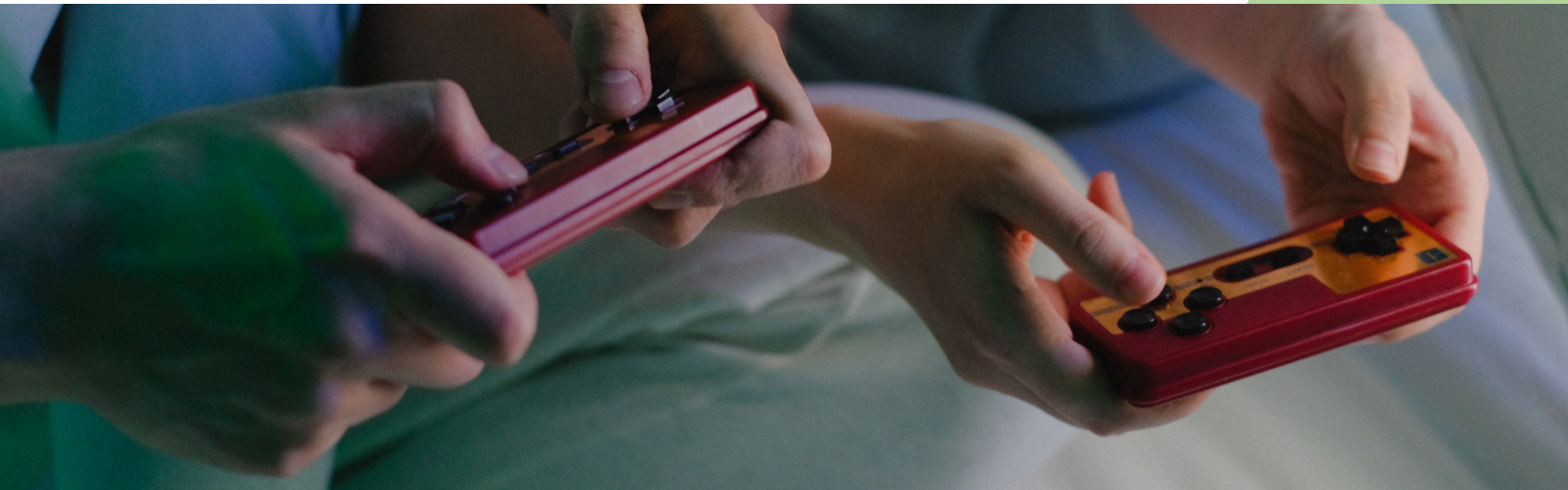


# INSTANT REPLAY

*A Celebration of Interdisciplinary Research*

SPRING 2024



Spring term always happens to be one of our busiest terms of the year. This term, we onboarded 23 new members, many of whom were graduate research assistants and undergraduate research interns working with Dr. Randy Harris' Rhetoricon team and Dr. Ville Mäkelä's ongoing virtual reality (VR) studies. We're always happy to be a part of a students' experience no matter what stage they are at in their research journey or how long they are with us!

This Instant Replay offers an in-depth look at the history of CHI PLAY, featuring Dr. Lennart Nacke as one of the founding members (see pages 2-8); a breakdown of the many conferences our members attended and presented at this year, including CHI, CGSA, DIS, and RhetCanada (pages 16-19); which GI member projects have received federal funding from SSHRC and NSERC (page 12); and the latest updates about the GI Podcast (page 9).

Check out the latest updates, accomplishments, and achievements our members have worked towards this term!



## NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

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# ASPECTS OF PLAY IN ACADEMIA:

## The History of CHI PLAY and how to Nurture Interdisciplinary Scholarship



[Visiting graduate student Sukran Karaosmanoglu (left) at CHI PLAY 2023: Photo by Sukran]

If you were to ask any Games Institute (GI) member to generally state what their area of expertise is, almost a third would identify themselves as an “HCI researcher”. Human-computer interaction (HCI) is a multidisciplinary and intersectoral field where researchers investigate information technology design in various, intersectional ways. From improving the usability of interactive devices, understanding user behaviour, to broadly, and ubiquitously, understanding human experiences with technology, the field is constantly evolving and expanding the spectrum of what is considered “HCI research”.

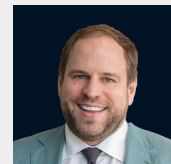
As such, large global conferences like the Association for Computing Machinery’s Special Interest Group on Computer-Human Interaction (otherwise known as ACM SIGCHI, and colloquial abbreviated to “CHI”), and its specialized edition CHI PLAY. CHI PLAY arose from increased interest in games and play related research, a frustration with the siloed and elitist nature of traditional academic conferences, and a desire to continue supporting mixed research in the realm of games and interaction design. It’s structured differently from other academic conferences,

supporting various research methodologies and conference norms, and has been associated as a safe space for publishing and experimenting with ideas that larger conferences, such as CHI, lack. It gives young scholars a venue to receive feedback from globally recognized researchers and supports the exploration of unconventional research crossovers, from humanities students studying how game mechanics enhance narrative storytelling, to engineers employing ethnographic research methods examining technology designed for small spaces. What started as a space to support novel, multidisciplinary approaches have slowly grown into an increasingly interdisciplinary ecosystem, welcoming scholarship at all levels and from different approaches.

CHI PLAY is heavily attended by GI members and is integral to the interdisciplinary nature of their work. In 2023, 20 GI members attended CHI PLAY hosted at UW’s Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business. Nine were part of the conference committee, and the entire conference was co-chaired by two GI faculty members. This edition of CHI PLAY became the largest presentation of GI members.

### ***The Genesis of CHI PLAY***

*“I was always interdisciplinary.”*



[Dr. Lennart Nacke]

The GI is referred to as an “Island of Misfits” for interdisciplinary researchers who don’t quite fit into prescribed faculty structures or disciplinary silos. One of the best examples of interdisciplinary research is **Dr. Lennart Nacke** (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business), a trained computer scientist approaching HCI from the perspective of a psychologist.

A pioneer of gamification research, Nacke now teaches HCI, user experience (UX), and user interaction (UI) design at the Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business.

During the early 2000s, games related research was either rooted in the humanities, with the study of narratives, and game mechanics or within computer science and programming. There was very little to do with merging those perspectives or design considerations. Nacke had tried to publish through CHI, the Digital Games Research Association (DiGRA), and even the Foundations of Digital Games (FDG) and had some success with papers but also realized very clear struggles. Different academic communities are accustomed to different norms for conference publishing, or what type of material should be accepted in the first place. For instance, in humanities research, it's not uncommon to only submit an abstract and workshop your idea at a conference, while more technical approaches such as computer science, fully publish papers via conference proceedings. Nacke had troubles with conference paper reviewers not understanding what physiological measures were, even if there were psychologists publishing in these spaces. Nacke had a vision to converge all these various conference foci into one inclusive, interdisciplinary conference.

"I wanted a better venue for my research, because back then, in the early 2000s, intense games user research was just getting started as a field. Gamification wasn't even a thing yet, and in the back of our heads, we were thinking of bringing games to the mainstream. Games were still pretty niche, to be honest. A lot of the research was in the humanities, and I wanted to find a more technical venue for games research."

Nacke started off by talking to all these games related conferences, including FDG, DiGRA, Future Play, and even Fun and Games. During this time, CHI created a Games and Play subcommittee proving that there was a growing need for a more HCI focused conference. He wanted the conference to be enormous, uniting all communities at once but realized the practicalities of an academic utopian vision were far too grand when starting off a conference. So, he focused on a smaller community—his own and became the driving force

behind the inaugural CHI PLAY. Linking with colleagues Regan Mandryk, T.C. Nicholas Graham, Floyd Mueller, and Peta Wyeth in a restaurant in Paris during the CHI 2013 conference, the group discussed the logistics and goals of establishing a reputable conference in digital gaming. After rounds of discussions, Nacke—alongside his now fellow co-founders—settled on the name "CHI PLAY" as to focus on both the "designer perspective (...) and the user researcher." The group planned the initial offering of CHI PLAY in 2014, hoping to locate it in Toronto, and submitted a proposal to SIGCHI to establish the specialized conference.



[GI members and CHI PLAY attendees at an infamous karaoke party with ft. Dr. Nacke: Photo by Dr. Lennart Nacke]

With the support of SIGCHI, the first CHI PLAY was hosted in 2014 at the Radisson Admiral Hotel in Toronto with roaring success. While budgeting for less than 100 participants, over 120 researchers attended. Nacke has since served as conference chair in 2014, and later in 2019, and has also chaired its steering committee from 2014-2018 and although the conference remains on the smaller, intimate end with an average of 150 participants attending yearly, Nacke continues working hard to keep its intimate size and make everyone, regardless of status, feel welcome. He and the other co-founders to this day remain easily accessible during the annual conference and make sure to chat and connect with newcomers. In fact, many of the students Nacke hires as interns to work at the GI, he met during CHI PLAY.

