfil the **need** you identified for your target **audience**?
 - What are the **wider implications and value** of your work?
 - What potential is there for **future work**?





It's dangerous to go alone...

Where to find information?

- **MyFalmouth:**
 - Official summative deadline date
- **MyTimetable:**
 - Dates and times of scheduled sessions
- **Learning Space:**
 - Formative deadlines, submission links, video lectures, resources...
 - The **project handbook** – formal assessment brief with deliverables and marking criteria



Where to find support?

- **Your supervisor:**
 - Feedback and guidance on your project
 - Do reach out between supervision meetings if you need to (though be aware of summer holidays affecting availability)
- **Technicians:**
 - Available during studio practice sessions, as well as via teams/discord/email
- **Module leader:**
 - Questions about assessment etc
 - Additional support and guidance
- **Your peers:**
 - Support each other!
 - Give feedback in group supervisions etc





Frequently Asked Questions

FAQs (1/3)

- Can my project be a **group project** (e.g. a game)?
 - Yes, but you must identify your role and contributions within the project.
 - I.e.; you will not be graded by the game as a whole, but rather by your work in it.
- Can my project **follow up from an existing project**?
 - Yes, but you must **significantly** expand it during this module:
 - A game already in beta that only needs minor tweaks and refinements would not be enough as a major project.
 - A prototype / draft from a previous module that you want to *significantly* expand / work on could do it.
 - Speak to your supervisor!




FAQs (2/3)

- Do I need to write a **journal / report / thesis**?
 - Depends on the kind of project:
 - Developing a game or associated assets does not *need* a report...
 - Unless there is something specific (question) you are researching by developing that game (comparing development techniques, design decisions, etc).
- If so, **how long** should it be?
 - Depends on whether it has an artefact attached, as well as its goal:
 - A purely theoretical project should be more comprehensive
 - Potentially a publishable paper
 - A practice-based project can have a shorter report / research journal, or no written component at all



FAQs (3/3)

- Do I need to have an **artefact** as part of my project?
 - Yes, but what constitutes an “artefact” is flexible:
 - For a purely theoretical project, the “artefact” can be a written thesis for example
 - Do I need to do an **oral defense** of my project?
 - Yes: regardless of what kind of project, you will need to present and defend it.
 - This means you will be asked questions regarding the rationale behind the project, any research you have (or should have) done, etc.
 - Documenting your project, even if you don't submit any written report, will help you keep track of this
 - Even if based on pure invention, research should be replicable and understandable by anyone.
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Questions?

Proposal Preparation

GAM705: Major Project

Outline of this part

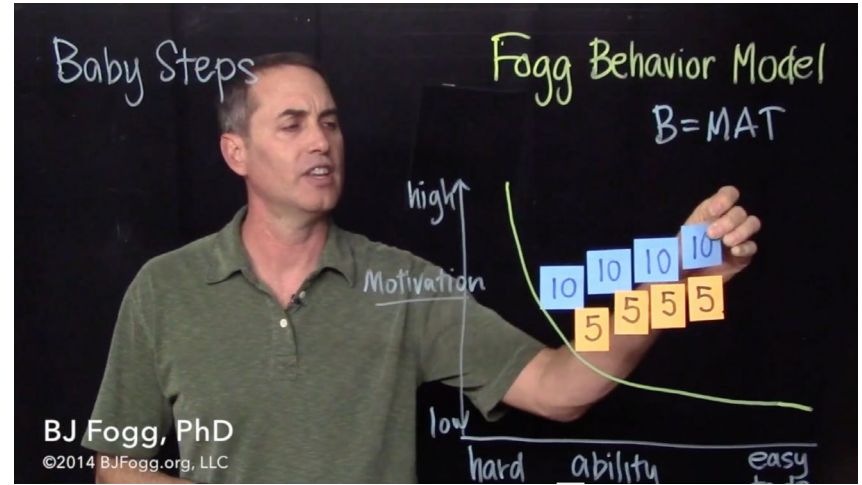
- Preparing a Proposal
- Preparing a Pitch
- Workshop

Project Proposal

Preparing a Project Proposal

According to BJ Fogg, founder, and director of the Stanford Behavior Design Lab:

"Sharing ideas early and often is one key to success for designers of end-user products and services".



