

Center for the Creative Economy

THE DEPOT * 814 W. BROAD STREET * RICHMOND, VA 23284-2519

arts.vcu.edu/creativeeconomy

THE COLLABORATORY

The VCUarts Collaboratory (CoLab) is an **post-disciplinary** internship program that provides students with **opportunities in hands-on, innovative problem-solving.** Students develop career skills and create value in existing organizations and professions through the completion of **research-intensive, industry-focused projects.**

How CoLab Benefits Students

“In a way, we re-imagined what an internship experience can be. Instead of individuals getting a 1-to-1 internship, we assign small intern teams to a diverse range of projects and organizations.”

ANDREW ILNICKI

CoLab Mentor

VCUarts Director of Academic Programming

Students undertake an initially ambiguous and complex project that focuses on an emerging technology, and a potential real-world application. Students work directly with mentors to develop a series of planned experiences with clearly defined goals and predetermined assessment methods. This allows students to contribute and learn in a professional context, and develop career-ready skills for a rapidly changing world of work.

Students either enroll in the CoLab internship course for academic credit (Fall and Spring semesters), or serve as paid interns (Summer session). Project teams range from 1 to 5 students in size. The students work in the CoLab facility in the Depot Building and/or on site at the industry affiliate, under the guidance of CoLab faculty and industry mentors. Project time frames range from 5–30 weeks throughout the academic year and/or summer months.

Specific benefits to students include:

- * developing a range of researching, problem-framing, and prototyping skills
- * building a depth of applied skills and professional experience in their major discipline
- * developing a broad spectrum of entrepreneurship and transferable enterprise skills across a range of disciplines
- * working on interdisciplinary teams
- * experience working on a range of emerging technologies.



Recent CoLab Projects

VCUarts Center for the Creative Economy featured in Forbes.com: Advancing Social Innovation Education

Virginia's economy does not suffer from the detached fantasies of Silicon Valley that create over-valued apps for finding a masseuse or a private chef. Nor does Virginia suffer from the ethics deficiency or shareholder cow-towing of Wall Street. Instead, Virginia's economy is built on a commitment to match real need with real opportunity. It is a collaborative ecosystem driving social innovation forward on three fronts: advancing social entrepreneurship and impact investing, advancing social impact bonds, and advancing social innovation education. These are the cornerstones not of a tech or shareholder economy, but a purpose economy...Read more at the following link: www.forbes.com

[How Revolutions In Finance And Education Are Transforming Virginia's Purpose Economy](#)
[by John Kluge](#)

Bioenergetics: A collaboration with the VCU School of Engineering Vertically Integrated Projects Program

A portfolio of projects that expose the science of bioenergetics to middle-school students in order to 1) promote a nutritionally positive lifestyle, 2) illustrate the value of collaboration with the creative disciplines in order to reveal unexpected opportunities, and 3) to encourage the pursuit of study in the field of bioenergetics and the creative disciplines in higher education.

Kids Remember Press: A collaboration with the VCU School of Social Work

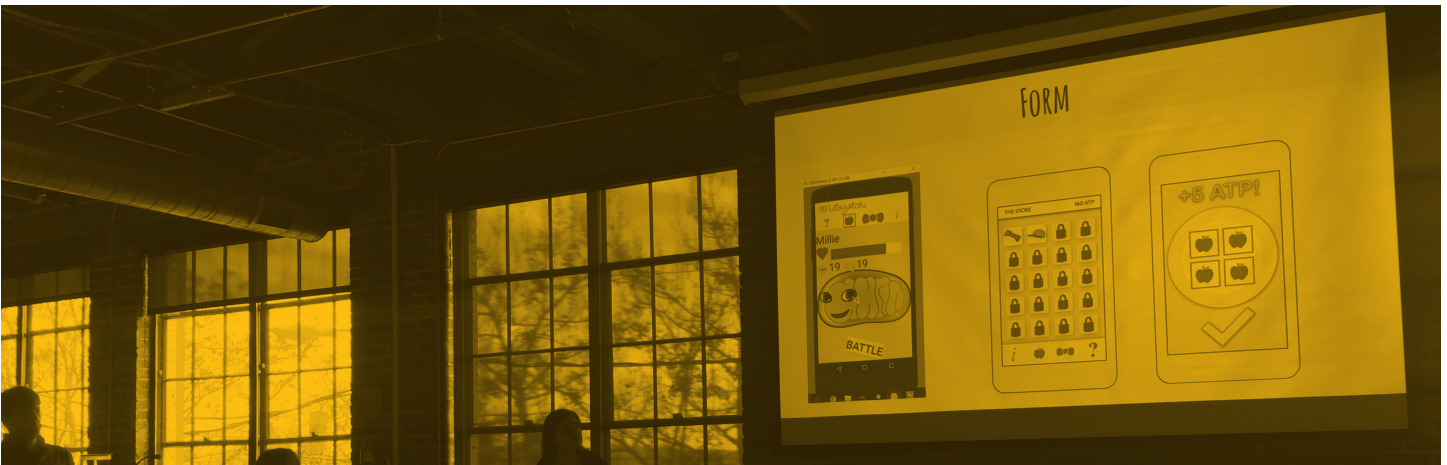
A project to develop an mobile digital platform that allows children who have experienced a life trauma to creatively express their memory of a lost loved one, and share their experience with other children who have suffered a similar experience.

Humanizing Banking: A collaboration with a national bank

A multi-semester project that focuses on qualitative research in order to develop insights for the re-redesign of the software application that serves as the primary communication interface between a national bank and their customers.

Capturing the Experience of Art: A collaboration with VCU Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA)

A project that explores the possibilities of utilizing facial recognition technology to capture the experiences of visitors to the vast range of exhibits in the soon to open VCU ICA.



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Please contact Matt Woolman, executive director of entrepreneurship, with inquiries about the Center for the Creative Economy: phone **804-827-1868** or e-mail mwoolman@vcu.edu.