

Reflections: MemoryLab Launch

Date: 13 November 2024

The MemoryLab was successfully launched in November 2024. At our introduction and brainstorming session, we welcomed a group of active and curious colleagues and students from the College of Arts and Humanities, the College of Medical, Veterinary and Life Sciences, the College of Social Sciences, and beyond.

To kickstart the launch, we as co-directors—Craig, Maria, and Yulia—introduced the objectives of the Lab, our own research, and some planned activities. After that, we had the privilege to listen to two PGR students who presented their research on memory. They were Laura Paton, currently doing a PhD in Scottish Literature, and Mircea Van Der Plas, a Research Associate in the Centre for Cognitive Neuroimaging.

The second part of the launch was interactive. We invited participants to discuss the direction of the Lab and how it can support interdisciplinary collaborations on the topic of memory. As co-directors, we want the Lab to benefit all interested parties and were thus excited to get participants' ideas on how to shape the direction of the Lab. We used Mentimeter to capture their views and ideas.

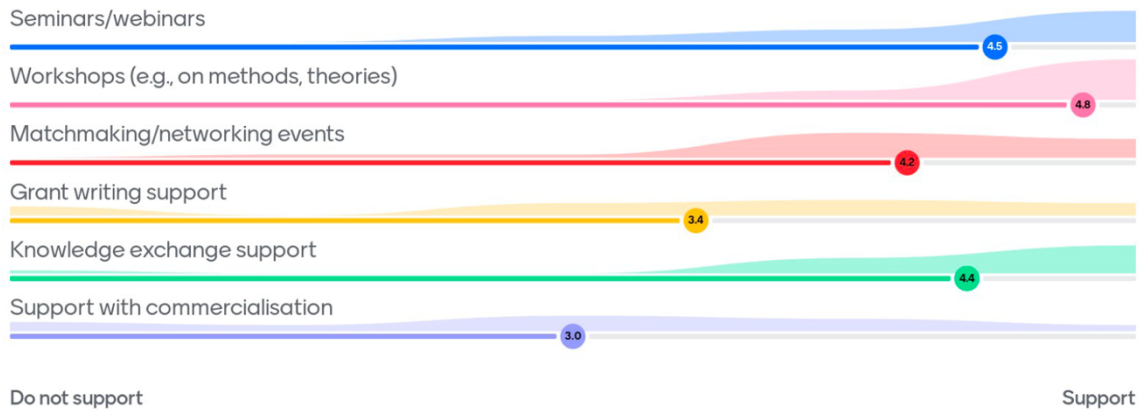
We first asked the participants to reflect on the topic of *What does memory mean to you?*



We then asked the participants *What do you think the MemoryLab should aim for to support your work?*

Offer opportunities to learn from others	Provide new and diverse perspectives on memory phenomena	Bring together different disciplines and perspectives on memory to enrich our individual fields/approaches	To create a sort of dictionary of terms in memory studies to prevent the never-ending reinterpretation of the same phrases (like 'public memory')
How memory can be used for social change in communities, especially through storytelling and sharing lived experiences.	Inspiration	As I'm not from an academic background, it would be great to try and understand some theoretical concepts and how I can put these into practice during my everyday tasks. It's also just so interesting!	Collaboration
Signposting/ facilitating discussion on key theory and ideas in the field of memory studies?	Engagement with the City, whether with the people of Glasgow or with the cultural history of the city	Learn from others	opportunities to test ideas/concepts
Step out of research bubble	Interdisciplinary perspectives on memory	Bring together the latest research on various aspects of memory	interdisciplinary approach to memory
Create an environment where individual ideas of memory can be discussed, embracing various points of view and sparking new thoughts.	You already are. ^_^ Encouraging those interested in exploring memory connected to their research. Connecting them to folk. Sharing their work. Inspiring one another. Being a scholarly ally.	Encourage interdisciplinary thinking and collaboration.	A regular series of events from different disciplinary perspectives
A forum for discussing the politics of memory	An opportunity to discuss what AI means for cultural memory		

Afterwards, we asked the participants *Which of the following activities do you support?*



Finally, we asked our participant what activities they would recommend for the Lab.

Some sort of open-access digital library, like a reading list (!) which categorises the key texts from the different fields	Public-facing events related to memory	What ways may there be best to record/measure memory-related elements in applied research? (whether using technology or observation or other forms)	Networking
Work in progress sessions	Feedback on project ideas, pointers to relevant literature in disciplines outside my own	Workshops on theory, reading lists	Coffee-connect or other networking
Feedback on initial ideas or writing.	Workshops which explain where to start	Simulations?	Methodologies and theories seminar for researchers new to the field, I also think a shared resource on agreed terminologies for memory studies would be so helpful
Facilitate talks and seminars from multiple subject areas as spaces to experiment with ideas and concepts, prior to committing to them fully	Theory-based workshops to learn more about the different interdisciplinary aspects of memory	Perhaps visiting speakers?	Short tasks or challenges to have us test out theories for ourselves in our own time
Reading group			

Networking

After the formal part of the launch, the participants stayed to celebrate the launch and to make new connections and to reconnect with old friends over drinks and a selection of cheeses. We thank everyone who joined us and contributed to shaping the MemoryLab—We are developing events based on the suggestions we received from you!

We are looking forward to seeing everyone again and meeting new friends in our future events!