UT Austin | Portugal

DIGITAL BITS

Madeira builds a new bridge to UT-Austin

The Digital Media program is working with the Madeira Interactive Technologies Institute at the University of Madeira on prospects for their new participation in the UT-Austin Portugal collaboration. Professors Valentina Nisi and Nuno Nunes from M-ITI visited August this month and spoke with several faculty members about possible research and teaching opportunities. The Madeira ITI works with and develops various interactive technologies, and will explore new options in media making and design with UT-Austin. Professor Nisi participated in the program's Open Institute and shared her creative work in developing community-based mobile stories; these were designed for various types of platforms, including phones. The dynamics of the sharing community and opportunities for developing interactive stories are among the near term research interests.

(From left, Kathleen Tyner, Matt Lease and Byron Wallace)

Successful FCT-Funded Investigators Launching New Project

In the Digital Media area, three projects were chosen for funding by FCT in the last research call. Congratulations to these teams!

- **Games for Media and Information Literacy**, UT PI Kathleen Tyner; PT PI Maria da Conceição Gonçalves Costa

- **Mining and Detection Systems**, UT PI Matt Lease; PT PI Álvaro Pedro de Barros Borges Reis Figueira

- **Recognition of Irony in Multicultural Social Media**, UT PI Byron Wallace; PT PI Paula Cristina

Quaresma da Fonseca Carvalho

Open Data Institute in Austin

The UT Austin-Portugal Digital Media Program's inaugural Open Institute was held August 2 to 7. This one-week residential program at the Moody College of Communication at the University of Texas at Austin included 22 speakers and participants from all over the world, including faculty and graduate students from the University of Texas at Austin, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, University of Madeira, and the University of Porto. The goal was to teach and learn the principles of open hardware, software and open data usable for governmental purposes and open access. Open access to government data, health issues, civic hacking, open street mapping, startups, open storytelling and other related topics were discussed among the group, augmented with various field trips to places in Austin – the ATX Hackerspace, Austin city hall to talk with city officials, a prominent downtown co-working space, UT's Harry Ransom Center - where some of these ideas were being realized.

Catarina Mota, a TED fellow who co-founded Open Materials, Valentina Nisi, professor at the University of Madeira and formerly with Media Lab Europe, James Seppi and Andy Wilson, software developers at Texas Natural Resources Information System and other leading open data scholars including faculty from the participating universities contributed. Graduate students from various majors, including Journalism, Education, Computer Engineering, Political Science, and Graphic Design participated.

Amilcar Correia (Publico) arrives in Austin

Amilcar Correia, from Portugal's daily national newspaper PÚBLICO, is spending the fall at UT-Austin as a fellow at the Technology and Information Policy Institute as well as with the Knight Center for Journalism in the Americas. Amilcar is the newspaper's editor-in-chief for P3, the newspaper's website targeting young adults. Amilcar led the development of the site after a career in the newsroom, working with PÚBLICO since

1990 as a reporter and later editor and deputy editor-in-chief. UT Austin faculty member and cinematographer Nancy Schiesari had the chance to work with the Porto-based P3 staff in its early years and was fascinated with their impulse to make an online newspaper that used "cinematic language." We hope to hear a lot more about this innovation with Amilcar here.

New Research Call: Stay Tuned

The Portuguese Foundations for Science and Technology will release another research call supporting the UT-Austin collaboration with Portuguese researchers in the fall, 2015. As with the last call, Portuguese researchers will team with UT-Austin based researchers to apply in various subjects. Within the Digital Media area, the priority areas include video games (gamification, storytelling); the economics of media industries within the lusophone market; digital media in health and health communication; digital media content and tools for transmedia, e-government and education; media processing and retrieval systems; public and civic media and development opportunities, among other topics. Proposals for both large and smaller projects will be entertained.