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**Exploring the impact of technology on an audio-centric media business: visioning the future of audience engagement and interaction**

An opportunity to spend ten months working with [Bauer Media](https://www.bauermedia.com/businesses/audio) to explore what the future of a media business centred on audio content, such as radio and podcasts might be in the light of new consumer technologies for listeners and associated behaviour changes.

What is the mainstream of audio consumption in 2030 (or 2040)? And what are the next technology shifts, and their implications, visible in that timeframe?

Bauer Media Audio, Europe’s leading digital commercial radio broadcaster and audio operator, is developing an internal strategy which will look at the implications for its radio businesses of changing interfaces with audio and whether that requires an expanded, more holistic view of content production and distribution.

This Fellowship will allow for exploration, experimentation and the generation of a variety of practical outputs to help generate a dialogue on strategic innovation.

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**Overview**

This MyWorld Fellowship is aimed at freelancers, practitioners, industry, and academics who have industry or practice-based experience. We invite people to think about these Fellowships as a period of collaborative thinking, innovation and experimentation, applying practice, expertise or relevant experience.

The Fellows will be contracted and paid via the University of Bristol but managed by Watershed and the Fellowship host, Bauer Media.

This document contains information about the opportunity and the application process. If you have any access requirements that mean this document does not work for you please contact Vanessa Bellaar Spruijt on myworld@watershed.co.uk.

This Fellowship is part of the MyWorld IDEAS programme, funded by UKRI.

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**The Fellowship**

**The impact of technology of an audio-centric media business: visioning the future of audience engagement and interaction**

What is the mainstream of audio consumption in 2030 (or 2040)? And what are the next technology shifts, and their implications, visible in that timeframe?

As a media channel radio has several distinctive qualities:

* It is very widely consumed but predominantly as a background or secondary input, rather than a primary focus
* It has an ability to generate a sense of both individual dialogue and wider community at the same time, listeners relate to a channel “brand” and feel a personal connection
* It has an ability to generate active interaction from a primarily passive consumption

Visions of future media channels have to date concentrated on new primary inputs (e.g. VR headsets, augmented reality, interactive AI) but what are the changes to consumption and distribution of content when that media is a secondary factor, particularly in the light of advances in spatial computing or located media? What are the new models of tacit interaction and/or passive engagement which still retain the sense of community and value-add connection of radio?

The Fellowship will research a series of scenarios and design fictions which explore the future of consumption of, and interface with, audio across a broad set of technologies and audiences. These scenarios should initially be based in fact, looking at the cutting edge now and visible behaviour / interaction trends, but extrapolate and world-build to imagine future potential and innovation.

Bauer has a very wide audience demographic which spans both young and older audiences across different radio brands – so the thinking needs to be inclusive in scope but also potentially recognise points of difference.

Bauer are asking questions that are relevant to many other organisations. This Fellowship will broaden the discussion and inspire thinking around the future development of audio - providing a catalyst by visioning future audience engagement and interaction scenarios.

**Key Responsibilities (outputs):**

Outputs will be iterative and developed during the Fellowship – they may include blogs, presentation decks, visual prompts or short videos. The intent is to provide inspiration on potential futures which can be translated back into considerations on forward-looking innovation within Bauer.

Whilst the Fellowship will run between December 2023 and October 2024, there is an expectation to produce some preliminary results at end March 2024.

**Experience and Skill Set**

* Demonstrable knowledge of content production and/or distribution, preferably audio.
* Working knowledge of commercial media sector, ideally linked to radio or IP distribution.
* Demonstrable understanding of future trends in content production, distribution and experience technologies, particularly linked to consumer interaction
* Interest in the immersive technologies (e.g. virtual, augmented and extended realities).
* Open and collaborative, comfortable sharing early ideas and giving/receiving constructive feedback with care.
* Ability to quickly prototype new ideas.

**Desirable experience**

* Experience of world-building, horizon scanning research or visioning design futures
* Practical experience of design in user experience and/or immersive environments
* Experience of working within a commercial media business

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**What do we expect from you?**

* You will join as a MyWorld Fellow, working closely with the Head of Innovation, and wider team, at Bauer Media
* Most of your time is spent within Watershed’s Pervasive Media Studio, which hosts a diverse and collaborative community of over 180 residents exploring creativity and technology.
* Your Fellowship will enable you to robustly examine your practice through a combination of research into what exists, practical experimentation and interdisciplinary conversation.
* You will produce work that can be tested in the public domain and outcomes are documented and shared for wider learning.

