



# EMM Lab Values and Mission Statement - 1.2

Last updated: May 17, 2023

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We are a professional space of academic knowledge production that aims to support forms of inquiry that work *outside* of traditional academic publishing. This includes, but is not limited to, research-creation, critical making, media arts production, and participant action research.

As a space dedicated to supporting these forms of inquiry, we care about valuing these forms of knowledge production. We also care about valuing those who produce this knowledge. Finally, we care about finding ways to mobilise these forms of knowledge in productive, public facing ways.

We aim to do so in line with the principles of social, environmental, and climate justice. These terms, to us, refer to a broadly intersectional approach that takes into account issues of labour, colonialism, land access, and stewardship. We hold that it is not enough to merely imagine other worlds; we seek to build them in large and small ways through the practice of research.

### Material Considerations (Procedures for Acquiring and Using Lab Equipment)

#### Acquiring Lab Equipment:

- Equipment acquired by the EMM Lab should be:
  - Repairable - We value the right to repair, as an environmentally conscious lab.
  - Reusable - Equipment that can only be used for a single project is not in line with an environmentalist ethos.
  - Sustainable - Equipment and materials used should (where possible) come from sustainable manufacturing processes, and should have post-use destinations other than landfills.
  - Open Source - The EMM Lab prefers open-source projects, software, and hardware (though technological barriers to use may exist).
  - Low-Cost and Accessible - We endeavour to work with materials that are inexpensive and can be acquired by other groups looking to iterate on our ideas.
- All of the above concerns are listed with the understanding that this lab exists in imperfect circumstances, and cannot have a fully substantive impact on larger systems of manufacturing and waste, and will not always be able to adhere to all of the above.

However, efforts to do so are worth a sincere effort, and will lead to useful insights about the systems in which we are imbricated.

### Lab Equipment Policies:

- Lab equipment is purchased for the production of lab research and the pedagogical needs of its members and community.
- Lab equipment can be used for personal projects by lab members, with the permission of the lab director or Cultural Studies media equipment coordinator.
- Lab equipment may also be loaned out to non-lab members for scholarly and public-facing research projects that align with the methods, ideals, and goals of the EMM Lab.

### **Products of Lab Research**

#### Privacy

- The EMM Lab is dedicated to ethical research, including, but not limited to, the right of research participants to their privacy. No private or confidential data, or research that could be used to uncover private or confidential data, will be published without the direct consent of those affected.
- Any private data collected or used will be destroyed upon the request of the respective individual.

#### Accessibility

- All EMM Lab outputs should be as accessible as possible, for all individuals. This includes both physical and technological considerations. As such, we aim to provide digitally-accessible alternatives to in-person events and screen-reader friendly, plain text documentation of our digital work.

#### Commercial and Non-Commercial Outputs

- Outputs of the EMM Lab are not for making markets nor intended for financial gains. Outputs should instead tend towards public experiments, public research, developing technological imaginaries, and encouraging new ways of being.
- Part of the output of the EMM Lab is the process by which projects are undertaken. In alignment with the EMM Lab's Ethos of Learning, and with its goal of public-making, experiments should be reproducible, and documentation should exist so that others may more easily reenact and iterate on our projects and works. To this end, we frequently use open-source and creative commons licences when distributing our work.

#### Social Media and Public Facing Media Outputs

- The EMM Lab maintains a Twitter (@emm\_lab) that serves as a lab book and record of lab progress, lab successes and failures, and thoughts around those topics. The Twitter account is designed to be a tool to be used to forward conversations about

progress, the acceptability of failure in academic spaces, and to forward the process of “learning together” that EMM Lab supports under its Ethos of Learning (see below).