As more GI members became part of the UW HCI community, it became more common for watercooler and cubicle conversations about what GI members were submitting, which venues are appropriate for their work and how they can support each other with

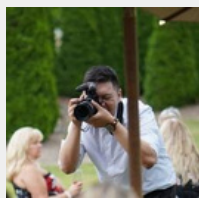


their research endeavours. Over the years CHI PLAY has introduced different research and conference tracks to accommodate game scholars of various disciplines via journal publishing and full papers, works-in-progress, workshops, panel discussions, and even student game design competitions. Nacke recalls when a humanities student was chatting with one of his computer science students, which then resulted in the humanities student submitting a game design paper to the conference; a very unusual activity for most humanities researchers.

Nacke explained that “when I was younger, I really felt intimidated and had a hard time making connections because I always felt like an outsider to the games studies community, and I never wanted anyone to feel like an outsider when it came to CHI PLAY.”

## Research Accessible with the Networkers

*“Can you draw me a fish?”*



[Joseph Tu]

Many CHI PLAY attendees were faced with this question during the conference’s opening gala. PhD student **Joseph Tu** (Systems Design Engineering), walked between attendees with an iPad, inviting them to draw a fish. While conference attendees were busy drawing, Tu would ask them about themselves and their research. Over the course of the night, Tu received 85 drawings from student, faculty, and industry participants ranging from goldfish crackers to a robot octopus.



[Joseph Tu presenting at CHI Play 2023, photo by Waterloo HCI]

Tu has been attending the CHI PLAY conference for some time—first, as a Master’s student. Now, his work oscillates between physiological measures, boardgames, and adaptive user interfaces. Tu views conferences as the perfect place to network and learn about potential job opportunities for after graduation, while also receiving expert feedback about his own studies, research projects, and dissertation work. As someone who describes themselves as having the “attention span of a goldfish” Tu is always looking for research that has a “cool factor.” When it came to networking and meeting new people at this year’s CHI PLAY, Tu came up with the icebreaker idea of drawing fish—and is now planning to turn the data collected into a research project about how to better approach in-person conference engagement.



[Alê Luz Lam]

While Tu’s approach was very casual and informal and related to his research, **Alê Luz Lam** (Management Science and Engineering) was one of the two Engagement co-Chairs who curated and formalized meaningful

engagement at this year’s conference. Luz Lam’s PhD research, in the Cheriton School of Computer Science, looks at positive implementation of mobile games for improvement of children’s eye health.

As the co-Chair looking to increase engagement and interaction for in-person and remote attendees in hybrid meeting models, Luz Lam believes it is “paramount that attendees get the opportunity of meeting other people, both for expanding their network and for getting to know the different academics who are part of the community.” She and her co-chair, Anke Reinschuessel, worked hard to make community engagement feel like in-person and remote attendees could mingle with each other and be part of the crowds. They jointly designed asynchronous sessions (which had the highest success rates for participation) and an interaction token system (in which people would receive a token for interacting). Participants could later cash in the tokens and receive stickers in exchange.



“Having serious research chats, collecting badges as the conference passes by, and playing games during coffee breaks are just a few of the experiences that made me go home inspired to contribute to this corner of academia as much as I can!”

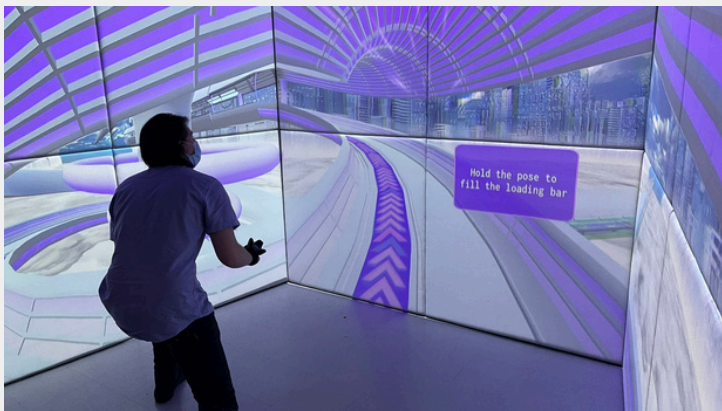
## ***Intergenerational Engagement with the Mentor and the Newcomer***

*“Why do people treat me differently?”*



[Dr. Cayley MacArthur]

**Dr. Cayley MacArthur** is an Assistant Professor in the Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business focusing on inclusive technology who, like Nacke, classifies herself as an HCI researcher. MacArthur has been attending CHI PLAY since she was a graduate student at the GI. Her first CHI PLAY was in Australia in 2018 which was “pretty hard to top” while this year’s conference was the first time she attended as a faculty member.



[A conference attendee using the Exercube to play an exergame, photo by Dr. Lennart Nacke]

As a student attendee, MacArthur appreciated the chance to interact with professors to make connections with people outside of her academic discipline and Waterloo network; something she now encourages her own students to do. However, since graduating, MacArthur noticed a change in how students approached and spoke to her—they were nervous. MacArthur sought to rectify this by participating in as many socials and engagement opportunities as possible to make herself approachable. She also took the opportunity of this year’s conference system of interaction tokens receiving numerous stickers trying to meet as many students as possible in her effort to make herself accessible and approachable.

MacArthur is also keen on encouraging her students and younger colleagues to attend panels that don’t necessarily align with their research. As an interdisciplinary scholar, who’s scholarly background transverses environmental studies, English language and literature, and engineering, MacArthur understands the value of cross-disciplinary collaboration, learning from others, and exposure to new ideas.



[Dr. Leah Zhang-Kennedy]

While attending CHI PLAY has become a routine for MacArthur, she’s also been encouraging other faculty members, like **Dr. Leah Zhang-Kennedy** to also begin attending. Zhang-Kennedy is an HCI researcher, and MacArthur’s colleague

from the Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business, focused on individual privacy during interactions with digital technologies. This was her first time attending CHI PLAY and she was surprised to find her research trajectory explored at the conference. She decided not only to attend, but also volunteer as a student mentor.

Her duties included meeting with graduate students, assisting in judging of the game design competition, offering encouragement to students in developing their own research and design skills. She was encouraging them to engage with different conference activities to network, find new colleagues, and understand the dynamics of the HCI community at large. Even though the growing interdisciplinary and intersectoral nature of the field might feel daunting for young scholars. “Everyone speaks a similar language through HCI.”

## ***Intersectoral Collaboration with the Chair and the Professional***



[Dr. Jennifer Whitson]

**Dr. Jennifer Whitson** (Sociology and Legal Studies) co-chaired this year’s CHI PLAY alongside fellow GI faculty member, **Dr. Jim Wallace** (School of Public Health Sciences). While Wallace considers himself an HCI researcher and is an active member of the GI’s HCI community, Whitson, does not.

Whitson had crossed paths before with HCI research, having attended the computer science-focused Future Play conference as a graduate student in social sciences. Whitson noticed during that time how the topics that games scholars in the humanities and social sciences engaged with were quite similar to what games researchers in computer science were examining using different methodologies: games affect, representation in games, and matters of privacy. Now, more than a decade later, Whitson's research looks at the games industry itself, including how companies function, what the barriers to entry are, and how education in games often fails.

Over the years, CHI PLAY has curated a strong sense of community, culture, and traditions. Attendees give standing ovations after every presentation and there is always at least one night of karaoke. For Whitson, it's these small moments that make the community a wonderful place to be part of, and as co-Chair, it was important for her to assist in maintaining that sense of community.



[Dr. Sebastian Cmentowski (left) presenting at CHI PLAY 2023, photo by Dr. Cmentowski]



[Dr. Stuart Hallifax]

During CHI PLAY, Whitson enjoyed the blend of academic and industry panels and presentation, viewing this as a valuable opportunity for academia and industry to learn from one another. It's one of the reasons why GI alumni who enter

the industry, such as **Dr. Stuart Hallifax** (A), continue to attend these conferences. Hallifax, a former summer intern for Nacke and – later – one of his post-doctoral fellows, working on gamification, education, and player preferences during his time at the GI.

His first CHI PLAY was in 2020, where he attended as a virtual participant, and having attended every year since, he still feels a part of the community, despite having exited the academia altogether. Hallifax now works at Ubisoft Montréal as a User Researcher specializing in player engagement and motivation. He sees excellent value in attending conferences like CHI PLAY, given that industry professionals, and those outside of academic institutions, are often the ones who put into practice the theories and methods developed by academics.

This year, Hallifax was invited to participate in the “Inside Industry: Games Makers Panel” which brought together designers, producers, and researchers from the industry to discuss how to mobilize the research produced by games scholars. As someone with experience in both worlds, Hallifax is of the mind that the games industry and academia can help each other in very dynamic ways. For instance, at Ubisoft, “if we do research or develop frameworks, we're not going to publish papers on it,” instead that work would be used for internal purposes, despite the fact that this research may have the potential to innovate active research in academia and avoid replicability. Meanwhile, if published academic frameworks were used by game developers in the industry, there should be a way to credit these academic researchers in video game credits.

## ***Assembling the Party and the Future of Inclusive, Interdisciplinary Research***

Nacke's vision of CHI PLAY being an open, welcoming, fun space has been fulfilled. In the future, the organizers plan to continue opening it up to more newcomers, hopefully getting more humanities and social science scholars involved. Above all else, Nacke says the most important thing is to avoid gatekeeping so that they are continually “making room for new voices” and nurturing the community. Nacke for instance, encourages all his students to be involved and volunteer not just for the experience, but so that they can share their diverse perspectives.

