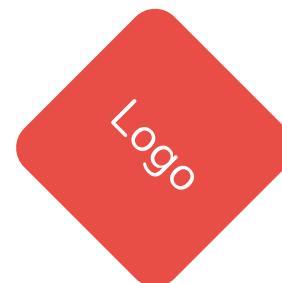




# Digital Tools in Modern Boardgames

Melissa Rogerson, Lucy Sparrow, Martin Gibbs  
2021 - 2022



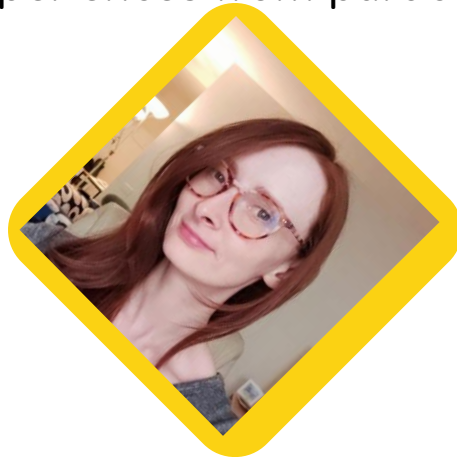
# Digital Tools in Modern Boardgames

## 1) Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) researchers in games & play (The University of Melbourne)

Our research explores the ways that people experience and create games and playful experiences, seeking to understand how technology supports these activities. We are interested in digital and physical games; children's play as well as that of adults; co-located and remote play; novel interaction modalities such as voice, gaze and hybrid tools; and gaming experiences from participation through fandom to spectatorship.



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# Digital Tools in Modern Boardgames

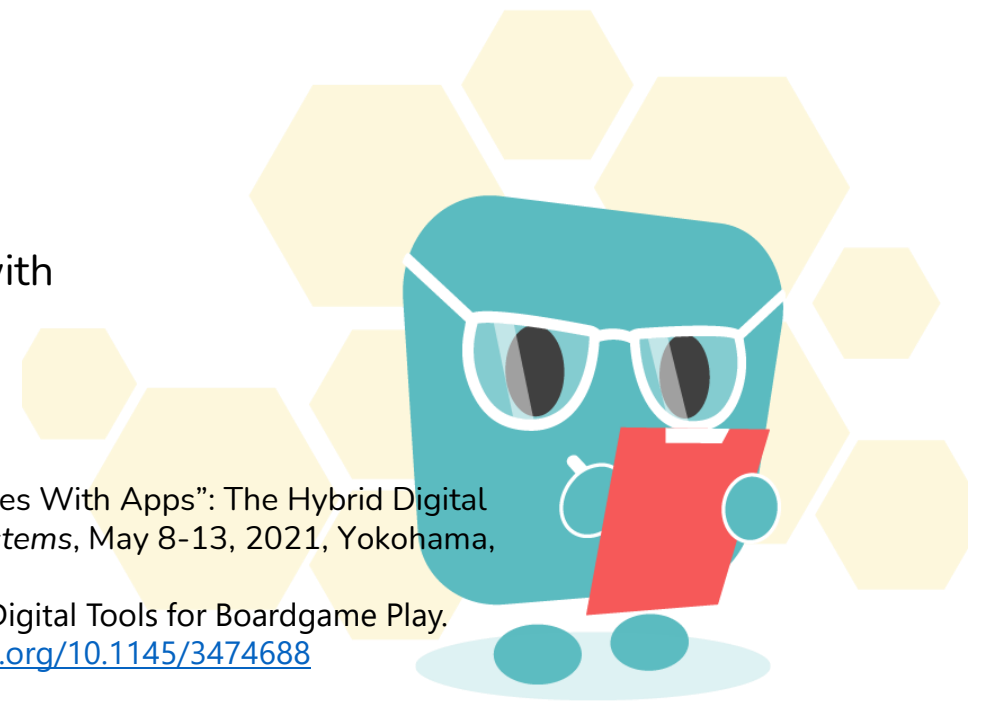
## 2) Background and objectives

- Even before the COVID-19 Pandemic, there was increasing interest in the use of digital tools for boardgame play – through online boardgaming as well as through official and unofficial apps to support play. [1]
- Building on our previous project with Game-in-Lab [2], this project aims to explore and compare how boardgame designers and publishers, including app developers, and the gaming public perceive the use of hybrid and digital tools.
- Our project explores how we can effectively communicate with players about how digital tools are used in a game.
- We aim to develop a visualisation method that summarises how digital tools are used in a game.

