

EDUCATION

littleBits™

LITTLEBITS EDUCATION COMMUNITY CASE STUDY

MUSEUM WORKSHOPS WITH LITTLEBITS

BY

Jessica Nuñez

TITLE

Family and Youth Programs Assistant

ORGANIZATION

Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum
New York, NY

AGE LEVELS

5-12

LITTLEBITS PRODUCTS USED

Workshop Set (modified)

DATE

May 2014

JESSICA NUÑEZ

**Family and Youth Program Assistant
Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum**



Jessica Nuñez is the Family and Youth Program Assistant at the Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum where she coordinates family programs and is a youth development officer.

Prior to joining the Cooper-Hewitt team, Jessica began her career in museum education at the Newark Museum; where she provided tours and conducted hands-on workshops for school programs.

Jessica has also worked with young adults at Rutgers University where she was a Part-Time Lecturer for the Spanish Department, as well as an Assistant Director for the Study Abroad Program in Salamanca, Spain.

Jessica has a M.A in Spanish Translation and Interpreting from Rutgers University, and is currently pursuing a certificate in Childcare Management from NYU School of Continuing and Professional Studies.

SARAH FREEMAN

**Public Education Manager
Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum**



Sarah Freeman is the Public Education Manager at Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum where she oversees programs for adults and families.

Before joining Cooper-Hewitt, Sarah was Deputy Head of Education at Dulwich Picture Gallery in London, working with a variety of audiences in award-winning education initiatives.

Sarah began her career in arts education at The Center for Arts Education in New York, where she worked on the Professional Development and Peer Exchange Program, and worked extensively with teachers, schools and families at The Lighthouse, Scotland's Centre for Architecture, Design and the City in Glasgow. Sarah holds a B.A. in Studio Art from Oberlin College, and studied

Learning in Museums and Galleries via The University of Leicester's School of Museum Studies distance learning program.

HOW DID YOU LEARN ABOUT LITTLEBITS AND WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO IMPLEMENT THEM INTO YOUR PROGRAM?

We are always looking for new ways to engage families with design. My colleagues and I went to **Emoti-Con**; the keynote speaker was Limor Fried from Adafruit and she recommended littleBits as a great resource.

We visited the littleBits office to explore what was possible and we thought it would a well-received addition to our program.



A Workshop begins with a demonstration of littleBits

EXPLAIN HOW YOU INCORPORATED LITTLEBITS INTO YOUR PROGRAM? DO YOU HAVE AN OUTLINE OF YOUR PROCESS?

The original idea was to incorporate littleBits into our version of the Imagination Foundation's Caine's Arcade Global Cardboard Challenge. The workshop we ended up running was "littleBits Mania" which was sponsored by Target Design Kids.

Part of the program is that the participants get to use materials in the class and then take them home. We assembled the modules, littleBits markers and some materials into individual take home containers, which were handed out to the families when they arrived. Monika Wuhrer from the Open Source Gallery in Brooklyn joined in leading the workshop.

She gave a short introduction to littleBits, a demo showing the different colors and functions and then gave the design challenge.

Participants would spend time exploring their container of modules and see if they could design a circuit that could be found in their city. Children sketched their designs and then constructed the circuit. At the end of the workshop, everyone shared what they had made.

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WHAT HAS BEEN THE RESPONSE OF YOUR COMMUNITY?

We had a great response to this workshop and participants were exposed to new ideas and materials. There was a lot of excitement to go on the website and several people told us they continued to use their modules at home. Overall everyone really enjoyed it and we had very positive feedback.

A Bit Boxes ready for our participants to begin making.

HOW WOULD YOU SUMMARIZE WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED IN IMPLEMENTING YOUR LITTLEBITS PROGRAM?

Next time, we would like to try a more open makerspace model. That way people would understand that the modules need to stay in the space and not be brought home. The way the program is currently structured, there was limited interaction between participants (children worked with their own family, rather than other children), so in the future we would be more interested in supporting more collaborative brainstorming and making as a whole group.



DO YOU HAVE PHOTOS OR VIDEOS THAT YOU CAN SHARE?

A Drawing circuits!



WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE PLANS FOR LITTLEBITS USE?

This was the only program that we ran. We have been thinking of the makerspace program, which would be more geared towards Youth Programs rather than families.

A Everyone hard at work on their creations.

