



Felipe Schmidt Fonseca

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ABOUT ME

I am Dr. Felipe Schmidt Fonseca, an experienced Berlin-based Brazilian advocate for social-environmental innovation and free/open-source technologies turned researcher. I am the founder of [Reuse City studio](#) and a co-creator of [sem ente](#), a toolkit for community projects; as well as the co-founder and lead articulator of the [Tropixel](#) network; and an active member of organisations such as [GIG](#) and [Circular Berlin](#).

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

PhD - School of Art, Design and Social Sciences

Northumbria University [27/07/2019 – 21/09/2023]

City: Newcastle-upon-Tyne | **Country:** United Kingdom | **Field(s) of study:** Communication Design | **Thesis:** Generous Cities - commons-oriented systems for the reuse of excess materials in cities

My PhD investigation was part of a doctoral training project called OpenDoTT, in partnership with a consortium of organisations led by Mozilla Foundation. It was funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie programme.

Training modules included:

- Design Research
- Open Leadership
- Prototyping with Open-Source Hardware
- Privacy by Design
- Policy-making

MA Scientific and Cultural Diffusion

Labjor, UNICAMP [01/02/2012 – 25/03/2014]

City: Campinas | **Country:** Brazil | **Thesis:** REDE/LABS - Laboratórios Experimentais em Rede ("Networked Experimental Labs")

BA Corporate Communications Management

Universidade Anhembi Morumbi [08/02/2001 – 26/01/2007]

City: São Paulo | **Country:** Brazil

WORK EXPERIENCE

Researcher - Circular Society

Global Innovation Gathering e.V. [01/12/2024 – Current]

City: Berlin | **Country:** Germany

Creating and developing projects on social and environmental approaches to the circular economy.

Founder

Reuse City [09/2024 – Current]

City: Berlin | **Country:** Germany

Reuse City is a studio dedicated to applied research, service design and technology development in the fields of circular economy, right to repair, and zero waste policy.

Freelance Consultant

[01/2023 – Current]

City: Berlin | **Country:** Germany

Developing independent research and projects such as:

- Semente - An interactive method to create and re-generate community-based initiatives (2022-). Funded by the University of Bristol.
- ALGO-Lab - Co-design lab about algorithmic discrimination and games in Brazil (2023). Partnership between GIG and the University of Bristol.
- On the Exactitude of Maps - Artwork and situated research on implications of geospatial data in contemporary society (2023). Part of the CODE program of Impakt (Utrecht), Transmediale (Berlin) and CPDP (Brussels).
- Scaling Distributed Manufacturing in the Global South. Commissioned by UK's Frontier Tech Hub (2023).
- Distributed Design Mentor Scheme (2023-).

Founder, Curator and Executive Producer

Tropixel [01/06/2013 – Current]

City: Ubatuba | **Country:** Brazil

I have organised 5 editions of Tropixel, each in a different format.

Festival and activity platform on arts, science, technology and society (Ubatuba, SP, Brazil).

Marie Curie Early Stage Researcher / PhD candidate

Northumbria University / Dundee University / Mozilla Foundation [27/07/2019 – 27/07/2022]

Country: United Kingdom

OpenDoTT was “a PhD programme to explore how to build a more open, secure, and trustworthy Internet of Things”. The project received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 Marie-Skłodowska-Curie research and innovation programme.

My research topic in the programme was “Smart Cities”. My thesis explores the theme “Waste Prevention and Generous Cities”.

Project manager, semente

Instituto Neos [01/05/2022 – 31/07/2022]

City: Ubatuba | **Country:** Brazil

Semente co-designed participatory methods to build community-based digital inclusion projects. Project funded by the University of Bristol.

Brazil team co-lead, Tales of Care and Repair

Instituto Cabra [01/08/2021 – 30/11/2021]

City: Casa Branca | **Country:** Brazil

Tales of Care and Repair promoted collaboration between England, India and Brazil about repair culture, collecting one thousand stories of repairs from those countries, organising local and international seminars and editing repair declarations for each context.