[1] Melissa J. Rogerson, Lucy A. Sparrow and Martin R. Gibbs. 2021. Unpacking “Boardgames With Apps”: The Hybrid Digital Boardgame Model. *Proceedings of the CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*, May 8-13, 2021, Yokohama, Japan. 10.1145/3411764.3445077

[2] Melissa J. Rogerson, Lucy A. Sparrow and Martin R. Gibbs. 2021. More Than a Gimmick – Digital Tools for Boardgame Play. *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction*, 5 (CHI PLAY). Article 261. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3474688>

**Project keywords:** board game, hybrid games, digital tools, hybrid play



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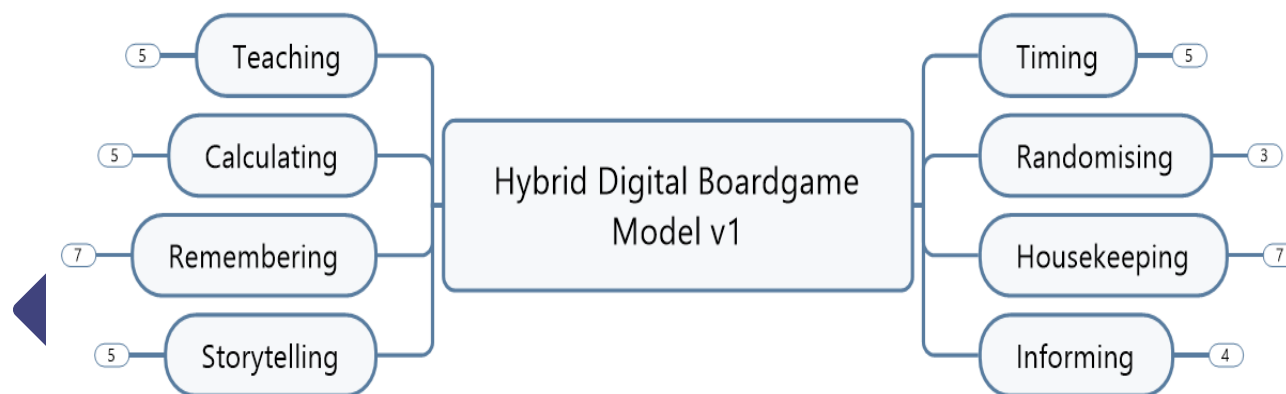
## 3) Methodology

- Constructionist, qualitative research, using survey and interview methods to study attitudes and opinions.
- Purposive sampling, supported by 'snowball' recruitment.
- Reflexive Thematic Analysis [3, 4] generates a view of underlying themes in the data.
- Axial analysis of hybrid digital boardgames uses our *Hybrid Digital Boardgame Model* [1] and the *Building Blocks of Tabletop Game Design* [5] as a framework to inform discussions.

[3] Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke. 2021. *Thematic analysis: A practical guide*. Sage, London.

[4] Gareth Terry and Nikki Hayfield. 2021. *Essentials of Thematic Analysis*. American Psychological Society, Washington, DC.

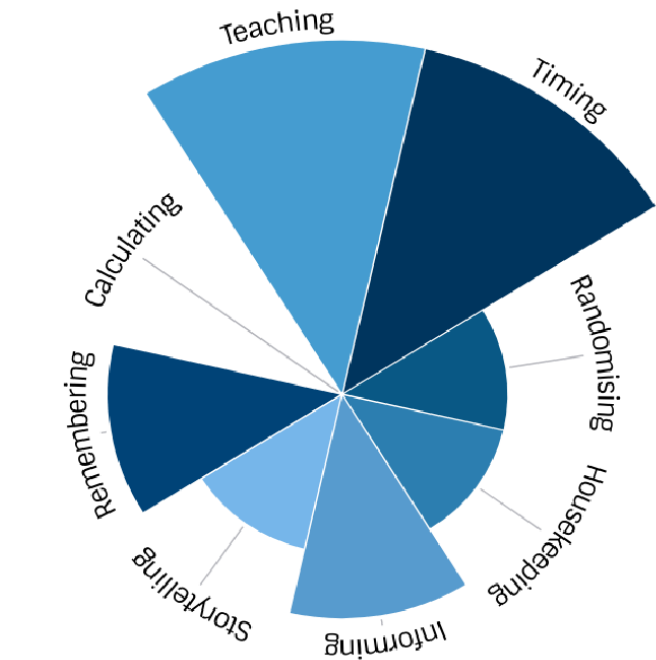
[5] Geoffrey Engelstein and Isaac Shalev. 2019. *Building blocks of Tabletop Game Design: An Encyclopedia of Mechanisms*. CRC Press (Taylor & Francis), Boca Ration, FL.



