

RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Mapping cultural diversity via cyberspace

Professor Ien Ang and a multi-disciplinary team of researchers from the Centre for Cultural Research are coming together with academics from Mumbai and Singapore to explore the development of a Cultural Diversity Digital Atlas through funding from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

'Researchers and organisations such as UNESCO have a desire to monitor and promote cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue as a means of supporting development and social harmony in an increasingly globalised world, says Professor Ang. 'Big cities are the places where the reality of cultural diversity is most visible. This project will develop an online, searchable, web-accessible map or atlas that can assist people in different cities in different parts of the world to present their experiences of cultural diversity, promote communication between and within them, and help them to learn from each other regardless of where they live. This project will bring together experts from three strategically important multi-cultural and ethnically diverse cities in the Asia Pacific region to scope out the feasibility of such a map, called the Cultural Diversity Digital Atlas.'

The multi-disciplinary and multi-cultural research team will conduct workshops to clarify the digital atlas concept, determine its technical features and capabilities, and build a prototype using the cultural profiles and stories of Mumbai, Sydney and Singapore. The researchers will work together with colleagues from the Archaeological Computing Laboratory at the University of Sydney, who have extensive experience in digital mapping methods. The prototype will then be tested for practical



usability and to ensure it works as an effective online tool to promote cultural diversity, pluralism and the intercultural exchange of experiences and ideas.

This project will employ innovative uses of media and technology to assist communication and dialogue between civilisations and cultures, and will therefore contribute to a growth in mutual respect, understanding and peace between and within nations.

Project Title: Global Digital Atlas for Cultural Diversity, Pluralism and Intercultural Dialogue in Asia

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