Project funded by the British Council’s Creative Commissions programme for COP-26.

Project owner, fonte.wiki

Instituto Neos [01/07/2021 – 30/11/2021]

City: Ubatuba | **Country:** Brazil

fonte.wiki is an open-source repository of open educational resources about digital policies in Brazil. Project funded by the Bristol Digital Futures Institute, in cooperation with the University of Bristol.

Project owner, ID21

Instituto Neos [01/03/2021 – 01/07/2021]

City: Ubatuba | Country: Brazil

ID21 interviewed leaders of Brazilian digital inclusion projects and elaborated a report on how to navigate their current concerns and possibilities.

Project funded by the University of Bristol's Impact Acceleration Account, in cooperation with the University of Bristol.

Consultant, Transversalidade da Memória

Instituto Itaú Cultural [01/03/2017 – 31/10/2019]

City: São Paulo | Country: Brazil

Co-creation and implementation of Transversalidade da Memória, a programme promoting the digitisation of the department of Documentation and Archives of the Institute and creating a community of practice across organisations in Brazil.

User Community Manager, Subutai Platform

OptDyn, LLC [01/09/2017 – 30/06/2019]

City: New Castle, DE | Country: United States

Managing community engagement and open documentation for the open source software Subutai.

Head of Digital and Urban Cultures

Municipal Advisory Board on Public Policy for Culture [01/09/2015 – 01/10/2019]

City: Ubatuba | Country: Brazil

Served two terms as an elected member of the cultural policy board.

Leader of the Working Group responsible for Ubatuba Municipality's 10-year Cultural Policy Plan.

Founder

ninho co-working space [01/04/2014 – 30/06/2019]

City: Ubatuba | Country: Brazil

ninho co-working space and center of science and culture.

Founder

UbaLab [01/02/2010 – 30/06/2019]

City: Ubatuba | Country: Brazil

Head of UbaLab Experimental Digital Culture Lab.

Consultancy, educational programmes, experimental initiatives, community-building.

Co-curator – AEI (Electronic Indigenous Art)

Associação Thydewá [01/08/2018 – 31/10/2018]

City: Olivença | Country: Brazil

Artistic residence programme pairing electronic artists and indigenous communities in north-east Brazil.

Research Assistant, Tainacan

MediaLab Goiânia, Universidade de Goiás [15/01/2018 – 10/04/2018]

City: Goiânia | Country: Brazil

Research topic: Tainacan – free / open source software for digital archives.

Research Assistant, Ciência Aberta Ubatuba

IBICT [01/03/2015 – 17/03/2017]

City: Rio de Janeiro | Country: Brazil

Participatory Action Research project investigating Open and Collaborative Science and Development.
Coordinating activities developed in Ubatuba, SP, Brazil.
Project funded by OCSDNet / IDRC | CRDI (Canada).

Junior Fellow, DCRL (Digital Cultures Research Lab)

Leuphana University [01/10/2016 – 05/11/2016]

City: Lüneburg | Country: Germany

Research topic: Design and Repair.

Researcher in Residence, (s)lowtech

PiNG Association [01/09/2016 – 30/09/2016]

City: Nantes | Country: France

Atelier Partagé du Breil/ Plateforme C.
Research topic: Transformation of Matter / Repair and Reuse.

Consultant

Brazilian Culture Ministry

City: Brasília | Country: Brazil

Funded by the Brazilian Ministry of Culture and UNDP.
Commissioned reports about Policies for Experimental Digital Culture (2011) and Creative Experimental Arrangements on Digital Culture (2015).

Designer in Residence

Virginia Commonwealth University Qatar [01/12/2014 – 16/12/2014]

City: Doha | Country: Qatar

Working with 10 MFA Students to experiment with Repair Culture.

