



香港城市大學
City University of Hong Kong

Critical and Practical Education for the Metaverse

Project Number: 6000874

Principal Investigator: Dr. Damien CHARRIERAS

Grant Type: TDG

Abstract:

The project consists in including dimensions of the Metaverse in an existing course dedicated to Art & Finance. It aims to provide students with the technical, creative and critical tools to assess Metaverses, create their own items and eventually organise their own events and experiences in Metaverses. Although the concept of Metaverse is not new, it has recently been popularised by blockchain-based virtual worlds. These “metaverses” sell virtual lands on which users can create their own experiences (e.g., games, events, concerts, and exhibitions). Their value of utility rests in their usability and adaptability to various purposes, and therefore the ability of users to take ownership of their lands. Therefore user-generated content has been one of the cornerstones of metaverses. This has prompted Metaverse companies to offer tools to facilitate the creation of digital assets in their worlds (e.g., The Sandbox’ VoxEdit).

This project aims to empower students and give them the opportunity to access the tooling necessary to create meaningful cultural and creative content, and showcase it to a larger audience, through virtual worlds. To do so, students need to gain an advanced knowledge of the technicalities of content-building for metaverses, skills that will be an important asset in digital content creation, irrespective of the context of use. The grant will support the acquisition of new technical and creative skills. The project will enable students to understand the fundamentals of blockchain and how it impacts the creation of creative experiences; it will give them a hands-on experience and acquisition of a creative tool, and it will initiate opportunities for collaboration with the private sector, notably the blockchain ecosystem in Hong Kong. This will benefit the students, as well as City University of Hong Kong as a whole.

To achieve these goals, the PI will collaborate with the Sandbox (and its partner companies), a Metaverse company subsidiary of Animoca Brands, which is one of the biggest blockchain companies and registered in Hong Kong. The Sandbox has already partnered with several local training institutions, some of which have purchased lands in the Sandbox (e.g., HK Design Institute (HKDI), HK University of Science and Technology (HKUST)). A partnership with the Sandbox would unlock other partnerships within the Sandbox ecosystem, notably with gaming companies. The collaboration with The Sandbox may take various forms across a spectrum: a 2-day workshop, a final exhibition of students’ works in the Metaverse, visits to The Sandbox’ offices to name a few. Minimally, the collaboration will take the form of one or two classes of practice by the Sandbox, providing hands-on experience to the students.



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Findings from this project will be shared by the PI and Co-I with the larger academic communities through the publication of a journal article.



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