

# TASC: Technology, Arts and Social Connection

*Building health through arts and new media*



Photo: fd, Flickr



Game player interacting with 'Touch', Melbourne 2008. Image courtesy Visionary Images.

Information communication technologies provide many new and exciting opportunities for creative initiatives that promote participation, social connection and community engagement, which have positive health and wellbeing outcomes.

By bringing people closer together, arts participation improves mental health by increasing self-esteem, self-efficacy and belonging; decreasing stress, anxiety and depression; and reducing social isolation — all of which can be as dangerous to health as smoking, risky drinking and obesity.

The digital revolution is impacting on every area of our daily lives. Our work, leisure time and even our means of communicating with friends and family are all

changing in response to increasingly widespread computing and communication technologies.

The emergence of social networking and the convergence of online and offline engagement are facilitating interesting collaborations between diverse players. As a new sector for health promotion action, VicHealth is excited to be engaged in contributing to building new learnings in information and communications technology.

VicHealth is supporting 14 projects that creatively use existing technologies to increase participation and social connection across Victoria.

## **Humanitarian Crisis Hub – Stories of Survival**

Through a combination of storytelling, digital technologies and print media, this project will enhance the social connection of newly-arrived refugees and immigrants in Victoria through documenting and sharing their stories of survival in war and conflict-ridden countries.

## **Wyndham City Council – RAW: ReActivate Wyndham**

Images, writing and audio produced by community members will be uploaded to an interactive website to create an online 'public art space' for Wyndham community members to facilitate their social engagement for health.

## **Borderlands Cooperative – Burnt Out: Stories from the Ashes**

This project will enable Black Saturday fire-affected communities in Kinglake and surrounding areas to document and share their experiences of disaster and recovery using digital technology.

More information about TASC: Technology, Arts and Social Connection is available on the VicHealth website at [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/tasc](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/tasc)

### **Victorian Arts Centre – Wayfarer 3.0: (Global Agents)**

Student 'urban agent' teams from across Victoria, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, will use pocket video cameras to create, enact and document experiences of their environment.

### **Museum Victoria – identity: yours, mine, ours**

Young people from Braybrook, Sunshine and the City of Hume will learn new skills using digital technology and create works that explore how ethnicity, spirituality, language and immigration have influenced identity in Australia. The works will be exhibited at the Immigration Museum from March 2011.

### **ArtPlay, City of Melbourne – Little Houses**

'Little Houses' is an exercise in human/computer interaction to increase social connection. The project will create real time 'soundscapes' and a public art installation focusing on the experiences of children and families.

### **The Song Room – PING: A remote music education project**

Web and social networking technology will provide access to music lessons for primary and secondary school children in rural areas. Face-to-face workshops are part of this project, but most of the music workshops with skilled musicians across a range of genres will be delivered online over 16–20 weeks.

### **The Torch – Flip-athon Project**

Role models ('torch bearers') from Indigenous and other cultural backgrounds will use hand held 'flip' digital video cameras to capture stories from around 14 rural and remote neighbourhoods and make short films about their communities. The project culminates in an online film festival.

### **Koorie Heritage Trust – Blaktraks**

Indigenous youth and Elders will share stories about their local urban communities and recreate the telling in digital media. Artists will assist with the development of stories that represent the changing face of Indigenous urban identities in Victoria. Short films will be disseminated via mobile phones and the internet.

### **Monash University – Images of Home**

Primary school children from Officer, 50km south-east of Melbourne, will digitally record and manipulate sounds that represent the concept of 'home'. By using sounds, children will see their hometown from a different perspective.

### **Peninsula Health – ConnectYOU Project**

Young people in Frankston and Mornington Peninsula will use digital photography to represent their view of their community. They will learn to build a website to host the photos. The project will end with an exhibition at Frankston Arts Centre.

### **Brunswick Women's Choir – Bringing Singing to the Community**

This project involves a series of online singing workshops, including songs by Yorta Yorta songwriter Lou Bennett. The digital videos, sheet music and audio files will be available online as a resource for existing or emerging community choirs who face difficulty accessing resources due to distance or disability.

### **Grit Media – The Travelling Chair**

The Travelling Chair is a web/mobile phone application for people with disabilities that will allow people to create personal profiles and review venues. This will create an interactive social network that provides essential information on the accessibility of buildings and venues across Victoria.



Higson Lane, Melbourne – 'The Banquet' light box. Image courtesy Visionary Images.

### **Alsop & Themann – My Wonderful Everyday**

Sound expert Roger Alsop and Melbourne artist Mark Themann will collaborate with the diverse communities of Dandenong to create a web-based spoken word work focusing on the issues of food and water in this area.