Part-time teacher, MIN

Escola Técnica Tancredo Neves [01/02/2014 – 31/07/2014]

City: Ubatuba | Country: Brazil

Teaching hardware and computer repair to 14-15 year olds.

Founder / Articulator

Bricolabs network [01/09/2006 – 01/06/2013]

Country: Brazil

Weaving an international community of makers, thinkers, researchers and activists around the idea of generic infrastructures, open source and change.

Commissioned writer, REDE//LABS

CCE/AECID (Spanish Cultural Center / International Cooperation and Development Agency) [01/01/2012 – 30/04/2012]

City: São Paulo | Country: Brazil

Series of articles and videos about experimental laboratories.

Artist in residence, OCA Digital

Thydewá [01/07/2012 – 31/07/2012]

City: Olivença | Country: Brazil

Workshops and experimentation with digital maps and first peoples communities.

Researcher

Inventta [08/2012 – 09/2012]

City: Campinas | Country: Brazil

Research on WEEE and potential solutions - part of a study commissioned by the Brazilian Ministry of Industry and Commerce.

Founder

MetaReciclagem [01/12/2002 – 01/12/2012]

City: São Paulo | Country: Brazil

A nationwide network of community-based laboratories for the refurbishment of discarded electronics. MetaReciclagem was supported by numerous agencies and organisations and received awards in Brazil and abroad.

Curator and executive producer, LabX

Festival CulturalDigital.Br [01/12/2011 – 15/12/2011]

City: Rio de Janeiro | Country: Brazil

Head of the experimental laboratory during the Festival, featuring 15 artists from 7 countries.

Articulator

Brazilian Culture Ministry [01/06/2003 – 30/04/2007]

City: Brasília | Country: Brazil

Leading roles in Articuladores, the group responsible for the concept and implementation of the Digital Culture strategy for the Cultura Viva / Pontos de Cultura programme, which deployed free and open source media production studios in hundreds of grassroots cultural centres from all regions of Brazil.

LANGUAGE SKILLS

Mother tongue(s): Portuguese

Other language(s):

English

LISTENING C2 READING C2 WRITING C1

SPOKEN PRODUCTION C1 SPOKEN INTERACTION C1

Spanish

LISTENING B2 READING C1 WRITING B1

SPOKEN PRODUCTION B1 SPOKEN INTERACTION B2

German

LISTENING B1 READING B2 WRITING B1

SPOKEN PRODUCTION B1 SPOKEN INTERACTION B1

Levels: A1 and A2: Basic user; B1 and B2: Independent user; C1 and C2: Proficient user

PUBLICATIONS

[2023]

Seeds of Digital Deforestation

Article on reflections and background of the semente project. Included as chapter of the book "Driving Design 2" published by the Distributed Design Platform.

[2023]

A Framework for Scaling Distributed Manufacturing in the Global South

This paper is the product of a collaboration between Manufacturing Change and the Frontier Technologies Hub. The paper has been funded by UK Aid from the UK government as part of the Frontier Technologies Program. It shares insights from Frontier Technologies pilots as well as findings from other studies

[2022]

Reuse Commons -a toolkit to weave generous cities

Proceedings of the Fab 17 Research Papers Stream.

Over the last decades, there have been significant improvements in waste management in contemporary cities - notably technology, methods and policies to improve the collection and recycling of materials. However, the industrial practice of recycling - transforming objects back into material for manufacturing - equates at least in part to cutting short the lifetime of things that may still have value. In addition, it requires significant investment and has environmental impacts that should be factored in. Keeping still usable materials away from waste is therefore of utmost importance. Done the right way, it can also create local opportunities for social inclusion and economic development.

This paper summarises some of the findings and reflections of my ongoing PhD research focused not on waste management but rather waste prevention through collective practices of material reuse in cities and regions. It introduces the concept of generous cities as an alternative narrative refocusing the use of technologies and methods to address the excess of discarded materials in a time of global climate emergency and fragmented social bonds. Rather than increasing the speed of collecting discarded material to be sent out to recycling, incineration or landfilling, the research aims at reflecting on the potential value of said material and how to generate social and environmental benefits from it.