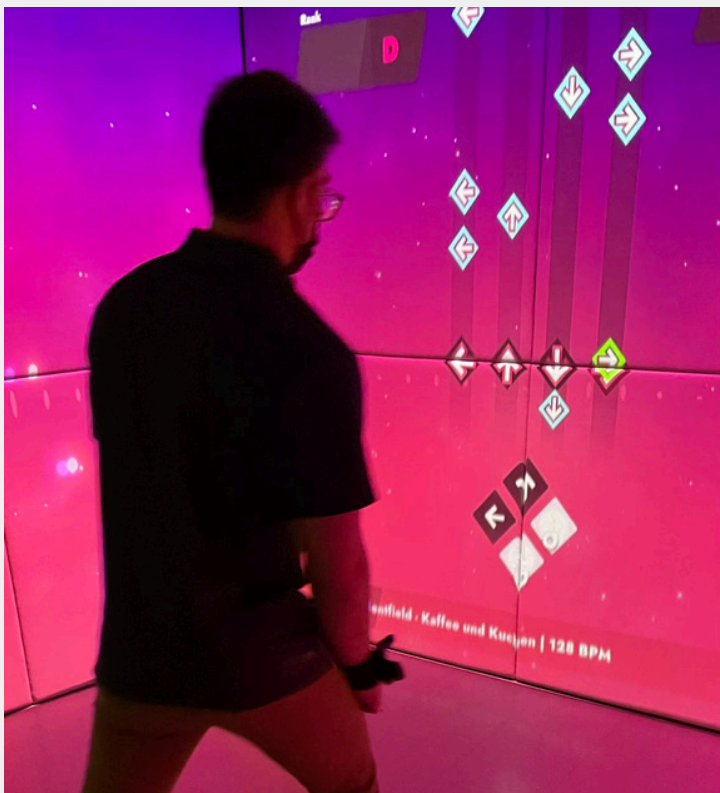




[CHI PLAY 2023 at Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business, photo by Dr. Lennart Nacke]

“I want my postdocs and grad students to do that work,” he stressed, “I don’t need to take up that space.”

Nacke is mindful that to encourage scholars beyond HCI proper into the fold, senior researchers need to be invited into the community to encourage their students to attend. Whitson is a great example of that. “For academic game work,” Whitson noted, “regardless of your discipline, CHI PLAY is—right now—the hub (...) of the largest collection of games related research.”



[A conference attendee using the Exercube to play an exergame, photo by Dr. Lennart Nacke]

From its visionary inception to its current success, CHI PLAY’s impact on interdisciplinary research, GI members, and the larger HCI community is impossible to overstate. It’s symbiotic relationship with the GI ecosystem allows for our own community to continue growing and thriving. It’s not uncommon to find GI students working very closely together as they run studies, write papers, and co-edit submissions while preparing for these conferences. Faculty often join them in solidarity, running writing sessions, encouraging students to practice their presentations in front of the group to receive feedback.

The yearly submission deadlines for CHI and CHI PLAY have even reconfigured how GI administrative staff structure their support during these periods of higher activity. The conferences’ impact is so great, that even the physical space of the Institute changes with the ebb and flow of conference seasons—morphing from a bright, vibrant, and boisterous space during submissions into eerie, quiet and calm when so members submit and rest. The importance of CHI and CHI PLAY has bled into GI structures and became an important aspect of the GI “lore”.

CHI PLAY provides junior interdisciplinary scholars an excellent experience of conference organizing, community creation, mentorship, networking as well as expanding their research trajectories and sharing their work. It’s a safe space to explore research creation, mixing methodologies, and sharing new ideas. At its core, it is not the research that made CHI PLAY what it is today, but the dedication to a safe, inclusive, and welcoming interdisciplinary community, dedicated to fostering new connections, that lead to its great success.



Congratulations to all GI members involved in organizing CHI PLAY 2023!

Organizers:

- **Alessandra Luz Lam** (Engagement co-Chair)
- **Ali Rizvi** (Local Arrangements Chair)
- **Dr. Daniel Harley** (Student Design Competition Chair)
- **Derrick Wang** (Interactivity and Play Chair)
- **Dr. Jen Whitson** (General co-Chair)
- **Dr. Jim Wallace** (General co-Chair)
- **Ken Jen Lee** (Student Volunteer Chair)
- **Dr. Pejman Mirza-Babaei** (Connections Chair)
- **Veen Wong** (Accessibility Chair)

Sessions:

- Anke Reinschlüssel, **Alessandra Luz Lam** | “Hybrid post-conference gaming session”
- Anke Reinschlüssel, **Alessandra Luz Lam** | “Hybrid pre-conference gaming session”
- Anke Reinschlüssel, **Alessandra Luz Lam** | “Interactivity & SGDC Streams”
- Anke Reinschlüssel, **Alessandra Luz Lam** | “Did R2 kill player 1?”

- **Cody Phillips, Sukran Karaosmanoglu (A)** “Papers 3 | Esports & Toxicity”
- **Derrick M. Wang**, Dennis Reidsama, Licinio Roque | “Interactivity Lightning Round”
- **Dr. Jennifer Whitson** “Banquet Keynote”
- **Dr. Jennifer Whiston** “Panel | Inside Industry: Game Marker’s Panel”
- **Dr. Jim Wallace, Dr. Jennifer Whitson**, Erik Harpstead, Beth Bonsignore, Julian Frommel, Anke Reinschlüssel, **Alessandra Luz Lam** | “Conference Opening”
- **Dr. Maximilian Altmeyer (A)**, Christos Mousas “Works-in-Progress Lightning Round”
- **Dr. Pejman Mirza-Babaei** “Panel | Educational Games Aren’t Bad, But They Need Attention!”
- **Dr. Pejman Mirza-Babaei** “Panel | The Role of Generative AI in Games Research”
- Scott Bateman, **Dr. Sebastien Cmentowski** “Papers 8 | Playing with Materials”
- Silvia Ruzanka and **Dr. Daniel Harley** “Student Game Design Competition Lightning Round”

For more information on the Inaugural CHI PLAY, check out the published conference proceedings [“Ten Years of CHI PLAY: A Panel on the Past, Present, and Future of the Conference”](#) featuring **Dr. Lennart Nacke**.



[Attendees at CHI PLAY 2014, held in Toronto, Canada, featuring Dr. Lennart Nacke]

GI Podcast co-hosts **Sid Heeg** (Sustainability Management) and **Toben Racicot** (English) return with four new episodes this term, sitting down with researchers from across the country and their experience with games. Catch the episodes wherever you listen to podcasts!

- [053: Non Playable Characters and Believable Emotion Design with Dr. Geneva Smith](#)
- [054: The Future of Recreational and Competitive Esports with Dr. Luke Potwarka and Greg Mittler](#)

## AC Atienza's Kickstarter Success: One-Hit Heroes



[AC Atienza]

On April 16, GI alumni, and full-time game designer at Wiggles 3D, **AC Atienza's** (Community Member) latest board game One-Hit Heroes quickly surpassed its Kickstarter goal of CA\$30,000 within an amazing 30 minutes. By May 16th at the end of the campaign, Wiggles 3D's Kickstarter reached a final total of CA\$296,467 with the support of 3465 backers.

One-Hit Heroes, a co-op fighting card game where players band together to defeat bosses with just 1 HP. After defeating the first boss, players unlock new card packs which behave as "episodes" introducing them to another chapter of the narrative while giving game upgrades to enhance their playing experience as well.

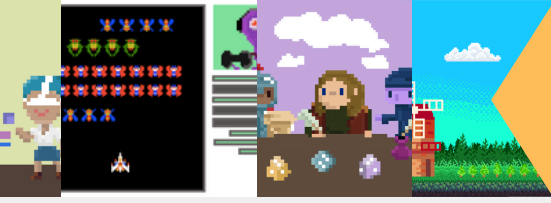
The game is Atienza's second successful Kickstarter campaign, following the success of *Captain's Gambit*, published by Cloudfall Interactive Studios, a company Atienza founded and works as the lead designer.

The GI congratulates Atienza on their highly successful campaign and looks forward to having copies around the GI! If you are interested in learning more or purchasing the game, please visit the [One-Hit Heroes Kickstarter](#) page. To learn more about designing board games, tune in to our [podcast episode featuring Atienza](#).



[One-Hit Heroes boardgame]

# GI Faculty Member Dr. John Muñoz Launches Body Interface Labs to Advance Physiological Integration in Digital Spaces



[Dr. John Muñoz]

Congratulations to GI faculty member, **Dr. John Muñoz** (Systems Design Engineering), on the start of his new company, the [Body Interface Labs | Wearable Data and Virtual Reality Solutions](#)! The company focuses on enhancing user experiences by integrating physiological measurements with digital spaces.

The collaborative environment at the GI has provided Dr. Muñoz with a valuable ecosystem and community, enabling him to navigate the uncertainties of starting a new business. Having unique qualifications and extensive experience consulting for startups and research institutes in the fields of games for health, biofeedback, neurotech, virtual reality, and digital therapeutics (e.g. [Alternova](#), [Emteq Labs](#), [Healium](#), [LooxidLabs](#), [Max Planck](#), [VR Vision](#), [InnovatioHealth](#)) and attending multiple industry-focused conferences (such as the [Games Developers Conference](#) and [I/ITSEC](#)), Dr. Muñoz shares:

“I noticed that the technology, methods, and tools I co-designed to conduct experiments in the lab, could be useful in many applications. Therefore, I decided to start Body Interface Labs as a company that creates products and provides consulting services for firms, entrepreneurs, and enthusiasts looking into incorporating physiological measurements and biofeedback technologies into games and simulations.”

