An Overview: Virtual Workplace Simulation

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The COVID-19 climate has shifted all norms. The University of Technology Sydney (UTS) has moved teaching online, companies are transitioning to remote workplaces and students are learning in their homes. In response to this complex challenge, the Faculty of Transdisciplinary Innovation (FTDi) has found an opportunity to reimagine how we deliver work-integrated learning to students and engage with industry partners.

The Bachelor of Creative Intelligence and Innovation (BCII) is a world-first, transdisciplinary combined degree combining students from 25 UTS core degrees. The future-oriented, industry-engaged curriculum champions critical and creative thinking, problem-posing and solving, innovation and invention, complexity and entrepreneurship, preparing these students for the jobs of the future. **The Bachelor of Technology and Innovation (BTi)** is a technology degree unlike any other. It responds to the emergence of systems, platforms, sectors and services that are the result of rapid technological change, that are shaping a new world of work where the boundaries continue to shift.

For BCII and BTi students, we are building a bespoke, virtual-workplace simulation co-designed with industry partners, academics, students and professionals to enhance students' professionalism and employability, whilst providing partners with our transdisciplinary students' innovative insights and out of the box ideas.

What is the value?

Talent: Gain access to top UTS graduate talent who are work-ready, innovation-focused and equipped with a toolkit of creative methodologies. Sharing graduate and employment opportunities directly with BCII students prevents unique thinkers from being filtered out by traditional recruitment processes.

Problem-solving: Explore a relevant, complex business challenge and receive real-time insights and solutions from a dedicated student team. Whether you are exploring an organisational issue within the COVID-19 climate or uncovering future opportunities in your industry, you will tap into the problem-solving capabilities of students in a safe-to-fail environment.

Engagement: Co-design a unique engagement experience with UTS award-winning learning designers, and benefit from the input and contribution of other industry professionals (expert panellists) and the insights and complex problem solving from top UTS transdisciplinary students. This subject is designed to overcome the limits of COVID-19 when it comes to delivering internship programs and student opportunities.

How does it work?

The subject offers students a transdisciplinary, professional experience with UTS industry partners, catering for a diverse range of student disciplines and interests by offering the choice of three or four professional streams to participate in. Each stream involves a different industry partner as the 'employer', a unique brief on an emerging issue and access to a range of experts across industry for knowledge and guidance.

The simulation immerses students in a role, similar to one they may apply for after graduation, exploring key stages including recruitment, induction, team building, project scoping and delivery. The cohort participating in the simulation will be from the fourth year of Bachelor of Creative Intelligence and Innovation (BCII) and second year of Bachelor of Technology and Innovation (BTi).

When does it run?

The subject runs in Winter from the end of July to mid-August, approximately 3 weeks. The subject's proposed dates are from 27th July to 14th August, however the full schedule will be confirmed later on with specific days and session times. The subject co-design requires lead and secondary partners to be available for a workshop in May/June. All partners must be available to participate in real-time during the subject period, however some engagements may be pre-recorded (see specific time commitments in partnership option descriptions below).

What are the partnership options?

1. Lead Partner

A unique opportunity for a limited number of partners to co-design a cutting-edge, virtual experience for our TD students. The lead partner is the 'employer' throughout the simulation and students are your new 'graduate cohort' inducted into the company. Immerse TD students in your workplace from sharing cultural values to setting relevant tasks around an emerging challenge. The lead partner will set tasks, brief students and review the work at completion with feedback. You will have access to the innovative and creative thinking of TD students in their final insights and solutions.

Details	Limited spots available, one per stream. High involvement with approximately 10 hours for preparation and 5 hours for the simulation.
Benefits	• Co-design the student simulation experience • Engagement with a bright cohort of students from a range of disciplines • Full access to the student's work and insights throughout the simulation • Opportunity to share your critical feedback on tasks • Expose students to your recruitment process, workplace culture & roles • Ability to evolve your graduate recruitment processes • Network with and hear from industry experts from a range of professional backgrounds on expert panels • Access to a transdisciplinary talent pool for future employment • Opportunity to test any virtual materials/activities in a safe-to-fail environment • Don't have to make physical workspace accommodations/WHS etc.
Activities	1. Co-design tasks with academics and partnership team 2. Provide relevant HR materials for induction and handbook 3. Available for induction and briefing of students on the challenge 4. Pre-record video briefing for tasks 5. Share feedback on student work

2. Secondary Partner

This level of partnership allows you to set one micro-task related to the stream's challenge for students to complete within a module. Rather than being the 'employer' in the simulation, you are a 'client'. If there is one specific task your organisation would like TD students' input on, this is for you.

Details	Limited spots available, one per stream. Medium involvement with 4 hours of preparation and 2 hours in the simulation.
Benefits	• Opportunity to co-design a micro-task with academics and lead partner • Access to the students' insights and solutions to the set task • Exposure to creative and innovative thinking of TD students • Access to a transdisciplinary talent pool for future employment
Activities	1. Co-design one microtask with academics and lead partner 2. Pre-record video briefing for task 3. Share feedback on student work

3. Workshop

A hands-on opportunity for an organisation or individual to engage with students by providing a virtual workshop on a relevant topic relating to the stream's brief. Example workshop: What is vulnerability and how to overcome it during COVID-19.

Details	Medium involvement with a 30 minute briefing with academics and approximately 1 - 1.5 hours in the simulation. Preparation time will vary based on workshop length and design.
Benefits	• Interactive and hands-on opportunity to engage with TD students
Activities	1. Prepare outline of workshop and relevant materials for students 2. Run workshop in simulation

4. Panellist

Engage with our students by speaking on an expert panel with other industry professionals. Share your provocative insights, trends and ideas on a given topic relevant to the challenge students are working on. In the simulation, you will take on a 'consultant' role.

Details	Low involvement with a 30 minute briefing with academics in preparation and 1 - 1.5 hours as part of the panel in the simulation.
Benefits	• Opportunity to share your industry knowledge with students to improve their ability to approach projects and tasks
Activities	1. Availability for panel briefing (in advance) 2. Expert panel including a short pitch and Q&A

5. Mentor

An opportunity to mentor a group of TD students and share your advice, insights and professional tips in a casual setting. Mentoring sessions will be done through Zoom or MS Team and can be one-on-one or in a group. Mentors can be alumni, professionals etc.

Details	Low involvement with a 15-30 minute briefing before the simulation and availability for 1 hour of mentoring.
Benefits	• Mentorship opportunity with 1:1 communication with students
Activities	1. Availability for mentor briefing 2. Mentoring session(s) with students

Next Steps and Considerations

- Choose an individual, team or department/s to be involved
- Select the right partnership level for you
- Determine a key challenge to explore and desired outcomes
- Participate in a codesign workshop with academics and industry
- Uncover shareable HR resources to create a more immersive experience

UTS Faculty of Transdisciplinary Innovation (FTDi)

An Australian first, the Faculty of Transdisciplinary Innovation (FTDi) offers degrees that encompass high-level critical and creative thinking, problem-solving, data and digital technologies, invention, complexity, innovation, future scenario building and entrepreneurship.

If you have any questions or would like more info:

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