Generous cities are ones in which material generosity is incentivised and rewarded. Instead of objective efficiency, I intend to highlight the centrality of intentional care - even when performed anonymously - to promote sustainability, regenerate social bonds and enable economic inclusion for local agents. A good proportion of excess materials can generate value - and not only in the economic sense - when they are diverted from the waste stream and handled with skills and knowledge that are usually already present in cities.

To ensure that waste prevention is effectively developed within cities and regions, it must be incorporated into public policies. I describe some lessons from my experience with collaborative policy-making in the past. That context informs the path of my research on waste prevention and generous cities.

I approach that context using mixed participatory methods, direct observation and co-design. I have identified individual/household behaviour, mapped urban flows of second-hand materials, created and prototyped design concepts, and engaged with an international community of practitioners and researchers experienced with different aspects of material reuse.

DOI 10.5281/zenodo.7432153

[2021]

ID21 - briefing

Final report (in Portuguese) of the ID21 study on community-based digital inclusion in Brazil, funded by University of Bristol.

Link: https://archive.org/details/ID21_0-5/

[2019]

Open Science and Social Change: A Case Study in Brazil

Chapter of the book *Contextualizing Openness: Situating Open Science*, edited by Leslie Chan, Angela Okune, Rebecca Hillyer, Denisse Albornoz, and Alejandro Posada. The chapter is an outcome of the [Ciencia Aberta Ubatuba](#) project.

Abstract

The community of Ubatuba, in São Paulo, Brazil, is located in a dense rainforest region. A diverse mix of Indigenous communities, researchers, activists, and policy makers are interested in the area. Thus, it makes a compelling case study for examining the potential of Open and Collaborative Science (OCS) from a sustainable development perspective. This project draws on a reflective, action-based research approach to understanding the institutional, cultural, and political challenges involved in the adoption of an OCS approach for development in Ubatuba, Brazil, by interacting with a variety of different actors. The authors conclude that, on one hand, OCS does create new spaces and methods for traditionally marginalized groups to engage in scientific discussions and local problem-solving, mainly in controversial and conflict situations and as a condition for resilience and political struggle for alternative paths of development. On the other hand, the very idea of openness is under dispute: What (Open) Science and for whom?

[2018]

Beyond the Dichotomy between Natural and Knowledge Commons: Reflections on the IAD Framework from the Ubatuba Open Science Project

The paper presents a critical analysis of the possibilities and limits of the Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD) framework, proposed by Elinor Ostrom and researchers from Indiana School, specially addressing the mutual relations between natural and knowledge commons. It is based on the results of an action-research project on the role of open science (OS) in development, carried out in 2015–2017, as part of the Open and Collaborative Science in Development Network – OCSDNet. Focusing on the institutional, political, and governance issues affecting knowledge production and circulation, the project provided the opportunity to observe how these dynamics take place in a relatively small-scale (while heavily interconnected) context — the municipality of Ubatuba, on the North Coast of the State of São Paulo, Brazil. Our study produced rich empirical and theoretical material for analysis, offering possibilities for critical reflection as well as social learning relevant to other territorial and social contexts.