Dr. Muñoz acknowledges the important role GI played in the establishment of Body Interface Labs, and his vision for the company is to lead innovation in integrating adaptive biofeedback into gaming and digital applications. Dr. Muñoz is actively seeking a co-founder with expertise in market analysis and business development to identify and capitalize on market needs and opportunities, driving the growth and success of Body Interface Labs.

The GI extends its best wishes to Dr. Muñoz for the continued success in his innovative endeavors!



[Dr. John Muñoz testing a device]



# GI Members partner with WISA to use AI for training pilots



[Dr. John Muñoz]



[Dr. Shi Cao]

GI members **Drs. John Muñoz** (Systems Design Engineering) and **Shi Cao** (Systems Design Engineering) partnered with the Waterloo Institute for Sustainable Aeronautics (WISA) to speak on the intersection of technology and human physiology at the Vital Pulse seminar taking place on June 27th, 2024. The topic “Advancing Pilot Training with Physiological Monitoring and Adaptive Simulation” aims to highlight the future of aviation, aircraft, and spacecraft training of Canadian pilots.

According to the Canadian Council for Aviation and Aerospace, Canada is facing a pilot shortage. This encouraged WISA members Drs. Elizabeth Irving, Ewa Niechwiej-Szwedo, John Muñoz, and Shi Cao to collaborate and display “how new technology can enhance pilot training, reduce environmental impact, and deepen our understanding of pilot skill development.” With the data collected from flight simulations, they train machine-learning algorithms to use artificial intelligence (AI) to evaluate, predict, and measure pilot performance.

To learn more, watch Drs. Cao and Muñoz in the panel [“Vital Pulse: Advancing Pilot Training with Physiological Monitoring and Adaptive Simulation, WISA.”](#) This panel featured experts from NASA Langley Research Center, Drs. Alan Pope and Chad Stephens, as well as Dr. Roxy Fournier from Schlegel-UW Research Institute for Aging (RIA).



## The Games Institute Podcast Featured on HigherEdPods

The Games Institute Podcast has been featured on the HigherEdPods platform, a directory for university associated podcast series from institutions like Harvard, Stanford, Zurich, MIT, and many, many more.

HigherEdPods brings together podcasts of similar content and fosters a community for higher education podcasters. Bringing the podcast into the directory expands the GI’s reach to new audiences further advancing conversations of about games and interactive immersive technologies, including individual research trajectories and interdisciplinary methods.

The podcast is currently hosted by GI members **Sid Heeg** (Sustainability Management) and **Toben Racicot** (English Language and Literature).

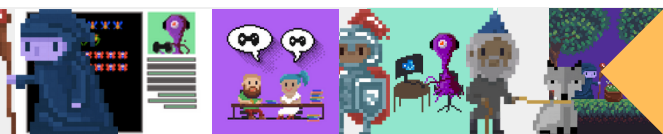
[See the GI Podcast in action on HigherEdPods!](#) And [check out the latest episode on all major podcast platforms.](#)

# GI Faculty Members are Awarded Over \$4 Million of Canadian Government Funding



Congratulations to the following GI faculty members who successfully secured over \$4 million in government grants for various interdisciplinary research projects!

- **Dr. Ben Thompson** (Optometry) was awarded \$250,000 for an NFRF entitled “From Eye Patches to Robots – Using Socially Interactive Technology to Improve Health Outcomes in Children with Amblyopia.” The length of this project is two years.
- **Dr. Cayley MacArthur** (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business) was awarded an NSERC Discovery Launch grant of \$12,500 as well as \$145,000 for an NSERC Discovery grant for her project called “Developing Inclusive Virtual Reality Technologies Using Human-Centered and Equitable Measures and Methodologies.” The length of this project is one year.
- **Dr. Daniel Vogel** (Cheriton School of Computer Science) received \$320,000 for his NSERC Discovery grant called “Developing Highly Skilled Dexterous Interactions.”
- **Dr. Lai-Tze Fan** (Sociology and Legal Studies), in collaboration with Project Director Dr. Marcello Vitali Rosati (Université de Montréal) received \$2.5 millions of SSHRC Partnership Grant for their project called “Revue3.0: Écrire, Transmettre, Découvrir”. The project aimed to run for seven years.
- **Dr. Mark Hancock’s** (Management Science and Engineering) NSERC Discovery grant project entitled “Immersive Interactive Technology for Collaborative Computing: Tightly Integrating Digital Technology with Physical Interaction.” was awarded \$275,000.
- **Dr. Randy Harris** (English Language and Literature) received an NSERC Discovery Horizon and \$371,580 of awarded funds over five years for the project titled “Rhetorical figures for human-like inductive biased language models.”
- **Drs. Shana MacDonald** (Communication Arts) and **Brianna Wiens** (English Language and Literature) have been awarded a SSHRC Partnership Development Grant entitled “Developing Scholarly Digital Feminist Networks in Canada: Resources, Toolkits, and Outreach,.” The project will run for three years and receive \$200,000 in funding.
- **Dr. Shi Cao** (Systems Design Engineering) was awarded \$215,000 for his NSERC Discovery Gran project titled “Pilot performance assessment using both data-driven and theory-driven computational models.”

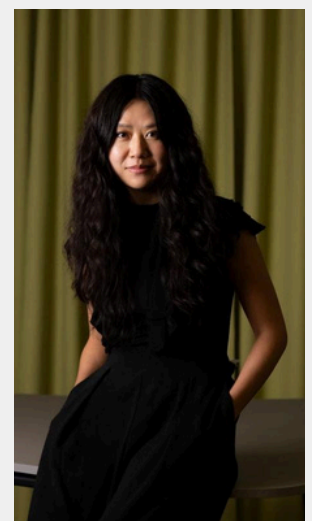


## Dr. Lai-Tze's U&AI Lab

**Dr. Lai-Tze Fan** (Sociology and Legal Studies) announced her new U&AI Lab funded by the Canadian Foundation for Innovation! The purpose of Dr. Fan’s work and the creation of the lab will be to examine the systemic oppression integrated into modern AI technology. The U&AI Lab will focus on three case studies in AI using frameworks from social sciences and humanities with STEM research in FATE (fairness, accountability, transparency, ethics):

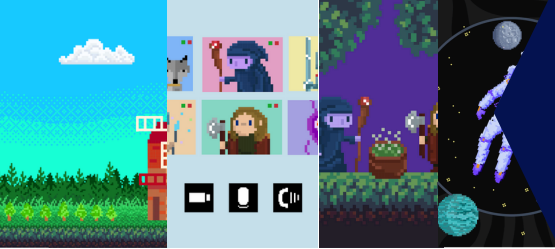
1. generative textual and language-based AI,
2. facial recognition technologies, and
3. AI hardware and the environment.

Dr. Fan also hopes to write a novel that can help others disrupt inequitable AI at critical stages of development and prevent unfair and unethical impacts to end users.



[Dr. Lai-Tze Fan]

The GI congratulates Dr. Fan on her new project and looks forward to future updates!



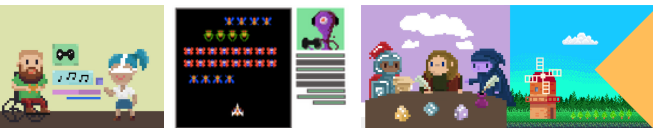
## Dr. Geneva Smith Joins the GI as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow as Part of the Provost's Program for Interdisciplinary Postdoctoral Scholars

On July 2nd, the GI welcomed its latest postdoctoral fellow **Dr. Geneva Smith**. Dr. Smith, who is also an instructor of Game Design in Communication Arts and will be co-supervised by **Drs. Lennart Nacke** (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business) and **Mark Hancock** (Management Science and Engineering). As a graduate student supervised by Dr. Jacques Carette at McMaster University, Dr. Smith was supported by the GI-led [Interactive and Multi-Modal Experience Research Syndicate \(IMMERSe network\)](#). Dr. Smith has previously [appeared as a guest on the GI Podcast](#), which highlights her doctoral research and experience as a member of [McMaster University's G-SCALE Lab](#), a partner institute to the GI.



[Dr. Geneva Smith]

Dr. Smith's research proposal for the position is funded by the [Provost's Program for Interdisciplinary Postdoctoral Scholars](#) for a period of two years. Entitled "Stories for Social Change Towards Methods for Interactive Digital Narrative Development," Dr. Smith will be studying how interactive digital narratives (IDN) can promote social change. Dr. Smith is exploring how IDNs can increase understanding of complex social and societal issues like climate change, public health challenges, and humanitarian crises. We look forward to working with Dr. Smith and seeing this research develop!



## GI Featured in UWaterloo News Article

On May 31st, the GI was featured in the article "[Cultivating inclusion through games and gaming](#)" that spoke on how the GI cultivates a diverse community of artists, engineers, writers and scientists to collaborate on different projects together. GI members **Dr. Daria Ho** (History), **Sid Heeg** (Sustainability Management), and **Arden Song** (Management Science and Engineering) provided their experiences at the GI and what brought them to this space.