- EMM Lab is not beholden to updating its Twitter (and any subsequent social media presences) on any regular schedule, or with any standardised forms of content production; all EMM Lab social media is a tool to be used, rather than something that uses us.
- EMM Lab’s social media accounts will not be used to retweet, share, follow, or support other Tweets or accounts without the express permission of either the Lab Manager, or the Lab as a collective. Exclusions to this are as follows:
  - EMM Lab will acknowledge and reply to comments on, and reTweets of, its own tweets and content.
  - EMM Lab will follow academic accounts that are producing relevant and interesting work, helping to place the EMM Lab in conversation with like-minded scholars and scholarly spaces. This includes collaborators, lab members, and friends of the lab.
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  - EMM Lab will re-follow accounts that follow the EMM Lab twitter, pending Lab Manager or group review.
- EMM Lab will tweet using the first person plural “we,” before providing specific attribution to lab members. For example, if Anne has been working on setting up a new solar panel, @emm\_lab may tweet “This week we’ve been working on further solar work, and Anne has made plenty of progress in assembling and setting up our newest solar panel!” or something similar.
- Per our Primacy of Care and policy of rest, EMM Lab social media accounts may take time off, as either activity in the lab slows, or lab members become busy. Again, we are not beholden to specific levels of output. More broadly, EMM Lab holds that social media account usage should be useful, meaningful, and/or fun; when an account ceases to be those things, there is no obligation to continue producing content with it.
- Per our commitment to ethical research and the importance of privacy, the EMM Lab social media requires informed consent before posting names, pictures, or other identifying information of people or groups.

## **Lab Culture**

### Inclusive Space

- We intend for the EMM Lab to be a safe and inclusive space, and for lab members to carry our values outside of the lab. As such, we recruit lab members, and collaborate with people outside the lab on the basis of these shared goals and values. We are a group that comes together through common interests in media technologies and research methods informed by intersectional theories of feminism, race, colonialism, and disability.

- Put in more direct terms, the EMM Lab is a space that rejects all ableism, bullying, colonialism, homophobia, fascism, racism, sexism, and transphobia (alongside other forms of systemic violence or prejudice not listed here).
- The EMM Lab has an Open Door policy for lab management on issues of lab culture. Our policies for interviews and conflict processes are evolving, but seek to incorporate and bolster these commitments.

### Ethos of Learning

- The EMM Lab is more interested in learning than in efficiency. In practical terms, this means that the EMM Lab is interested in learning-focused teaching, collaborative efforts, and skill-sharing practices.
- This also extends to acknowledging that incoming lab members will have both their own, unique skills and competencies, and their own, unique knowledge gaps, which may include a lack of scholarly or technical knowledge on the part of any given lab member.
  - With this in mind, knowledge of lab members is varied--and valued in that variety. Additionally, knowledge building is a shared project within the lab and between lab members, rather than a condition for entry.
- To this end, we aim to learn together instead of specializing and siloing the work of research. Lab members will regularly teach what they know to other lab members, such that all lab members have the opportunity to learn all the skills integrated into a project. Lab members are also expected to produce beginner-friendly documentation of their projects when finished. This keeps a living archive of skills in the lab community and fosters more holistic forms of knowledge of the topic.

### Academic Space

- The EMM Lab is primarily a professional, academic, and collaborative space, rather than a social one (though see Primacy of Care, below). As such, the EMM Lab should primarily be a space for generative work, though socialization is, of course, permitted within the Lab. Non-lab related social interactions should be practiced with both an ethos of care and inclusion in mind (*i.e. we are not a clubhouse*).

### Primacy of Care

- The EMM Lab is a space of care and collaboration, and is invested in the personal and professional flourishing and wellbeing of lab members. As such, if the lab work is taking an undue mental or physical toll on any lab members, those members should prioritize their health over contributions to the lab.
- Lab members' contributions to the lab are an expectation, but not an obligation. This includes acknowledging the fact that participation and work output will wax and wane over time for both individual lab members, and the lab as a whole. As such, a key ongoing goal of the EMM Lab is to support the participation and collaboration of lab members to the extent that they would like to collaborate and participate. This includes paid sick and vacation days for employees, as well as periods of coordinated rest for lab activities.

- Whenever possible, lab members should communicate about interruptions to their availability and capacities so that work can be redistributed or lessened for the group.

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Late updated: July 18 2022

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