**The Lab Manual Card Game**

The Lab Manual is the *how* of Re:Enlightenment. It provides a set of guidelines, or prompts, to help marshal the resources of the Re:Enlightenment project towards addressing the problems that members seek to explore.

The Lab Manual offers guidance towards operating in a Re:Enlightenment mode, but in a way that encourages flexibility and exploration rather than conformity to a set of rules. It does not offer a linear formula to be applied universally; instead, it offers a collection of practices, platforms, tools, and concepts that, when applied together, bring the resources of Re:Enlightenment to bear on any given problem.

The Manual is deliberately designed to be open-ended. Not only is the practitioner responsible for determining the best configuration of the five types of resources we’ve created (touchstones, platforms, workshops, tools and protocols) to bring to bear on a given problem (usually through a process of experimentation), but there is room and flexibility to continually add new resources as our practices evolve and expand into new intellectual and social spaces.

By designing the Lab Manual as a card game, our goal is to encourage this exploration. As practitioners “play” with the cards (and important category of Enlightenment experience), they gain a deeper understanding of the multi-faceted nature of our resources, as well as the processes of experimentation by which they can be put into practice. By allowing chance to play a role in the game, the Lab Manual encourages creative and flexible thinking about the relationship between our resources, our practices, and our problems.

The cards, and the resources that they represent, encourage the player/practitioner to come to their own interpretation of Re:Enlightenment thinking and how it may be applied to their problem. The Manual encourages an interpretive interaction between the practices and resources of Re:Enlightenment and their use in knowledge creation.

**How To Play**

The player(s) select a problem to be explored using the resources of Re:Enlightenment as defined by the cards

The dealer will deal the player(s) 5 cards, one from each suit to be applied to the selected problem: 1 touchstone, 1 platform, 1 workshop, 1 tool and 1 protocol

If, after debating, the player decides that the problem is intractable to the cards at hand, they may return up to three of their cards and be dealt replacements from the suits that they trade in. **The touchstone card may NOT be exchanged.**

The player then works to apply the final cards to their problem. The cards may be arranged in any order, or any configuration. It is up to the player to determine the chronology of how the different resources are applied (if such a chronology exists).

The player then reports back on the configuration of the cards that they adopted and how they interpreted those cards to help them analyze their problem and create knowledge and/or explanations pertaining to it.

**Hints on Playing**

The cards are physical objects: manipulate them into different orders and arrangements to best address the problem you seek to analyze.

Most cards should be applicable to most problems: think through the full potential of hand you are dealt rather than simply exchanging the maximum number of cards.

The use of each suit described here is merely a suggestion: you should be creative about how each can be applied differently depending on the problem and the other cards in your hand.

Think in terms of new combinations of resources that can help to create new knowledge or new explanations in the context of your problem. This is the goal or Re:Enlightenment.

Play thoughtfully but quickly. The application of Re:Enlightenment resources is an interactive process and the more problems that you explore with it, the more their compatibility with Re:Enlightenment thinking comes into focus.

**The Suits**

Re: **TOUCHSTONES—Start Here**

When in doubt—a good place for any knowledge venture to begin—it helps to have touchstones to set an initial path.   Re:Enlightenment set three based on its focus on the Enlightenment of the 18 th century.  But each of those touchstones can also be generalized for use with other topics and purposes.

RE: **PLATFORMING—Choose your platform**

Knowledge always runs on a platform, the architecture of which is both ideational *and* physical—it supports both institutions and practices as they connect different kinds and sites of knowledge. The connections that are established, enabled, or disabled by the operating platform delimit what can be known and identified as knowable. The Project has developed a vocabulary for describing, exploring, and changing platforms: design, stuckness, dedisciplinarity, exchange. Following McLuhan and Bowker, Re:Enlightenment highlights the consequences of classification—how platforms separate and connect things.   And it imagines the future of Enlightenment as a change in platform.

RE:**WORKSHOPS—Site your knowledge on its platform**

Knowledge is not just of different kinds, but is also the product of the manifold nodes and clusters of sites in which we make it. We call those sites “workshops,” and by describing what’s in them and how they work we hope to open those sites to others.   Bring your problem and get to work. Think of it as renting an intellectual space configured and supplied in a particular way. By describing them and sharing them we work toward a primary aim of the Re:Enlightenment Project: to model and test different modes of knowledge-making in order to arrive at new ways forward.

RE: **TOOLS—Use the tools**

Tools are any means we use to get knowledge work done.  They can be mental constructs or physical objects.   And their functions might vary depending on the workshop in which they are employed and the other tools with which they are deployed.

RE: **PROTOCOLS—Follow the protocols**

In general protocols are enabling constraints—they enable one connection or way forward by disabling others.   Re:Enlightenment, however, has given protocols a particular twist.   They are, for the Project, entries in a conceptual vocabulary intended to facilitate the creation and refinement of new knowledge.   Each term that enters that vocabulary is collectively written up in a specific way: a short paragraph of accessible prose that explains, without external references, how to use that concept to make knowledge.   They are chosen and designed to conform to that genre, making them modular—that is, easily combined and reshuffled to help construct new explanations.