

# Setting and Reflecting on Conditions from Within

A prospective and retrospective toolkit for artistic and practice-based researchers and their supervisors

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## REFERENCES

Barbara Bolt, "Artistic Research — A Performative Paradigm?" in *PARSE* (2016), <https://parsejournal.com/article/artistic-research-a-performative-paradigm>.

Evelien Geerts and Iris van der Tuin, "Diffraction & Reading Diffractionally" in *Matter* (2021), <https://revistes.ub.edu/index.php/matter/article/view/33380>

# Rationale, or: How to Use the Toolkit

This toolkit for artistic and practice-based researchers, supervisors, and evaluators supports a multilayered approach to formulating and reflecting on the conditions of research both during the process itself and afterwards.

The toolkit invites researchers, in conversation with their peers and/or supervisors, to set the conditions of the research by working with two sets of interlinked questions and a table wherein participants note the various answers to these questions, their overlaps, and their discrepancies.

Setting the conditions from within can be done and/or repeated at various stages during a PhD-, postdoc-, or other research trajectory.

The reflective questions used can, after a project has been completed, form the starting point for evaluation and, in the case of the PhD, VALIDATION of the methods followed, formats chosen, knowledges produced, and reflections provided.

As such, the toolkit supports a prospective and retrospective reflective process that respects the performative — non-linear and unpredictable — process of artistic research.

# Pick your Format(s)

Scholarly monograph

Review

Reporting article

Essay

Case study

Glossary entry

Micrology

Novel

Artwork (all genres/media, material/immaterial)

Interactive (digital) work

Immersive environment

Exhibition

Exhibition catalogue

Artist book

Zine

Poster/pamphlet

Artist talk

Lecture performance

Performative conference

Screening program

Workshop

Research lab

Walk

Activist gesture

...

# Describe your Format(s Diffractively\*)

EXPRESSION	What is conveyed/expressed by each or by the formats assembled?
STYLE	In what style?
ARCHIVE	What relation to an archive? What archive?
AUDIENCE	What's the audience? What publics get created?
METHOD	How to get there? How did you get there?
SITUATEDNESS	What is your situatedness in a given field?
DESIRES	What are your desires in the given field?

\* Diffractions move beyond contrast and/or comparison;  
the invitation is to provide words for what happens BETWEEN two or more concepts, methods, or formats.

# Prospective Layer 1: Describe

Researcher, using the formats just described, fills out table for their project/practice

	EXPRESSION	STYLE	ARCHIVE	AUDIENCE	METHOD	SITUATEDNESS	DESIRES
Scholarly monograph							
Review							
Reporting article							
Essay							
Case study							
Glossary entry							
...							

## Prospective Layer 2: Enrich

Researcher provides more detail by answering some analytical questions.

What urgency are you trying to impart? Why?

Answer a minimum of three questions from below list or answer all of them:

What material practice do you intend to shift with the research? In what field?\*

What methodological shifts will you engage in the process?\*

What may the work reveal? What may it do?\*

What new concepts may emerge through the research?\*

Are these new concepts meant to shift understandings and practices in the field and/or  
in other discursive fields?\*\*

Is the work to a/effect its audience aesthetically, kinaesthetically, or affectively?\*\*

Is the work meant to shift the way we perceive the world?\*\*

How does each of your formats support or enrich the answers to these questions?

Questions adjusted (\*) or quoted directly (\*\*) from Bolt (2016).

# Title

How might your project and its (multiple) impetus(es)  
be condensed into a title?

A project title communicates in condensed form what your work(s) and text are meant to convey to others and, perhaps, how they are meant to convey that.

Try to formulate a title and, while you are at it, try to be brief as well as CONCEPTUAL.

NB: It is as potentially interesting to keep track of your changing project title throughout the period of your research as it is to keep a log of the answers to the questions in the toolkit. Changes can provide starting points for individual or collective reflection.

# Retrospective Layer: Reflect

Supervisors and/or promotion/assessment committee answer the questions for the purpose of validation. Has an urgency been communicated and addressed convincingly?

Pick a minimum of three or all questions from below list or answer ALL of them:

How did the research shift material practice in the field?

What methodological shifts occurred through this process?

What was revealed through the work? What did it do?

What new concepts emerged through the research?

Do these new concepts shift understandings and practices in the field and/or in other discursive fields?

Does the work a/effect its audience aesthetically, kinaesthetically or affectively?

Does the work shift the way we perceive the world?

How does each of your formats support or enrich the answers to these questions?

All questions quoted directly from Bolt (2016).