DOI 10.4000/proceedings.elpub.2018.28 hal-01816671

[2018]

Interview for Restart Podcast

Interview for the Restart Podcast. The conversation covered a number of subjects - from my background in the MetaReciclagem project to the social meaning of Gambiarra, as well as Brazilian politics now and fifteen years ago. I believe we talked for more than one hour, and they had to edit to fit the length of the podcast, and the results are here:

[2017]

Dos laboratórios experimentais à inovação cidadã | From experimental laboratories to citizen innovation

The image of a citizen lab has been used to describe a vast and varied field of initiatives which in fact share organizational characteristics, as well as repertoires, aspirations and methodologies. The same initiatives also maintain, nonetheless, considerable diversity, as a result of different processes of formation and consolidation. This article portrays the relatively recent history – of more than a decade – of Brazilian projects active in fields customarily associated with the scenario now usually belonging to citizen labs. To explore this panorama, I propose a brief compilation of previous work where I wrote about Brazilian digital culture, experimental labs and creative network arrangements, particularly from the point of view of public policies emanating from the Ministry of Culture. This historical overview suggests that a considerable part of the initiatives that now adopt the language of citizen innovation in Brazil has its roots in diverse, and older, sociocultural contexts. Recognizing and pointing out this

heritage contributes to the relevance and effectiveness of citizen innovation projects, countering the relative novelty of this nomenclature. The article also brings up some recommendations previously directed to the elaboration of public policies of stimulus to the field of experimental laboratories, but which may also contribute to build eventual support for citizen innovation

DOI 10.18617/liinc.v13i1.390

[2017]

Gambi-sand

Short description of my design residency in Doha, published in the 4th edition of Facta Magazine.

[2017]

Knowledge, skill and labor

This is the second of two texts, written in October 2016, resulting from my period as a resident researcher in Nantes, invited by [PiNG Association](#). It was published originally on [Medium](#). There is a french version [here](#). It is preceded by the other part titled "Knowledge, Skill and Labor", available [here](#). Both texts were based on my lecture in the event called *Ceci n'est pas un déchet*.

[2017]

Transformed worlds

This is the first of two texts, written in October 2016, resulting from my period as a resident researcher in Nantes, invited by [PiNG Association](#). It was published originally on [Medium](#). There is a french version [here](#). It is followed by the other part titled "Knowledge, Skill and Labor", available [here](#). Both texts were based on my lecture in the event called *Ceci n'est pas un déchet*.

Write here the description...

[2016]

Reconhecimento e superação da exploração capitalista em redes criativas de colaboração e produção | Recognizing and overcoming capitalist exploitation in creative networks of collaboration and production

Industrialism as a dehumanizing scourge has been seen since the early twentieth century (if not before) as something to be overcome. The road to overcome the mechanical coldness of the machines of iron, explosion, smoke and strength, fueled by alienating work, has been touted as a "return" to the organic, to production systems that are seen as more flexible, more natural, made of meat, blood, warmth and lightness. The functioning model of biological life systems has subsidized the development of information and communication technologies and these systems have been used as examples to explain a certain "nature" of computer networks as self-organizing, evolutionary and emerging systems. This article aims to discuss the analogy of biological computing systems as developed by Tiziana Terranova, taken as the typical way of managing creative networks. We use ethnographic field research on digital laboratories and other collaborative production environments and add to that political reflections on economic relations of exploitation that happen in these environments. The technoutopian imaginary, which acts as a backdrop to these laboratories and other creative environments, says information technology can be used as tools to combat bureaucratization and alienation in society. However, this paper seeks to go beyond these images – questioning their origins and naturalized assumptions

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while claiming that resistance and reinvention are possible against the informational capitalism cyber matrix. We explore the possibility of an ambiguous relationship between attempts by capitalist management to control and extract value from horizontal and emerging spaces and the establishment of parallel and independent ways of life within capitalist society. Nowadays, information networks are being used as production machines with emergent and decentralized behavior, therefore creative. Can they be concurrently set up as spaces for life outside (and beyond) capitalism?

[2015]

Gambiarra: repair culture

This text was written after a residence in the VCUQ in Doha, Qatar. Previous versions were published in my old (now archived) [blog](#) and Makery (in [English](#) and translated to [French](#)). Some months later it was slightly improved by the editors of Tvergastein and [included in its sixth edition](#). More about the two weeks I spent in Doha can be read in [this microtext for Facta magazine](#) or [this blog post](#) (both in Portuguese); and seen in [this picture album](#). There is also an unfinished book about our field trip and the Salleh Lab that I hope to finish someday in the future.