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## 4) Results

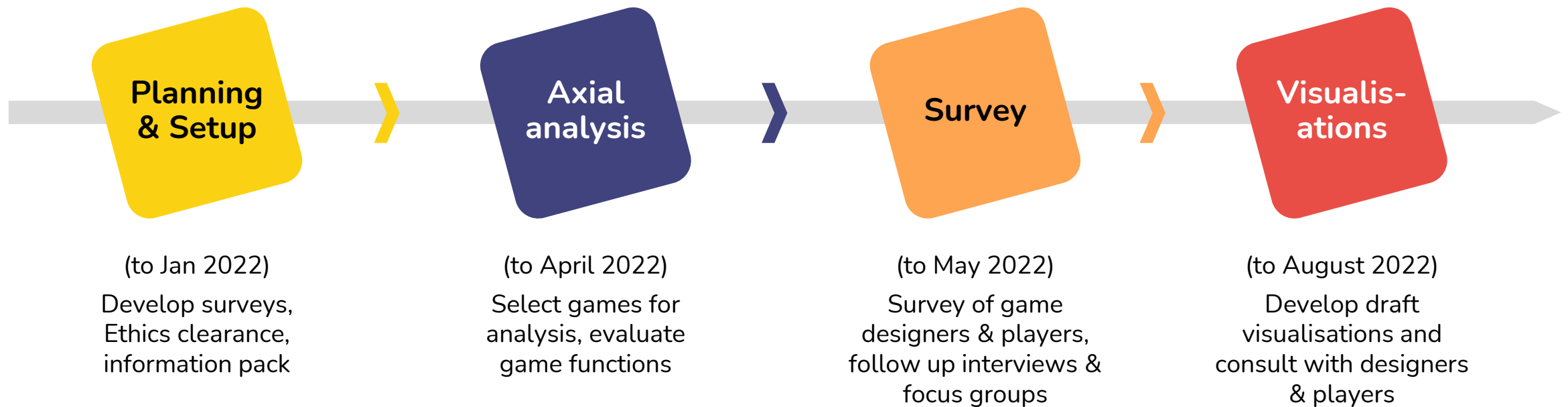
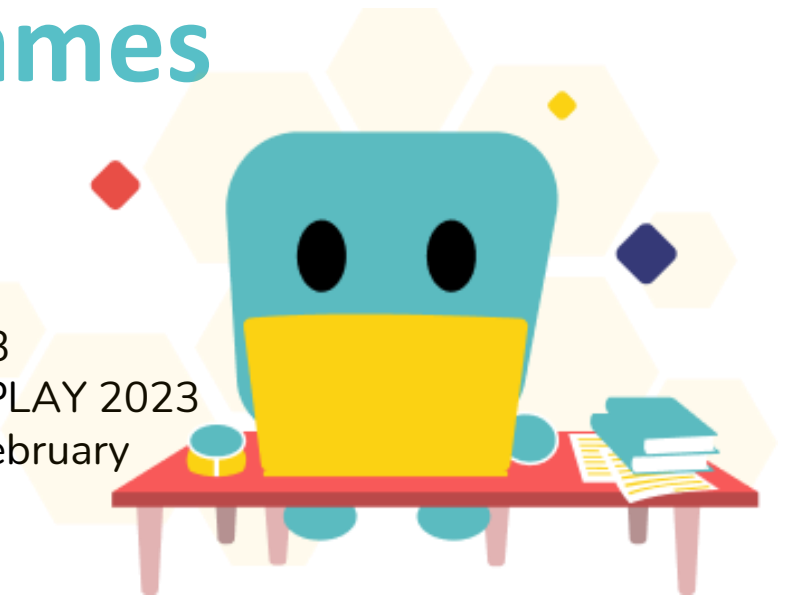
- Expected results:
  - Axial review of 50 hybrid digital boardgames will identify whether particular hybrid functions occur in clusters, whether they pair with established boardgame mechanisms (« Building blocks »).
  - Interviews and survey will establish and compare designers' and players' perceptions of how digital tools are used in boardgaming and how to present that to players.
- Expected challenges or issues
  - Recruitment of boardgame designers with relevant experience and expertise



# Digital Tools in Modern Boardgames

## 5) Key project dates & outlets

Key publication outlets include: Board Game Studies Colloquium 2022; CHI 2023 (submission September 2022); DiGRA 2023 (submission December 2022); CHI PLAY 2023 (submission February 2023); Designing Interactive Systems 2022 (submission February 2023)



**Merci !**

