

International Fab Lab Association



Newsletter – February 2012

Here is our February 2012 Newsletter, also as PDF. We will inform you about what is happening in our association and abroad and how you can participate. Feel free to forward it further.

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From the board

In our board meeting via Skype on February 12th, we focused on the Fab Charter and the common set of Tools and Processes. In Peru we promised to prepare a **Review of the Fab Charter** for our next general meeting in August 2012. So, we agreed with Lindi Mophuthi's proposal to get there. She will explain it in the **article at the end of this Newsletter. Don't miss it!**

Regarding the **common set of tools and processes**, we also prepare an update with the average Fab Lab in mind (say 50k USD initial investment). We will keep an open eye on Mini Fab Lab as well. Further, we will consider the criteria to be able to run a Fab Academy. We realize that the latter takes more than tools and processes alone. Anyway, Alex Schaub will bring this further; next time more.

We received good news from **Fab Academy 2**, the new academy dedicated to **setting-up and running a Fab Lab**, which should start in September 2012. Klaas Hernamdt & co. have the first draft of their design document almost ready. We will forward it to all members with a request for comments without delay. Contact: klaas@fabfolk.com.

Our next board meeting has been scheduled for March 12th 2012. We will send you our March Newsletter one week later.

FABulous greetings!

Picture of the month

What are you seeing, where on earth is this found and what is its relation with Fab Labs? The answer will be revealed in our next issue.



The picture in the January 2012 issue of our Newsletter showed the shop-window of Fab Lab South-Limburg in Maastricht (The Netherlands). The reflections reveal that the picture was taken during the famous Carnival parade, exactly one year ago. The Fab Lab in Maastricht is the perfect place to decorate your Carnival outfit. By the way, it has more unconventional workshops like a knitwear workshop and a course to prepare a perfect espresso or cappuccino; a creative way to attract new visitors!

New web site at fablabinternational.org



The International Fab Lab Association proudly announces its brand new web site at fablabinternational.org. We try to make it the public window to the international Fab Lab community from where you can link through to other Fab related sites. And of course it is the virtual community center of our association.

The site is in English, but facilitates the creation of parallel editions of selected pages in other languages. Volunteers for translating pages are welcome! Please, contact Axel Sylvester.

Design competition: furniture for FabLabs



Domus, in collaboration with FabLab Torino, invites designers, architects, students and professionals to participate in an open-source design challenge: conceive a line of furniture to be used in FabLabs all around the world that can be manufactured in the FabLabs themselves. A selection of the best designs, chosen by a panel of experts, will be realised and exhibited by Domus at the Milan Salone del Mobile in April 2012, published in Domus and made available for download on domusweb.it. For details, see [their site](#).

Fab Educa

In The Netherlands, from Fab Lab Amersfoort a small group of Dutch Fab Lab staff was formed to work on improving the educational services of Fab Labs. One idea is to come to some standardization of documentation (and its metadata) on educational activities of Fab Labs.

As FabLabs in other countries may have the same needs, they may try to give such a workgroup an international dimension. Anyway, those who are interested, please contact Iris Douma at iris@fabfolk.com.

Fab OHAS

Different members stressed the importance of more attention to organizational health and safety in Fab Labs. It would be welcome if we could identify what has been done so far and what are priorities for the short term. Apart from a single text fragment in our Fab Charter, we need to make our knowledge easily accessible for all and we need to educate ourselves in good practices in this field. We try to form a group on this topic, to harvest what we know and do already, and to work on further dissemination, e.g. via a video conference. Contact: Pieter van der Hijden.

FABulous News

In January 2012 we welcomed one new Fab Lab: Fab Lab in Windhoek, Namibia, now in its planning stage.

More details can be found on the official list of Fab Labs at <http://wiki.fablab.is/wiki/Portal:Labs>.

Reading and watching



FAB@SCHOOL PRESENTS

MAKE TO LEARN: EXPLORING WIND POWER

The book is [free to download](#); additional free materials can be found at <http://www.maketolearn.org/wind/>.

[MakeToLearn.org](http://www.maketolearn.org) provides an online space where teachers and students can come together virtually to [explore](#) digital fabrication, [discuss](#) it with like-minded colleagues, [learn](#) core academic content through lessons and curricular units, and [discover](#) new tools to facilitate digital fabrication in the classroom. It is also an online hub for sharing and downloading digital shapes and designs.

Upcoming events

- 23 February 2012: 11h.: Gennevilliers (France): Inauguration of the Fab Lab (called Faclab) at L'Université de Cergy Pontoise; <http://www.faclab.org/2012/02/le-faclab-ouvre-officiellement-ses-portes-le-24-fevrier/>
- 27 March 2012: Design competition: furniture for FabLabs; submission deadline; <http://www.domusweb.it/en/upcoming-event/call-for-ideas-autoprogettazione-20-->
- 10-12 April 2012: Tulsa, Oklahoma, USA: USFLN Symposium 2012; <http://usfln.org>.
- 13 April 2012: Tulsa, Oklahoma, USA: USFLN Camp ShopBot Post Symposium; <http://usfln.org>.
- 16-19 May 2012: Manchester UK: FAB-★ Manchester, European Fab Summit at Future Everything Festival; <http://futureeverything.org/festival/>

- 23-25 May 2012: Cotonou, Benin: E-learning Africa; <http://www.elearning-africa.com/>.
- 18-24 June 2012: Boot camp in various locations; Fab Lab management and installation; coordination@fabacademy.org.
- 22-28 August 2012: Wellington, New Zealand; Massey University, the Institute of Design for Industry and Environment at the College of Creative Arts; www.fab8nz.com; Chris Jackson fab8nz@gmail.com.