## Feminist Think Tank launches an open access journal



GI Faculty members, **Drs. Brianna Wiens** (English Language and Literature) and **Shana MacDonald** (Communication Arts), have launched [\(UN\)Disturbed: A Journal of Feminist Voices](#), an open access, middle-state publication with the purpose of spreading awareness on contemporary feminism and discussions on gender and gender identity, power, oppression, intersectionality, and activism in all aspects of contemporary culture.





[Dr. Brianna Wiens]



[Dr. Shana MacDonald]

As Drs. Wiens and Dr. MacDonald describe it, “this journal seeks to offer space for both emerging and established scholars to reflect on, analyze, create, critique, and think through the significances of our commitments to feminist activism.” Since this journal is a middle-state publication that is open access, it provides an excellent venue for feminist-orientated works to ease into the world of academic publishing.

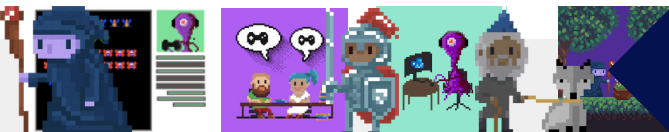
The following GI members contributed to the first edition:

- Jay Smith (A)
- Kate Bradley (A)
- Navneet Kaur (A)
- Rency Luan (English Language and Literature)
- Sakeenah Ashique (A)
- Thuvaraka Mahenthiran (A)

This journal comes out of Drs. Wiens and MacDonald’s Feminist Think Tank, a research collective based at the GI, focusing on intersectional feminist design. The Think Tank facilitates critical reading, brainstorming sessions, research reviews, and research-creation opportunities.

The launch of **(UN)Disturbed: A Journal of Feminist Voices** is a crucial initiative that contributes to and elevates the progress of contemporary culture and builds upon Dr. Wiens’ and MacDonald’s existing work of providing young feminist scholars with tools to combat patriarchal and oppressive structures.

For instance, their project “Exploring Digital Feminist Futures: Creating Media Tools and Interventions for the Resistance,” has received funding through the GI’s Seed Program run by GI, allowing the advancement of feminist research and extending equity and diversity work both at GI and university wide.



## Dr. Emma Vossen Interviewed on the Continuing Studies Podcast Series

On August 8th, **Dr. Emma Vossen** (Knowledge Mobilization and Research Impact Officer) was featured on the Continuing Studies Podcast series in the episode entitled “Game On: How the Games Institute Uses Podcasting to Expand Research and Diversity.”

The podcast introduced Dr. Vossen’s vital role within the GI’s ecosystem as a Knowledge Mobilization and Research Impact Officer and how she translates knowledge produced by GI members to be understood by the general public. The conversation pivoted to the impact of the GI itself and its mission in providing a space and network for interdisciplinary researchers working in the areas of games and immersive, interactive technologies.

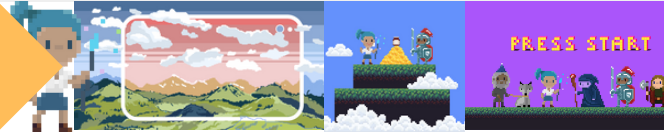
An important part of Dr. Vossen’s role within knowledge mobilization and translation has been identifying the right tools and methods to use when delivering academic research to different audiences. She touched upon her role as an Editor in Chief of [First Person Scholar](#) during her time as a graduate student, and the importance of open access journals. She used the knowledge gained through that experience when managing the [GI Podcast](#) as another avenue to demonstrate research impact that is accessible to external audiences.



[Dr. Emma Vossen]

[The GI Podcast](#) has since been included in the [HigherEdPods](#) platform, which brings together podcasts produced by post-secondary institutions. The GI Podcast is available on all major streaming platforms and features many researchers from the GI including graduate students, established scholars and faculty; and more recently, external researchers interested in the field of games and immersive, interactive technologies.

## GI Faculty Members Launch New Podcast Series



This past summer, **Drs. Pejman Mirza-Babaei** (Ontario Tech University) and **Jennifer Whitson** (Sociology and Legal Studies) launched *the [Changing Gamedev Life](#)*, a podcast dedicated to showcasing stories and experiences of people working within the games industry. The podcast also provides an in-depth look into the joys and challenges of working in industry to increase listeners’ awareness on how to approach similar situations in their own life.

*Changing Gamedev Life* has already featured GI alumni and previous GI collaborators including community manager for Kitfox Games, **Alexandra Orlando** (A), a former PhD candidate and First-Person Scholar Editor-in-Chief; and *Dr. Johanna Weststar*, who was a speaker at the [“Building Equitable and Sustainable Game Development Education”](#) workshop which was part of the ADE Speaker Series in the following episodes:

- [Episode 3: Dr. Johanna Weststar on the Importance of Unionization](#)
- [Episode 6: Alexandra Orlando on Fostering Community in Gamedev](#)

Learn more about the *Changing GameDev Life* podcast by [checking out their Substack](#).

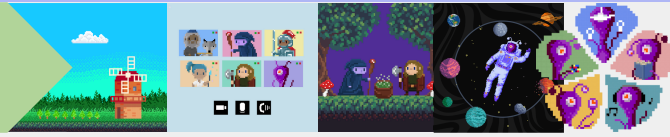


[Dr. Pejman Mirza-Babaei]



[Dr. Jennifer Whitson]

## GI Members at CHI 2024



This year's ACM (Association of Computing Machinery) CHI conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (or CHI for short) took place in Hawai'i from May 11-16, and many GI members attended to present their papers, in-progress studies, and projects. Below is a list of GI members who were accepted into CHI this year. For a full list of paper titles and publications, check out the GI Member Accomplishments on page 23.

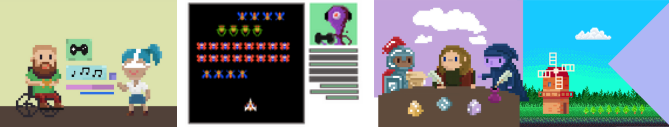
Congratulations to all who were accepted, attended, and presented!

- Ali Haider Rizvi (Systems Design Engineering)
- Anchit Mishra (Cheriton School of Computer Science)
- Bibhushan Raj Joshi (Management Science and Engineering)
- Dr. Craig Kaplan (Cheriton School of Computer Science)
- Dr. Daniel Vogel (Cheriton School of Computer Science)
- Derrick Wang (Systems Design Engineering)
- Dr. Eugene Kukshinov (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business)
- Hilda Hadan (Systems Design Engineering)
- Joseph Tu (Systems Design Engineering)
- Dr. Karen Anne Cochrane (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business)
- Kaushall Senthil Nathan (Systems Design Engineering)
- Dr. Leah Zhang-Kennedy (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business)
- Dr. Lennart Nacke (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business)
- Ludwig Wilhelm Wall (Cheriton School of Computer Science)
- Dr. Mark Hancock (Management Science and Engineering)
- Marvin Pafla (Cheriton School of Computer Science)
- Dr. Oliver Schneider (Management Science and Engineering)
- Dr. Pejman Mirza-Babaei (Ontario Tech University)
- Dr. Reza Hadi Mogavi (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business)
- Dr. Sebastian Cmentowski (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business)
- Sukran Karaosmanoglu (A)



[GI Members presenting at CHI Play 2024]





The Canadian Society for the Study of Rhetoric 2024 conference (or RhetCanada for short) was held at McGill University from June 8 to June 14. Four GI members attended to present their ongoing research projects and studies. For a full list of paper titles and publications, check out the GI Member Accomplishments on page 24.

- **Dr. Brianna Wiens** (English Language and Literature)
- **Dr. Randy Harris** (English Language and Literature)
- **Rency Luan** (English Language and Literature)
- **Dr. Shana MacDonald** (English Language and Literature)

Congratulations to those who were accepted and attended!

## GI Members at the Canadian Game Studies Association (CGSA) 2024

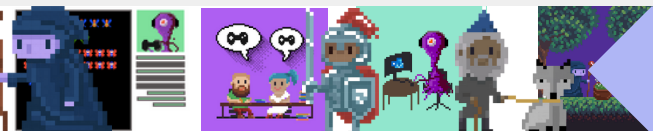


GI members recently presented their research at the Canadian Game Studies Association (CGSA) 2024 conference. This annual event brings together scholars from games studies to discuss their latest research.

This year, five GI members showcased their research ranging from how video games engage with climate apathy, questions surrounding authorship, and the literature around representation of race in games. For a full list of paper titles and publications, check out the GI Member Accomplishments on page 24.

Congratulations to all who were accepted, attended, and presented!

- **Aleksander Franciczek** (English Language and Literature)
- **Dr. Gerald Voorhees** (Communication Arts)
- **Dr. Jason Hawreliak** (A)
- **Dr. Jennifer Whitson** (Sociology and Legal Studies)
- **Dr. Kishonna Gray** (University of Michigan)



## The Interdisciplinary HQP Workshop Series Finishes a Successful Pilot Run

From June 6th to June 27th, the GI ran a series of four workshops aimed at engaging GI student members on navigating the complexities of interdisciplinary research. This included lessons on communicating and presenting research to non-expert audiences, managing interdisciplinary research projects, and traversing university systems to receive interdisciplinary research support.