**What do you get?**

* A grant of £20,000 for 10 months embedded exploration at 2.5 days/week (incl. expenses)
* Support and guidance from Bauer, combining the commercial and audience insight of a global creative business with insight on the future direction of R&D, where you will play a catalytic role in developing new ideas.
* Access to an interdisciplinary community across the Pervasive Media Studio, MyWorld and the partner universities.
* Support from a Watershed producer (relationship management, contracts, networking, signposting to opportunities, etc.)
* For the duration of MyWorld’s programme: Desk space and access to facilities in the Pervasive Media Studio at Watershed in Bristol, connecting you to a vibrant community of artists and creative technologists
* Access support where relevant.
* Sharing opportunities for any work made, via Pervasive Media Studio Lunchtime Talks and/or blogs, Watershed First Friday programme, and other opportunities.

The Fellowship will be co-sponsored as a partnership between Bauer Media and MyWorld, envisaged as the start point in a longer term, relationship focused on co-commissioned innovation.

The outcome of the research will directly influence the strategic planning of the Bauer Media radio businesses across UK and Europe.

The Fellow will work with Bauer Head of Innovation Kathryn Molloy; MyWorld Business Partnerships lead Katie Martin.

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**How to apply**

You are invited to answer five questions in an online questionnaire focusing on how you meet the skills and experience for the Fellowship and how you can build care into the process.

Shortlisted applicants will then be invited to interview.

Apply here for the Bauer Media MyWorld Fellowship: https://wshd.to/bauerapplication

Please check the eligibility criteria in the [FAQs](https://wshed.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/s/MyWorldstrengthinplaces/EeUdNYQLCIZAj3io79cd92oBSaabuLrrhijVqKqLkgXnSw?e=UPCrgL) before applying.

We understand that online forms do not work for everyone. If you would like to apply by alternative means please email Vanessa Bellaar Spruijt on

myworld@watershed.co.uk

**Timeline**

* Closing date for applications: Monday 6 November 2023 at 10.00a.m. (GMT!)
* Applicants will hear from us by: end of 10 November 2023
* Interviews: Thursday 6 November 2023
* Contracting: November/December 2023
* Fellowship start date: w/c 11 December 2023
* Fellowship end date: w/c 5 August 2024

**Talk to Us**

We have shared some [FAQs](https://wshed.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/s/MyWorldstrengthinplaces/EeUdNYQLCIZAj3io79cd92oBSaabuLrrhijVqKqLkgXnSw?e=UPCrgL) here. If your question has not been answered, please contact Vanessa Bellaar Spruijt on myworld@watershed.co.uk

**Bauer Media**

[Bauer Media Audio](https://www.bauermedia.com/businesses/audio) is Europe’s leading digital commercial radio broadcaster and audio operator. Experts in the power of sound, the company reaches over 61 million listeners weekly through its broadcast radio, online services, and podcasts. Spanning nine countries – the UK, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Ireland, Finland, Poland, Slovakia and Portugal – Bauer Media Audio owns leading brands including Today FM, KISS, MixMegapol, Absolute Radio, Radio Norge, Radio Expres, Radio Nova, Radio 100, RMF and Radio Comercial.

In the UK, Bauer reaches over 20 million+ listeners every week (57 million across Europe) and operates over 120 commercial, local, national and digital stations, including Absolute Radio, Magic Radio, KISS, Scala Radio and Jazz FM. It also has a growing podcast portfolio.

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**About Pervasive Media Studio and Watershed**

The Pervasive Media Studio hosts a brilliant community of over 100 artists, creative companies, technologists and academics exploring experience design and creative technology.

The Pervasive Media Studio is based within Watershed in Bristol, a cultural organisation championing engagement, imagination and ingenuity. We have an open plan studio with a culture of generosity, curiosity and interruptibility.

We believe that by clustering together people from a broad range of backgrounds, with differing skills, experiences and opinions, all of our ideas get better.

It is a collaboration between Watershed, University of Bristol and UWE Bristol.

**About MyWorld**

Watershed and the Pervasive Media Studio are part of a programme called MyWorld which will showcase the latest advances in digital production and research.

Led by the University of Bristol, the aim of MyWorld is to position the West of England as an international trailblazer in screen-based media, forge dynamic collaborations to progress technological innovation, deliver creative excellence, establish and operate state of the art facilities, offer skills training and drive inward investment, raising the region’s profile on the global stage.

MyWorld is funded through UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) ‘Strength in Places fund’.