Preparing a Project Proposal

Fogg developed a **conceptual design document structure**:

Articulate all the information needed to fully understand a **product** (i.e.; artifact) in a structured and logical sequence.

This document is **non-trivial** in its creation but once complete, should **help to solidify the concept** in your own mind and ease the process of communicating your concept to your stakeholders.



BJ Fogg's Conceptual Design Document

1. Title and overview
2. User description (incl. personas)
3. Storyboards of user experience
4. Prototypes
5. Features and functionality
6. The justification for design (theor. and pract.)
7. Results of user testing (preliminary user test.)
8. Shortcomings of design
9. Expansion – stretch goals
10. Next steps in the design process
11. Summary



Distilling the Elements

Your project **may not need** all the elements:

- “Storyboards and user experience” for an algorithm comparison?
- “User description” for a theoretical analysis of flow theory?

But some elements **might simply need rephrasing**:

- “Prototypes” for artwork → “Sketches” / “Moodboards”?
- “User testing” for AI system → Why do users need a new AI?



Preparing a Pitch

Preparing a Pitch

One of the most useful general approaches to **pitching** is that of Guy Kawasaki's **10-20-30 model** of pitching.


It relies on:

- **10 slides...**
- ... that will take **20 minutes** to present...
- using **30 point fonts**.

(Although your pitch should only be around 10 minutes long -- so this should probably be more like a 5-10-30 model!)



The Slide Deck, according to Kawasaki

1. A definition of what the problem is that you are attempting to solve
 2. A slide that outlines what your solution is.
 3. Your business model (how revenue comes into business and what to be spent on).
 4. Your technology and 'secret sauce' (what makes your project distinct?).
 5. The markets you will serve and the sales you expect to generate.
 6. A slide that outlines your competitors
 7. Key players in your team
 8. A slide of project plans and milestones, what will be done by when
 9. A slide of where you are currently at
 10. A summary
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Towards your Slide Deck

Although Kawasaki's format may not be ideal for all situations, it follows a fairly standard underlying **business planning model** of:

- Where are you now?
- Where do you want to go?
- How are you going to get there?



Towards your Slide Deck

It challenges you, as the pitch creator, to **answer a lot of potentially hard questions**, such as:

- Where do the **customers** come from?
- What will they spend **money** on, and why?
- Who your **competitors** actually are?
- When will your **idea** be ready?

(Recall Kawasaki's model is aimed towards getting funding for a project, or ensuring its viability: this could help you foresee a marketisation strategy for your project.)



Towards your Slide Deck

Some of the slides **might not be relevant** to your project.

If you feel that this is the case, feel free to **change the structure** but we encourage you to **discuss this with your project supervisor** first.



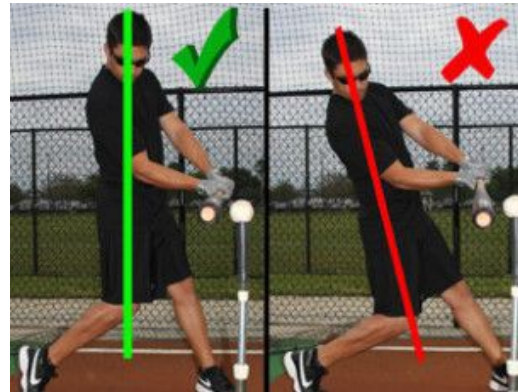
Good Practices in Pitching

- Transmit your **enthusiasm** for the idea:
 - You should aim to get your audience on board and share your passion for the idea.
- Get the **audience involved** from the beginning:
 - Present the problem and let them wonder about the solution.
- Your discourse should be **clear, direct, fresh...**
 - ... While avoiding being shallow, confusing, or needlessly comic.
- Know the **narrative** of your pitch:
 - Tell your audience a “story”.



Bad Practices in Pitching

- **Don't just read** the slides, add value to them.
 - Text-to-speech tools are already widely available.
 - Recall that pitching \neq lecturing!
- **Avoid walls of text** in slides.
 - You want people listening to you, and not reading the slide.
 - Fewer key concepts stick easier than huge paragraphs.
- **Don't rush it:** take your time if you need it.
 - For example, use a rhetorical question to take a deep breath, or drink some water.





Questions?