The four workshops in this pilot run were:

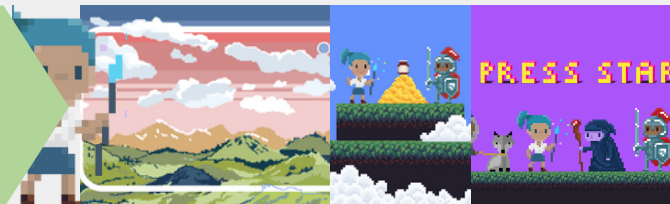
- 101 on How UWaterloo Works Within the Context of Interdisciplinary Work with **Agata Antkiewicz**
- 101 of Managing an Interdisciplinary Project with **Pamela Maria Schmidt**
- 101 on Talking to Non-expert Audiences with **Dr. Elise Vist** (A)
- 101 on Knowledge Mobilization in Real World Media with **Dr. Emma Vossen**

The series will continue in Fall 2024, providing tools and resources for the GI student membership on working within an interdisciplinary environment and how to apply this knowledge to their own research.



[Moving clockwise from top right: Agata Antkiewicz and workshop participants, Dr. Emma Vossen, Dr. Emma Vossen and workshop participants, and Pamela Maria Schmidt]

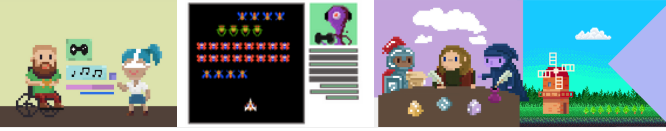
## GI Members at UWaterloo Conference “From Targeting in Academia to Promoting Trust and Understanding”



From June 27th to 28th, GI members presented and attended UWaterloo’s in-person conference that brought together international and local scholars from various disciplines to demonstrate the different ways our communities can—and should—foster trust within academia. Read more about the impact of the conference and key takeaways in the UWaterloo News article ["Overcoming fear for social justice."](#)

GI members presented the following:

- “Pay for access: On the implications of limiting access to GPT’s data and design in the API economy” by **Dr. Lai-Tze Fan** (Sociology and Legal Studies), **Tatum Weicker** (Sociology and Legal Studies), *Cecilia A.W. Martin*, *Amanda Yu*, and *Jin Sol Kim*
- “Solidarity as method: Building stronger research coalitions to counter antagonism” by **Dr. Shana MacDonald** (Communication Arts)
- “Witnessing and researching traumatic histories and histories of harm” by **Dr. Susan Roy** (History)



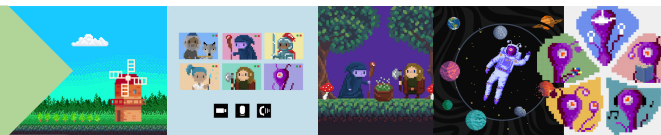
This year's Designing Interactive Systems (DIS) Conference took place in Copenhagen, Denmark from July 1 to July 5. As part of the Association of Computing Machinery (ACM), the DIS conference series specifically looks at design challenges within games and immersive, interactive technologies. This year, DIS asked the simple question of "why design?" as its theme. 12 GI members and alumni presented their on-going research, facilitated workshops, and participated in panels.

Congratulations to all who were accepted, attended, and presented! A following list of papers and workshop titles can be found on page 24.

The following is the list of members involved and their work.

- **Alessandra Luz** (Cheriton School of Computer Science)
- **Dr. Cayley MacArthur** (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business of Interaction Design and Business)
- **Dr. Daniel Harley** (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business)
- **Dr. Eugene Kukshinov** (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business)
- **Dr. Jim Wallace** (School of Public Health Sciences)
- **Kateryna Morayko** (A)
- **Dr. Lennart Nacke** (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business)
- **Macy Takaffoli** (A)
- **Dr. Mark Hancock** (Management Science)
- **Rachel Woo** (A)
- **Dr. Reza Hadi Mogavi** (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business)
- **Dr. Ville Mäkelä** (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business)

## GI Faculty Members Featured in Interdisciplinary Research Panel



After completing our Interdisciplinary HQP Workshop pilot series with student members at the GI, we're happy to see GI faculty contributing to the conversation on the faculty level with the support of the Office of Research and the Faculty of Arts. With opening remarks from GI faculty member **Dr. Ian Milligan** (History), GI member **Dr. Shana MacDonald** (Communication Arts) took part in "The Practice of Interdisciplinary Research: Learning Through Successes and Challenges" alongside Drs. Talena Atfield, Ashley Mehlenbacher, and Adam Molnar. The panel engaged in the experiences and lessons learned from working with interdisciplinary project teams and some of the methods UWaterloo faculty engage with to ensure equitable relationships.

Engaging in interdisciplinary research is not always an easy process, but here at the GI we continue to innovate our research processes and methods to champion interdisciplinary research with highly trained and specialized faculty members, staff, and students.



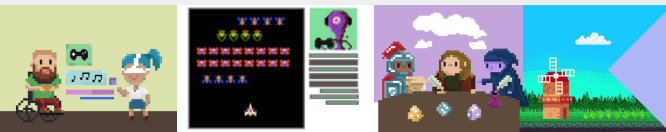
## Delegation from KidsAbility visit the GI



On June 17, the GI welcomed communication experts, researchers, and students from KidsAbility to showcase the various research conducted by GI members. Along with Brendan Wylie-Toal, the Director of Research & Innovation at KidsAbility, the group also toured the GI facility to learn more about how GI administration supports membership, research, and connecting academic work with industry, demonstrating previous knowledge mobilization projects. We hope they enjoyed their time here!



[KidsAbility visitors play testing game demos]



## Games Institute once again welcomes student visitors from Mexico

Following the success of last year's visit, the GI welcomed another cohort of visitors from Mexico who were eager to explore the world of games and interactive technologies. These students are from the RoboSEIP program managed by Renison University.

During the visit, students viewed presentations by GI members, attended interactive sessions, and engaged with research, including:

- A demo of *Seas the Day* by **Dr. John Muñoz** (Systems Design Engineering) where students had the opportunity to try the virtual reality game, designed for individuals with dementia to help them engage in both cognitive and physical exercises.
- Testing the interactive training tool of a human knee joint, created by **Marco Moran-Ledesma** (Systems Design Engineering), who also showed off the Haptic Experience lab and the novel uses of haptic technology for the prototype of the human knee joint.
- A language learning study by **Emily Shiu** (Psychology) where students participated in an experiment testing how bilingual speakers interact with voice assistants and the students were perfect candidates!
- Heart rate tracking devices with **Joseph Tu** (Systems Design Engineering) who is exploring physiological measures and social deception board games.

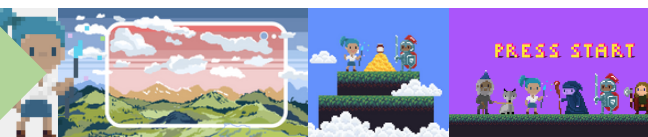
After the tour, the students had the opportunity to explore the Institute, chat with the researchers more candidly, and engage with other GI projects like the Bit Box, *Quantum Cats*, *Energize*, and even *Alice and Schrödinger*.

Thanks to all our members who showcased their work!



[Students interacting with different projects by GI members]

## Coffee and Games



Another term brings another successful Coffee and Games! It was thanks to the S24 Operations Coordinators **Altynai Isakova** and **Ehrinne Maducdoc** for hosting the weekly social event, and a special shout out to **Clément Salomon Ramos**, **Marlon Fabichacki Pereira**, and **Nicolás Enrique Rueda Rincón** for volunteering their time during the GI Staff Shutdown. While the fan favourite Mario Kart 8 was played by members, others were keen to learn and play new board games like *Quacks of Quedlinburg*, *Saboteur*, *Werewolf*, and many more! With a large number of weekly attendees, it has definitely kept the Collaboration Space wild and lively (especially during the Euros!).



[GI members playing board games and watching the Euros]



## New Members

Welcome to all the following faculty, researchers, and other individuals who have joined us this term!

