

Fab Lab Forum Discussion



Wednesday 22 April 2009

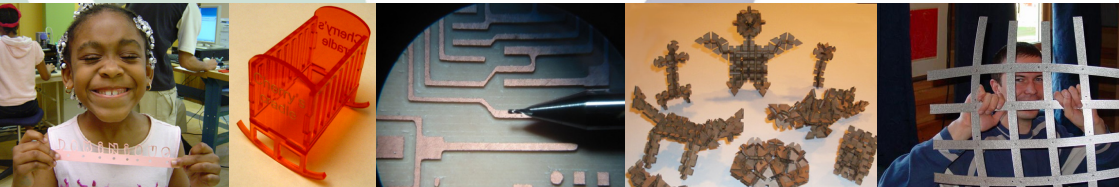
The Manufacturing Institute
Quay West, Trafford Wharf Road
Manchester M17 1HH

“Towards a world where almost anyone can make almost anything, anywhere”

A first for the UK, a first for the North West

The Fab Lab Forum offers a unique opportunity for discussion with Prof. Neil Gershenfeld (Director, The Center for Bits and Atoms, Massachusetts Institute of Technology) on a grass roots, community project to deliver aid through invention, here in the North West – Fab Labs.

The Manufacturing Institute, in partnership with the Innovation Investment Fund are facilitating the pull from several North West communities and groups to see the first UK Fab Lab pilot set up here in our region.



To come along and be part of shaping the future please email Dr Eddie Kirkby Eddiek@manufacturinginstitute.co.uk or telephone 0161 874 0393

THE **Manufacturing**
INSTITUTE

Supported by the Innovation Investment Fund partners



AGENDA

09:30 **Reception:** Tea, coffee and breakfast rolls

10:00 **Dr Julie Madigan:** Introduction to The Manufacturing Institute

History of The Manufacturing Institute

Charitable objectives

Community links/activities

10:10 **Prof. Neil Gershenfeld:** Personal introduction and the concept of Fab Labs

About Neil Gershenfeld and the MIT Centre for Bits & Atoms

Digital fabrication – the new revolution

Fab Labs – conception and history

International Fab Lab Community

10:40 **Dr Eddie Kirkby:** North West Fab Lab – implementation and possibilities

Why a Fab Lab in the North West

Implementation plan – timescales, location, etc

Possibilities – what could a Fab Lab mean to the community?

10:55 **Break:** tea, coffee and biscuits

11:15 **Panel discussion:**

Jonathan Lawson – The Manufacturing Institute – Chair

Neil Gershenfeld – MIT, International Fablabs

Julie Madigan – CEO, The Manufacturing Institute

Plus three expert contributors – to be confirmed

How to make it happen – getting the most out of the Fab Lab.

Set questions and open discussion – how could parties contribute to the 'success' of the Fab Lab and what would this look like.

12:45 **Lunch**

13:45 **Close**

What is a Fab Lab?

A community resource in the form of a fully kitted fabrication workshop for the production of ideas from inception through to creation.

Fab Lab History

Born out of MIT, Fab Labs have spread from inner-city Boston to rural India, from South Africa to the North of Norway. Activities in Fab Labs range from technological empowerment to peer-to-peer project-based technical training to local problem-solving to small-scale high-tech business incubation to grass-roots research.



What are Fab Labs all about? Excerpts from The Fab Lab Charter

Access:

You can use the Fab Lab to make almost anything: you will learn to do it yourself, and you must share use of the Lab with other users and users

Mission:

Fab Labs are a global network of local workshops, enabling invention by providing access for individuals to tools for digital fabrication.

Education:

Training in the Fab Lab is based on doing projects and learning from peers.

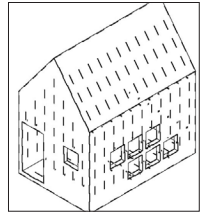
“I am 8 years old. I just made a circuit board”

Valentina Kofi – Day 1 at Takoradi Fab Lab, Ghana



Who uses Fab Labs?

- Individuals who wish to see their ideas or concepts become a reality or simply just make things they'd like to make
- Inventors and entrepreneurs who wish to test or market their ideas with tangible, working prototypes
- Local groups designing and making products to help in their community and build community links
- Start-up companies wishing to develop their products
- Micro engineering or manufacturing businesses
- Teachers and students working on design competitions or educational workshops



Benefits of Fab Labs

- Empowerment of individuals through the capability to produce their own products
- Community building through shared goals and activity
- Problem solving to support key agenda items such as transport (TIF), environmental technologies, sport, etc
- Outreach to a global community connected by sharing of ideas and linked through video conferencing
- Development of technological and creative skills and education
- Creation of new SMEs and new jobs
- Developing high tech small scale local community businesses
- Stimulation of the local economy through partnering with local suppliers and manufacturers - global design, local manufacture
- Invention!!

Empowerment



Education



Problem solving



Job creation



Invention

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