

July 2024

**CRAFT**  
*network*

# CRAFT Newsletter

The CRAFT Network invites all network members to submit content to be featured in our bi-monthly newsletter. The newsletter includes reading resources, calls for collaboration, member research spotlights, and responses to compelling questions related to equity in/and making.



The CRAFT Research Collaboration Network, connects researchers and practitioners who work at the intersection of equity and interdisciplinary education in making both inside and outside of STEM. Together, research work to pursue common research questions and forge new partnerships with community and school-based making.





Love  
Translational  
Ethical  
Cultural Broker  
Political  
Spiritual  
Wellbeing  
EQUITY

Partnerships  
Y  
U  
T  
Y  
Criticality

# CRAFT!

**WHAT**  
What are the values that we want to see in our spaces?  
What goals do we have for the future of work and what can we do to achieve them?  
What are our values that we want to see in our spaces?

**WHO**  
Who are we looking for to help us achieve our goals?

**WHERE**  
Where can we best achieve our goals?

**HOW**  
How do we sustain our community and our partners within and beyond our projects?



**DESIGNIT! STUDIO**



What are we looking for to help us achieve our goals?

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CRAFT Network Meeting  
San Francisco, CA  
February, 2024



# CRAFT Network Meeting Highlights Spring 2024

## Children's Creativity Museum, San Francisco, CA

On Saturday, February 10, 2024 maker researchers and practitioners came together for an equity networking event with the CRAFT Network at the Children's Creativity Museum in San Francisco.

The meeting highlighted local Bay Area makerspaces, making practices, and connections to how making is shaped by Bay Area communities, identities, and issues of equity and belonging.

Many thanks go out to Prinda Wanakule, Senior Director of Inclusive Research, Development & Impact Measurement at the Tech Interactive in San Jose who generously hosted us for the convening.

Local Bay Area makers and organizations who participated shared artifacts and stories shared stories that highlight the multifaceted ways equity comes together for learners in Bay Area makerspaces.

Attendees mingled with the local makers, made and discussed artifacts inspired by the convening, and explored the Children's Creativity museum where they enjoyed a Chinese New Year celebratory meal.

CRAFT Network members connected with new and existing friends as they visited local events and venues such as a public telescope viewing at the Chabot Space & Science Center and the Exploratorium.

Thank you to all those who attended and joined the growing CRAFT Network community.



**CHILDREN'S  
CREATIVITY  
MUSEUM**

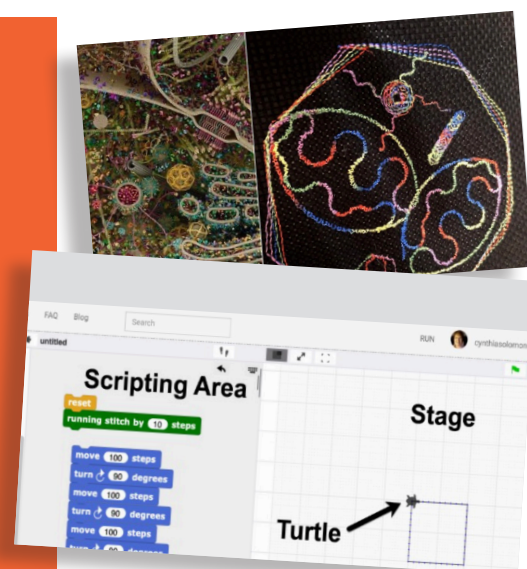
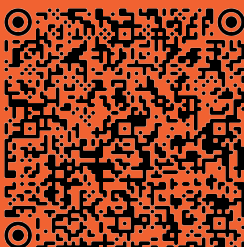


## Share Reading Resources

### TurtleStitching: At Least Twenty Things to Do With a Computer and a Computerized Embroidery Machine

By Susan Klimczak & Cynthia Solomon

Read the article in the  
*Contemporary Issues in  
Technology and Teacher  
Education Journal*



## Member Scholarship Spotlight

### Why do students turn away at the threshold of a makerspace?

Maggie Melo

Inspired by a community of scholars and practitioners dedicated to creating inclusive makerspaces. Dr. Melo's collaborative efforts alongside community scholars and practitioners is highlighted in the book "Remaking the Library Makerspace." While grateful for her academic and professional roles, they represent only a part of who she is. She is also an amateur maker, auntie, sister, daughter, partner, dog mom, and soon-to-be mom. As a Filipina American and first-generation college graduate, her identity is enriched by her lived

experiences.

During her time as a graduate student, Dr. Melo began working with the EITM Lab at the University of Arizona libraries, where she helped launch the first makerspace, the iSpace. She became fascinated by the idea and potential of makerspaces as learning environments for students but noticed that certain design elements limited their potential by making them less inviting diverse populations. Building on this noticing, this observation led her to focus her research on the spatial design of makerspaces and

how to tweak their features to make them more welcoming to all users.

"Why do students turn away at the threshold of a makerspace?"

Having worked with makerspaces for nearly a decade, became intrigued by the ordinary yet significant moment when students would peer inside a makerspace and then walk away. Exploring the question "why do students turn away at the threshold of a makerspace?", Dr. Melo found that the threshold was more than just an entry or exit; it



was a critical juncture where a decision to engage or not was made.