[2009]

E Culture

Report on digital culture in Brazil, co-authored with Bronac Ferran.

Locating any art form within a geographical or national border is a challenging task. In the case of digital culture/new media art it is particularly paradoxical to define or confine artists or arts organisations who may be working in virtual and networked ways by physical location. However, paradoxes are often healthy things and certainly, in the case of Brazil, location and context (as well as recent political history) have played an enormous part in determining the specifics of what we will call digital culture. How might therefore we characterize this practice within Brazil in order to begin to map it? What are the key characteristics we will find that may help to differentiate this work from other forms of expression both in Brazil or elsewhere?

[2009]

Notes from the Field: E-waste in Brasil-Lixo Eletrônico and MetaReciclagem

As probably every other country in the world, in recent years Brazil has seen an immense increase in the production and consumption of electro-electronics equipment, which generates, as expected, an equally large amount of e-waste. However, there is a general lack of information about health and environmental issues among actors involved with the e-waste cycle, and very limited public discussion about the topic. Also, proper legislation to regulate the destination of all this material does not yet exist. The National Policy on Solid Residuals, which has been discussed in the Brazilian Congress since 1991, had shown signs of including e-waste management. But the responsible working group in the Chamber of Deputies has recently decided to make an amendment to its 33rd article, dealing with the regulation of reverse logistics (take-back) and mandatory recycling of special waste, and no longer considering electronic equipment as such. In response to that, the collective Lixo Eletrônico decided to publish a manifesto and open an online petition drawing attention to the change in the bill. The article offers an overview of the situation and the issues involved and explains the action that is being carried out by the Lixo Eletrônico Collective, presenting the first outcomes and next steps.

ISSN 1614-1687

[2009]

Gambiarra: tactical creativity

Chapter co-authored with Hernani Dimantas and published in the book *Paralelo: unfolding narratives* gathering contributions of the [Paralelo](#) conference (Sao Paulo, 2009).

[2005]

Brazil and the FLOSS process

This paper, more than presenting a case study, introduces the context in which digital and electronic culture, and the ideology that surrounds these cultures in Brazil, were able to influence the programs of the Brazilian Ministry of Culture. We will present the story of a project named Pontos de Cultura (cultural hotspots). We will describe how this project aims to diffuse a collaborative and free thinking/production ideology.

NETWORKS AND MEMBERSHIPS

[01/06/2013 – Current] Ubatuba, Brazil

Tropixel Network

Founding member

[29/06/2022 – Current] Berlin

Global Innovation Gathering

Member

[12/2023 – Current] Berlin

Circular Berlin

Member

AWARDS

[2014]

Prêmio Pontos de Mídia Livre - Ministério da Cultura do Brasil

Project: Gaivota 2.0 online community radio

[2010]

Prêmio Cultura Digital - Ministério da Cultura do Brasil

Project: UbaLab - experimental digital culture lab

[2010]

Prêmio Mídia Livre - Ministério da Cultura do Brasil

Project: Mutirão da Gambiarra editorial collective

[2009]

Prêmio Cultura Digital - Ministério da Cultura do Brasil

Project: Rede MetaReciclagem

[2006]

Prix Ars Electronica - Honorary Mention

Project: Rede MetaReciclagem

[2005]

APC Betinho Prize - Honorary Mention

Project: Rede MetaReciclagem

DIGITAL SKILLS

Digital Skills - Test Results



Information and data literacy

ADVANCED Level 6 / 6



Communication and collaboration

ADVANCED Level 6 / 6



Digital content creation

ADVANCED Level 6 / 6



Safety

ADVANCED Level 6 / 6



Problem solving

ADVANCED Level 6 / 6

Results from [self-assessment](#) based on [The Digital Competence Framework 2.1](#)