A week long pop-up exhibit of Design Innovation student work done in the Outer Hebrides from the Glasgow School of Art. Over the course of a week, the Institute of Design Innovation shared the collaborative work done between design students and the island communities during the spring 2016. The differing projects look at the unique opportunities present in the islands and innovate upon preferable futures for everyone.

Storywave is a collaborative digital platform for reimagining Hebridean futures, inspired by the ocean as the primary way by which people and knowledge used to circulate. Many young people around the world have a connection to Hebridean culture. Storywave lets them leap over geographical distance to open up undiscovered opportunities together with people on the islands. Together, Storywave users create a rich ocean of tales where stories are shown as increasingly blurry white dots the further in the future they lie.

The design of the exhibit was setup to be compact, portable freestanding and slotted together to create the structure. The panels are easily assembled and disassembled placed wherever it was required. More importantly the imagery is removable and therefore the panels are a sustainable and re-usable way of presenting our work.

Co-cheangal is an exploration of women in business in the indigenous craft industries on the Isle of Lewis. It is based upon a rationale that includes the importance of recognising the changing roles and responsibilities of women running their own craft businesses on the island today. The aim was to look at ways in which a collaborative framework could be developed to aid the sustainability of craft businesses. The outcome of our project is Link, a business support and mentoring service aimed at enabling the sustainability of craft businesses on the island. It provides the opportunity for women to share their own journeys regarding setting up and running a business and share their own skills through mentoring others.

Feedback from the community members ranged from positive work saying that there was a need for local youth spaces that were not planned or overtly observed, or that connecting the stories of Hebridean life is important to the diaspora around the world. More so, a desire for sharing the needs of the distributed communities was a way to move forward with the projects.

There was more critical feedback in the way that distributing resources across the isles. It was mentioned that working with the current cultural process of island life would better suit the way that projects move forward.

This project attempted to learn from the community values and problems of the crofting practice, and went on to explore how this learning can be used to design a comprehensive, inclusive, transparent and accountable system of consulting and decision making for the Hebrides. Researching on crofting practice helped us to understand the structure and functioning mechanisms of the communities in the Hebridean islands. It also led us to believe that “consulting and decision making” might be a potential area of intervention where these values can be used as guidelines.

BikeHub would provide teenagers with a maker space where they can learn, share and acquire DIY skills. Working together in the space, teenagers would co-design six bike hubs to be placed around the island. Once the bike hubs are created, they would have a positive visible presence in the environment, contributing to a new identity for Barra. Ultimately, the project aims to give ownership to teenagers to run and choose the function of the different bike hubs as a place for community-based sharing and collaborative projects.
What is Design for Island Life?

Over the course of a week, the institute of design innovation shared the collaborative work done between design students and the island communities during the spring 2016. The differing projects look at the unique opportunities present in the islands and innovate upon preferable futures for everyone.

This road map shares the reflections of the week’s trip as well as the feedback received from the communities.

Design of the Exhibit

The design of the exhibit was setup to be compact, portable and most importantly be able to fit in the boot of a car. Inspired by Eames cards, this plywood ‘totem’ display is freestanding and slotted together to create the structure. The panels are easily assembled and disassembled placed wherever it was required. More importantly the imagery is removable and therefore the panels are a sustainable and re-usable way of presenting our work.

Feedback from the Exhibit

Feedback from the community members ranged from positive work saying, that there was a need for local youth spaces that were not planned or overtly observed, or that connecting the stories of Hebridean life is important to the diaspora around the world. More so, a desire for sharing the needs of the distributed communities was a way to move forward with the projects.

There was more critical feedback in the way that these projects don’t necessarily address the real need of distributing resources across the isles. It was mentioned that working with the current cultural process of island life would better suit the way that projects move forward.

A week long pop-up exhibit of Design Innovation student work done in the Outer Hebrides from the Glasgow School Art.
In Spring 2016, the Masters of Design Innovation students were tasked to work with communities across the Outer Hebrides after their two week long ‘Winter School’ where they met local island members who talked about life on the islands.

Over the following twelve weeks these students would develop a series of island projects that were co-created with communities and groups on the islands, including: Barra Youth Cafe, Storas Uibhist, Taigh Chearsabhagh, and An Lanntair.

Four projects were selected to showcase the diversity of solutions to the communities that would become the travelling pop-up exhibit, these included: Storywave, Bike Hub, Co-Cheangal, and Decision Making.

The aim would be to share the work that the students had done, as well as, to receive feedback from the communities. Once the projects were selected, four locations were chosen to ‘popup’: Stornoway, Lochmaddy, Kildonan, and Castlebay.

**Project 1: Storywave**

Storywave is a collaborative digital platform for reimagining Hebridean futures, inspired by the ocean as the primary way by which people and knowledge used to circulate.

**Project 2: Co-Cheangal**

Co-Cheangal is an exploration of women in business in the indigenous craft industries on the Isle of Lewis. It is based upon a rationale that includes the importance of recognising the changing roles and responsibilities of women running their own craft businesses on the island today.

**Project 3: Decision Making**

This project attempted to learn from the community values and problems of the crofting practice, and went on to explore how to design a comprehensive, inclusive, transparent and accountable system of consulting and decision making for the Hebrides.

**Project 4: Bike Hub**

Bike Hub would provide teenagers with a maker space where they can learn, share and acquire DIY skills. Working together in the space, teenagers would co-design six bike hubs to be placed around the island.