

Please reference as:

Ravenscroft, A., Edmonds, C., Atwell, G., Hughes, J., Steiglitz, D., Blagbrough, D., Dellow, J., Hassan, E Murphy. A (2013). RadioActive: Inclusive Informal Learning through Internet Radio and Social Media, from the proceedings of British Educational Research (BERA) Conference 2013, 3-5 September, University of Sussex, UK

## ***RadioActive: Inclusive Informal Learning through Internet Radio and Social Media***

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*Paper Presented at BERA Conference, University of Sussex, UK, 2013*

Addressing how disenfranchised young people can be included and engaged within relevant work-related vocational learning paths is one of the key challenges within the UK and across the globe. Weakening social and economic conditions linked to cut-backs in education is arguably producing a 'lost generation' of young people who are excluded from education and training, particularly within the UK and Europe. The challenge of including, engaging and educating these marginalised young people, in innovative and low-cost ways, so that they can become active and engaged citizens, who contribute to legitimate economies, is a substantive problem linked to research priorities within the UK and EU.

Our RadioActive initiative addresses these challenges directly, through two related Community Action Research projects, one focussed in London and the UK (RadioActive UK, funded by Nominet Trust), and the other focussed on the broader European landscape (RadioActive EU, funded by the EU Lifelong Learning Programme). Collectively, these projects provide a broad international application of internet radio for inclusion, informal learning and employability.

The project is implementing a radical approach to conceptualising, designing and developing internet radio and social media for informal learning within 'lived communities'. It embodies the key pedagogical ideas of Paulo Freire (1970) and his notion of transformational (or emancipatory) learning through lived experience. This is achieved in the UK context through embedding the radio and content production within the existing practices of established youth organisations. The internet radio is used to catalyse, connect and communicate developmental practices within these organisations, leading to rich personal and organisational learning, change and development. In particular, exploring rich and varied personal and community identities, and promoting their articulation, expression and positive transformation, are pivotal to RadioActive. It also embodies a new approach to social media design - that is conceived as an intervention in existing digital, and mixed-reality, cultures. Hence, the application of our approach captures, organises and legitimises the digital practices, content production and critical and creative potential of disenfranchised young people to provide a new and original community voice. This voice combines the intimacy, relevance and 'touchability' of local radio with the crowd sourcing power of social media.

This talk will present: our original rationale and pedagogical approach; the new learning design methodology linked to the resulting RadioActive platform; some exemplar broadcasts and content; and, an evaluation of the degree to which RadioActive has led to personal and community learning and development within participating youth organisations.