For the past two and a half years, Dr. Melo has engaged in research that explores why students decide to walk away from makerspaces. As part of this work, she asked a student who was entering a makerspace for the first time what their first impression of the space was, to which the student responded:

“[M]akerspaces feel very STEM-focused and very white male centric and I guess as a BIPOC woman, I don’t really feel welcome in those spaces all the time. And it takes just a lot of person, like energy and courage to just walk in, just start touching stuff and also

have like a little bit of anxiety.”

Inspired by the potential of makerspaces to create equitable and inviting learning experiences for students like the student she spoke with, Dr. Melo has continued

her work with the EiTM lab to understand how the spatial design of makerspaces communicates who belongs there.



**Marijel (Maggie) Melo** is an assistant professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill whose work focuses on critical theories and makerspaces. Dr. Melo runs The Equity in the Making (EiTM) lab, which advances and inspires individuals’ passions concerning equity and inclusion in society.



## We want to hear from you!

We are here to support work and collaborations that strive for equity in making. If you are a researcher, practitioner, or educator, **WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!** [Click here](#) to contribute to the newsletter!

Stay connected and stay tuned...

## Professional “Person–

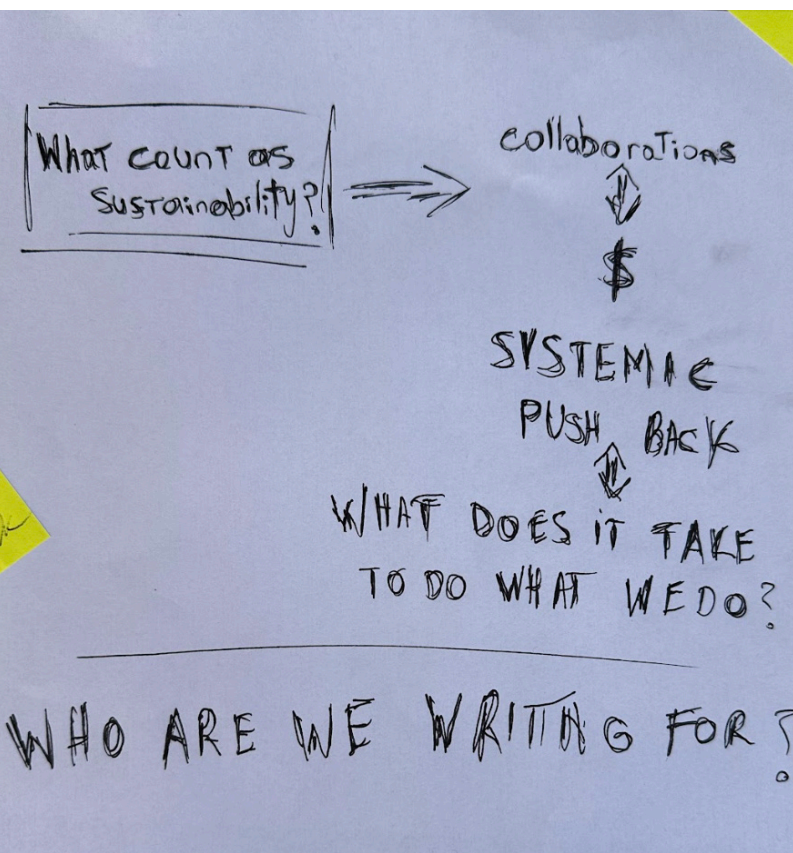
Are you looking to connect with someone with a particular expertise, common interests, or network of partners? Use the newsletter submission form [here](#) to share who you’re looking to connect with.



## Nominate a Question, Share a Response

This feature invites network members to engage with critical and timely questions emergent in their work and daily lives. Each newsletter will include a new question(s) as well as responses submitted for the previous newsletter’s question.

Do you have a question you would like to nominate for inclusion in the newsletter? [Click here](#) to submit your question or your response.





## Letter from the PI team

Dear CRAFT Network members and friends,

We hope you have enjoyed and found value in our kick-off newsletter. We launch this newsletter to foster cross-pollination and connection amongst existing network members and catalyze growth in network membership. This newsletter and the broader activity of the CRAFT Network is made possible through funding from the National Science Foundation under its Research Coordination Network (RCN) program (Award #2005898). This program aims to bring researchers and practitioners together to coalesce around timely, compelling, and critical issues.

The explicit aim of the CRAFT Network is to shape the field's understanding of making cultures and practices with special attention to issues of power, inequity, justice, and minoritized communities, peoples and practices. We are especially interested in bringing together scholars, educators, and practitioners whose work disrupts and seeks to transform the purpose and function of making-related research in STEM education and educational research and initiatives more broadly.

To learn more about the CRAFT Network and to join the network, visit our website at <https://craft-network.org>

In solidarity,

Eli Tucker-Raymond (Boston University), Maria Olivares (Boston University), Jill Castek (University of Arizona), Edna Tan (University of North Carolina Greensboro), Cynthia Graville (Saint Louis University)



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