- **Anna Tian** (she/her) is the Esports Coordinator at Athletics and Recreation and supervised by Greg Mittler. She completed her undergraduate degree with a bachelor's in environmental studies and is interested in growing the collegiate esports scene in Canada.
- **Dr. Clara Colombatto** (she/her) is an assistant professor in the department of psychology. Her research interests are in aspects of human perception and cognition.
- **Clément Salomon** (he/him) is a Mitacs Globalink Intern supervised by Dr. Ville Mäkelä. He is from Aix-Marseille IUT, pursuing computer science undergraduate degree.
- **Cody Lee** (he/him) is a Mitacs Globalink Intern from Taiwan and is supervised by Dr. Will Zhao. His project focuses on designing a system that detects AI-generated health-related misinformation on social media platforms.
- **Emma Smith** (she/her) is a graduate of the undergraduate Honours Co-op English-Rhetoric, Media, and Professional Communications program at the University of Waterloo. She is currently supervised by Dr. Neil Randall and is assisting with his Lord of the Rings and adaptation research.
- **Eric Chea** (he/him) is currently working for the Warriors esports team as a video editor and is supervised by Greg Mittler.
- **Ice Wu** (she/her) is a Mitacs Globalink Intern supervised by Dr. Will Zhao. Her research lies in AI and business-related fields.
- **James Pilcher** (he/him) is a Mitacs Globalink Intern from the University of Exeter in the UK and is supervised by Drs. Cayley MacArthur and Mark Hancock.
- **Jordan Wang** (he/him) is a student research assistant for Dr. Oliver Schneider for his co-op term. He is an undergraduate student in Mechatronics Engineering.
- **Julian Felipe Villada Castillo** (he/him) is a visiting PhD student supervised by Dr. John Muñoz. He is a professor and researcher at the Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira in Colombia and is developing health-related games for stroke patients' rehabilitation.
- **Khushi Savla** (she/her) is a student research assistant working with PhD candidate Bibhushan Raj Joshi and is supervised by Dr. Oliver Schneider. She has a background in Mechatronics Engineering.
- **Kwasha Shah** (she/her) is a Mitacs Globalink Intern supervised by Dr. Leah Zhang-Kennedy and worked for the "Children and Parents' Mental Models of Security and Privacy in Humanoid Robots" project. She is from the Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Science, completing a Bachelor of Technology in Computer Science and Business Systems.
- **Marlon Fabichacki Pereira** (he/him) is a Mitacs Globalink Intern supervised by Dr. Ville Mäkelä. His work focuses on developing real-world object detection in Virtual Reality to explore new interactions in virtual environments.
- **Michelle Ma** (she/her) is an undergraduate research assistant supervised by Dr. Jim Wallace.

- **Nathan D'Silva** (he/him) is a research assistant for the Rhetoricon project supervised by Dr. Randy Harris. He is studying Combinatorics & Optimization and Computational Mathematics at the University of Waterloo.
- **Nicolás Enrique Rueda Rincón** (he/him) is a visiting international student, supervised by Dr. Ville Mäkelä. He is a master's student at the University of the Andes.
- **Dr. Olga Vechtmovea** (she/her) is a professor in the department of Management Science Engineering. She leads the Natural Language Processional Lab at the University of Waterloo, and her research interests are in artificial intelligence, machine learning, and computational linguistics.
- **Rachel Anne Yee** (she/her) is a graduate research assistant currently pursuing her Masters of Engineering at the University of Toronto, and is supervised by Dr. Ville Mäkelä.
- **Shriya Kulkarni** (she/they) is an undergrad computer science student at the University of Waterloo and is supervised by Dr. Randy Harris. They are a full-stack developer for the Rhetoricon project for her co-op term.
- **Skylar Ji** (she/her) is an undergrad computer science student at the University of Waterloo. She works as a developer and UX/UI designer for the Rhetoricon and GoFigure project at the GI, supervised by Dr. Randy Harris.
- **Sofía Santos** (she/her) is an undergraduate psychology student at the University of Waterloo and is supervised by Dr. Randy Harris. On top of being a research assistant for the Rhetoricon project, she also contributes to research on voice interaction with smart assistants under the guidance of PhD candidate Emily Shiu.
- **Wilfred Lee** (he/him) is a visiting Mitacs Globalink Intern from Hong Kong and is supervised by Dr. Will Zhao. His project focuses on designing a system that employs machine learning algorithms to detect AI-generated health-related misinformation on social media.

## Farewell to...

It is always bittersweet to have members graduate and leave the GI. We are so proud of them and excited to see what they do next after their time at the GI!

- Congratulations to **Amandeep Kaur** (she/her) on completing her MMath in Computer Science with the publication of her thesis "[Comparison of Unsupervised Topic Modelling Techniques for Qualitative Data Analysis of Online Communities.](#)" She was supervised by **Dr. Jim Wallace**.
- Congratulations to **Lili Choong** (she/her) on completing her MMath in Computer Science with the publication of her thesis "[Using AI-Supported Onboarding Systems in Video Games to Improve Player Experience.](#)" She was co-supervised by **Dr. Lennart Nacke** and Dr. Jian Zhao.



No matter how long members have been with us, whether it's a few weeks to a few years, we always like to recognize their time with us. Thank you to all the co-ops, interns, and (U)RAs!

- **Mustapha Momoh** (he/him) was a master's student working under the supervision of Dr. Oliver Schneider. His research interests include 3D computer vision for virtual reality, human factors, and machine learning.
- **Punit Kunjam** (he/him) was a master's student working under the supervision of Dr. Oliver Schneider. His research specialized in game development, augmented & virtual reality, and haptics.

This term's unofficial  
Busy Bee Award goes  
to Dr. Lennart Nacke!



## Conference Presentations and Talks

### ACM CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems 2024

- *Chengbo Zheng, Kangyu Yuan, Bingcan Guo, Dr. Reza Hadi Mogavi* (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business), *Zhenhui Peng, Shuai Ma, and Xiaojuan Ma.* (May 2024) "[Charting the Future of AI in Project-Based Learning: A Co-Design Exploration with Students.](#)"
- *Damien Masson, Sylvian Malacria, Gery Casiez, and Dr. Daniel Vogel* (Cheriton School of Computer Science). (May 2024) "[DirectGPT: A Direct Manipulation Interface to Interact with Large Language Models.](#)"
- *Dr. Eugene Kukshinov* (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business), *Joseph Tu* (Systems Design Engineering), *Kata Szita, Kaushall Senthil Nathan* (Systems Design Engineering), *Dr. Lennart Nacke* (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business). (May 2024) "["Never The Same": Systematic Analysis of the Methodological Issues in the Presence Studies That Employ Questionnaires.](#)"

- *Gabriela Vega, Valentin Martinez-Missir, Dennis Wittchen, Nihar Sabnis, Audrey Girouard, Dr. Karen Anne Cochran* (Stratford School), and *Paul Strohmeier.* (May 2024) "[vARitouch: Back of the Finger Device for Adding Variable Compliance to Rigid Objects.](#)"
- *Hilda Hadan* (Systems Design Engineering), *Dr. Lennart Nacke* (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business), *Dr. Leah Zhang-Kennedy* (Stratford School), *Derrick Wang* (Systems Design Engineering). (May 2024) "[Privacy in Immersive Extended Reality: Exploring User Perceptions, Concerns, and Coping Strategies.](#)"
- *Johann Wentzel, Fraser Anderson, George Fitzmaurice, Tovi Grossman, and Dr. Daniel Vogel* (Cheriton School of Computer Science). (May 2024) "[SwitchSpace: Understanding Context-Aware Peeking Between VR and Desktop Interfaces.](#)"
- *Joseph Tu* (Systems Design Engineering). (May 2024) "[Casting Connections: A Fishy Approach to Conference Engagement.](#)"
- *Dr. Lennart Nacke* (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business). (May 2024) "[How to Write Better CHI Papers \(with AI\).](#)"
- *Dr. Lennart Nacke* (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business), *Dr. Pejman Mirza-Babaei* (Ontario Tech University), and *Anders Drachen.* (May 2024) "[User Experience Research and Design in Video Games.](#)"
- *Ludwig Wilhelm Wall* (Cheriton School of Computer Science), *Dr. Oliver Schneider* (Management Science and Engineering), and *Dr. Daniel Vogel* (Cheriton School of Computer Science). (May 2024) "[Scrappy and Substiports: User-Inserted Ad Hoc Objects For Faster, More Sustainable 3D Printing.](#)"
- *Marvin Pafila* (Cheriton School of Computer Science), *Kat Larson,* and *Dr. Mark Hancock* (Management Science and Engineering). (May 2024) "[Unraveling the Dilemma of AI Errors: Exploring the Effectiveness of Human and Machine Explanations for Large Language Models.](#)"
- *Matthew Lakier* and *Dr. Daniel Vogel* (Cheriton School of Computer Science). (May 2024) "[Digital Knick-Knacks: Standalone Audiovisual Digital Possessions or Embellishments in Digital Environments.](#)"
- *Nikhita Joshi* and *Dr. Daniel Vogel* (Cheriton School of Computer Science). (May 2024) "[Constrained Highlighting in a Document Reader can Improve Reading Comprehension.](#)"
- *Dr. Oliver Schneider* (Management Science and Engineering), *Bibhushan Raj Joshi* (Management Science and Engineering), *Sandeep Zechariah George Kollannur, Anchit Mishra* (Cheriton School of Computer Science), and *Tommy Nguyen.* (May 2024) "[Haptic Playground: Empowering Inclusive Haptic Design for Everyone \(Workshop\).](#)"
- *Saralin Zassman, Dr. Craig Kaplan* (Cheriton School of Computer Science), and *Dr. Daniel Vogel* (Cheriton School of Computer Science). (May 2024) "[Mindful Scroll: An Infinite Scroll Abstract Colouring App for Mindfulness.](#)"
- *Serena Hillman, Carolyn Pang, Samira Jain, Carman Neustaedter, Jofish Kaye, Ali Haider Rizvi* (Systems Design Engineering), *David McDonald, Qunfang Wu, and Craig MacDonald.* (May 2024) "[Beyond Theory: A UX Outcomes Casebook for HCI Education.](#)"