Statistics - Our association has 104 members (individual persons). If you know people interested in becoming a member, let them fill in the form you find on <http://fablabinternational.org>.

There are now 116 Fab Labs. Please, check your ratings!

FAB LABS	1 Oct. 2011	1 Nov. 2011	1 Dec. 2011	1 Jan. 2012	1 Feb. 2012
Planned	NA	NA	NA	5	4
Under development	NA	NA	NA	8	10
AAA rating	10	10	11	11	11
Other ratings	40	48	49	57	55
Not rated	49	49	49	33	36
Total	99	107	109	114	116

Colophon - This Newsletter is sent to you on behalf of the Board of the International Fab Lab Association. Our central email address is association@fabfolk.com; the address of our preliminary web site is <http://fablabinternational.org>.

Of course, you also can contact our board members directly:

- Chairperson, Pieter van der Hijden (pvdh@sofos.nl),
- External and Internal Relations, Axel Sylvester, Hiroya Tanaka (axel_association@fablab-hamburg.org, htanaka@sfc.keio.ac.jp),
- Innovation (new products and services), Alex Schaub (alex@waag.org),
- Liaison CBA and FABn, Sherry Lassiter (sherry.lassiter@cba.mit.edu),
- Registrar (Fab Charter, Rite-de-passage, List), Lindi Mophuti, lindi.mphuthi@gmail.com,
- Secretary, Peter Troxler (trox@fabfolk.com),
- Treasurer, Betty Barrett (bb1@illinois.edu).

Review of the Fab Charter

With its aim of providing widespread access to modern means for invention, the Fab Labs have exploded all over the world with over 106 (operational, planned and under development) labs. This explosion required some general set of guidelines that all fab labs worldwide share; and this is what the Charter aims to achieve.

The Charter has been a topic of discussion for a while and it has become pivotal to review our charter to be used and applied by labs worldwide.

We welcome you to this discussion

The International Fab Lab Association was established in 2011, which is a democratic organization run by its members or individuals interested in and/or involved in the Fab Lab community. The aim of the association is a.o. to monitor the functioning of the fab lab's rite-de-passage as well as the implementation of the Fab Charter; and intervene if necessary.

It was proposed that a small workgroup be formed to review the current charter and make recommendations to the association board, which will in turn decide on the forwarded proposal and present at the next general members meeting (i.e. New Zealand). It became a daunting exercise to get people together for a Skype discussion and as such, the board had to review the process of getting inputs about the charter. It is to this end that the board now is requesting your inputs via our newsletter.

We look forward to your messages!

The current Fab Charter is a working and living document and we propose that the members review the current charter, and send 2 or 3 suggestions to Lindi (lindi.mphuthi@gmail.com). These suggestions will be deliberated and a final draft prepared for presenting at the next meeting where members will have an opportunity to vote.

There are currently 3 vision and 6 mission statements that were proposed at the FabFoo sessions in Lima (Fab7) and Amsterdam (Fab6); which needs to be processed and a draft submitted to the board before Fab8 meeting. Figure 1 is a representation of the current Fab Charter, and figure 2 represents the proposed mission and vision statements.

The Fab Charter

Mission: fab labs are a global network of local labs, enabling invention by providing access for individuals to tools for digital fabrication.

Access: you can use the fab lab to make almost anything (that doesn't hurt anyone); you must learn to do it yourself, and you must share use of the lab with other users and users.

Education: training in the fab lab is based on doing projects and learning from peers; you're expected to contribute to documentation and instruction.

Responsibility: you're responsible for:

- **safety:** knowing how to work without hurting people or machines.
- **cleaning up:** leaving the lab cleaner than you found it.
- **operations:** assisting with maintaining, repairing, and reporting on tools, supplies, and incidents.

Secrecy: designs and processes developed in fab labs must remain available for individual use although intellectual property can be protected however you choose.

Figure 1: Fab Charter

Vision and Mission Statements

VISION: Following the Foo, it seemed that adding a vision statement is worth consideration; here are some options:

- a. To leverage the ideas, tools and processes of digital fabrication toward improving the human condition.
- b. To leverage the ideas, tools and processes of digital fabrication to create meaningful change in the world.
- c. To sustain a global revolution, leveraging digital fabrication to change the world

MISSION: (1 and 2 are from the Foo sessions, and 3-6 are new)

1. To realize a global, open network of people collaborating and sharing knowledge in digital fabrication for problem solving in order to facilitate individuals in solving their challenges.
2. To realize a global, open network of people collaborating and sharing knowledge in digital fabrication in order to contribute to individual's social, cultural, and economic aspirations.
3. To sustain a global, open network of people sharing digital fabrication knowledge to democratize access, spark innovation, and facilitate empowerment in individuals and communities worldwide.
4. To sustain an open network of people sharing digital fabrication knowledge, sparking innovation, facilitating empowerment, and catalyzing change within the global community.
5. To sustain an open network of people sharing digital fabrication knowledge to spark innovation, facilitate empowerment, and catalyze change in the global community.
6. To sustain an open network of people sharing digital fabrication knowledge to catalyze change by democratizing access, sparking innovation, and facilitating empowerment within the global community.

Figure 2: Proposed Vision and Mission Statements so far

[Please, overflow Lindi's mailbox at lindi.mphuthi@gmail.com with your text suggestions, comments, critical notes etc. You are welcome!](mailto:lindi.mphuthi@gmail.com)