- **Sukran Karaosmanoglu (A), Dr. Sebastian Cmentowski** (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business), **Dr. Lennart Nacke** (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business), and *Frank Steinicke*. (May 2024) "[Born to Run, Programmed to Play: Mapping the Extended Reality Exergames Landscape.](#)"
- *Yen-Ting Yeh, Nikhita Joshi*, and **Dr. Daniel Vogel** (Cheriton School of Computer Science). (May 2024) "[The Effects of Update Interval and Reveal Method on Writer Comfort in Synchronized Shared-Editors.](#)"
- *Yen-Ting Yeh, Antony Albert Raj Irudayaraj*, and **Dr. Daniel Vogel** (Cheriton School of Computer Science). (May 2024) "[Single-handed Folding Interactions with a Modified Clamshell Flip Phone.](#)"

#### RhetCanada: Canadian Society for the Study of Rhetoric 2024

- *Anna McWebb* and **Rency Luan** (English Language and Literature). (June 2024) "Are We the Bimbos From Hell?"
- **Dr. Brianna Wiens** (English Language and Literature). (June 2024) "The Siren Song of Feminist Rhetorical Feusal."
- *Cathal Twomey* and **Dr. Randy Harris** (English Language and Literature). (June 2024) "NEW Rhetorical Figures?"
- **Rency Luan** (English Language and Literature). (June 2024) "A (Re)contextualization of the Female Body: Agency, Power, and the Material-Discursive Through the Iconography of Barbie."
- **Dr. Shana MacDonald** (Communication Arts). (June 2024) "Pleasure Activism of Joyscrolling."

#### Canadian Games Studies Association 2024

- **Aleksander Franiczek** (English Language and Literature). (June 2024) "Sustaining Videogame Authorship: A Method for Developer-Centric Analysis."
- **Dr. Gerald Voorhees** (Communication Arts), *E Oropeza, Ashlee Bird*, and **Dr. Kishonna Gray** (University of Kentucky). (June 2024) "Race in Games and Game Studies: A Scoping Literature Review."
- **Dr. Jason Hawreliak (A)** and *Matilda Davidsson*. (June 2024) "Mitigating Climate Apathy and Doomerism: The Value of Speculative Optimism in *Gathering Storm* and *Stray*."
- **Dr. Jennifer Whitson** (Sociology and Legal Studies). (June 2024) "Author Meets Critics (Panel Session)."

#### ACM Conference on Designing Interactive Systems 2024

- *Ana O Henriques, Hugo Nicolau, Anna R. L. Carter, Kyle Montague, Reem Talhouk, Angelika Strohmayer, Sarah Rüller*, **Dr. Cayley MacArthur** (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business), *Shaowen Bardzell, Colin M. Gray, and Eleonore Fournier-Tombs*. (July 2024) "Fostering Feminist Community-Led Ethics: Building Tools and Connections (workshop)."
- **Dr. Cayley MacArthur** (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business), **Kateryna Morayko (A)**, **Alessandra Luz** (Computer science), and **Dr. Mark Hancock** (Management Science and Engineering). (July 2024) "[Not All Those Who \(Mind-\) Wander Are Lost: Exploring Game-Unrelated Thoughts.](#)"

- **Dr. Eugene Kukshinov** (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business), **Dr. Daniel Harley** (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business), *Kata Szita*, **Dr. Reza Hadi Mogavi** (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business), **Dr. Cayley MacArthur** (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business), and **Dr. Lennart Nacke** (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business). (July 2024) "[Disembodied, A-social, and Unreal: How Users \(Re\)Interpret Designed Affordances of Social VR.](#)"
- **Macy Takaffoli (A)**, *Sijia Li*, and **Dr. Ville Mäkelä** (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business). (July 2024) "[Generative AI in User Experience Design and Research: How Do UX Practitioners, Teams, and Companies Use GenAI in Industry?](#)"

#### Other Conferences

- **Alessandra Luz** (Cheriton School of Computer Science), **Florian Marcher (A)**, **Dr. Lennart Nacke** (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business), and **Dr. Daniel Vogel** (Cheriton School of Computer Science). (June 2024) "[Encouraging Disengagement: Using Eye Tracking to Examine Attention with Different Levels of Juicy Design.](#)" AVI'24.
- **Dr. Lai-Tze Fan** (Sociology and Legal Studies). (June 2024) "How does Access to AI impact Human Creativity and Humanistic Research?" Canadian Society for Digital Humanities.
- **Dr. Leah Zhang-Kennedy** (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business). (June 2024) "Deceptive Design and Privacy in Immersive Extended Reality." CODE Colloquium.

#### Publications

- **Dr. Adan Jerreat-Poole** (Communication Arts). (June 2024) "[Gaming with empathy: How one video game offers a glimpse of life in Gaza under attack.](#)" The Conversation.
- *Antonio Miguel Cruz, Dr. Hector Perez (A), Emily Rutledge, Christine Daum*, and **Dr. Lili Liu** (School of Public Health Sciences). (June 2024) "[Factors associated with a history of critical wandering among Medic-Alert subscribers.](#)" BMC Geriatrics.
- **Dr. Brianna Wiens** (English Language and Literature) and **Dr. Shana MacDonald** (Communication Arts). (June 2024) "[Witches in Swamps, Sirens at Sea, and Leviathans of the Deep: Feminist Figures That Haunt Our Social Media Worlds.](#)" Public.
- **Dr. Brianna Wiens** (English Language and Literature) and **Dr. Shana MacDonald** (Communication Arts). (May 2024) "[Dwelling as Method: Lingering in/with Feminist Curated Data Sets on Instagram.](#)" Journal of Digital Social Research.
- **Dr. Cayley MacArthur** (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business), **Dr. Eugene Kukshinov** (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business), **Dr. Daniel Harley** (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business), *Trisha Pawar, Nirali Modi (A)*, and **Dr. Lennart Nacke** (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business). (August 2024) "[Experiential disparities in social VR: uncovering power dynamics and inequality.](#)" Frontiers in Virtual Reality.

- **Dr. Marcel O’Gorman** (English Language and Literature). (June 2024) “When it comes to AI, it feels like we’re doing more adaptation than adoption these days. This is not a good feeling.” The Globe and Mail.
- **Dr. Reza Hadi Mogavi** (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business), *Juhyung Son, Simin Yang, Derrick M. Wang* (Systems Design Engineering), **Lydia Choong** (Cheriton School of Computer Science), *Ahmad Alhilar, Peng Yuan Zhou, Pan Hui*, and **Dr. Lennart Nacke** (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business). (July 2024) “The Jade Gateway to Exergaming: How Socio-Cultural Factors Shape Exergaming Among East Asian Older Adults.” arXiv.

## Media and Interviews

- **Dr. John Muñoz** (Systems Design Engineering) was interviewed in Frequency News about exergaming
- **Dr. Lennart Nacke** (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business) was interviewed in the Winnipeg Free Press about gamification.
- **Dr. Lili Liu** (School of Public Health Sciences) was interviewed in the Winnipeg Free Press about aging adults going missing
- **Dr. Marcel O’Gorman** (English Language and Literature) was interviewed by the Waterloo Record at AI
- **Dr. Shana MacDonald** (Communication Arts) was interviewed on CBC radio to talk about TikTok and the skincare industry marketing anti-aging products to children.

## New Jobs

- **Dr. Hector Perez** (A) joined the Niagara Regional Police Service as a Corporate Analyst
- **Dr. John Muñoz** (Systems Design Engineering) joined Wilfrid Laurier University at Brantford as an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Liberal Arts
- **Dr. Kishonna Gray** (University of Michigan) accepted a position as full professor with tenure at the University of Michigan.
- **Dr. Lai-Tze Fan** (Sociology and Legal Studies) became an Associate Professor within University of Waterloo
- **Dr. Lennart Nacke** (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business) was appointed as a University Research Chair
- **Dr. Shana MacDonald** (Communication Arts) was named the inaugural O’Donovan Chair in Communication Across the Disciplines

## Awards and Grants

- **Dr. Daniel Harley** (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business) received the Excellence in Online Course Design Award from the Centre for Extended Learning
- **Dr. Edith Law** (Cheriton School of Computer Science) received the Graham Seed Fund to field test a new app designed to help immigrants and refugees navigate critical health and social services.
- **Dr. Kristina Llewellyn** (Social Development Studies) received the Excellence in Research Award from the Faculty of Arts



**Bolded names** in this document denote GI members while *italicized names* denote collaborators and guests. Names marked with "(A)" denote former GI members. (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business) denotes affiliation to the Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business. (English) denotes affiliation to the English Language and Literature department. All names are listed alphabetically by first name.

The Games Institute and its members acknowledge that the land on which our community works and lives today is the traditional land of the Attawandaron (Neutral), Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee peoples. We recognize that the University of Waterloo, of which the Games Institute is part, is situated on the Haldimand Tract – the land taken without consent and subsequently promised to the Six Nations – that includes ten kilometers on either side of the Grand River.

We recognize the enduring presence and deep traditional knowledge, laws and philosophies of the Indigenous Peoples with whom we share this land today. As the Games Institute facilitates researchers of games, digital spaces, and interactive technologies, we undertake to make space for Indigenous scholars, designers, commentators and creators to uplift voices that are marginalized in the academic and gaming community.

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