

MANCHESTER SCHOOL  
OF ARCHITECTURE

# COMMUNITY WAVES

Community Waves is an exciting collaboration with Manchester-based Radio Diamond. This volunteer-run station is a vital part of Moss Side's community, allowing young people to develop broadcasting and sound recording skills. The station provides a platform to boost self-esteem amongst those from disadvantaged backgrounds, with educational needs, and with health issues. Our project aims to increase awareness of the station's positive impact and to raise money to pay for their annual DAB licence, thus increasing their listeners and sponsors.



Visit [msa.ac.uk](http://msa.ac.uk) for more information

MANCHESTER  
1824



Manchester  
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University



MSA  
LIVE 25

## Team

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## Partners



Radio Diamond began in October 2013, founded by Dexter McIntosh a local businessman; and further developed from the K.D.N.K recording studio.

The idea behind the station is to give local talent a worldwide platform to expose their gifts and talents.

This volunteer-run station is a vital part of Moss Side's community, allowing young people to develop broadcasting and sound recording skills. The station provides a platform to boost self-esteem amongst those from disadvantaged backgrounds, with educational needs, and with health issues.

The station now has multiple recording spaces for live shows as well as a well equipped recording studio which they rent out, allowing local artists to develop their talent. They also have a podcast recording studio which they rent out to raise funds for the station.



# Introduction

## The Brief

Community Waves is an exciting collaboration with Manchester-based Radio Diamond. Our project aims to increase awareness of the station's positive impact and to raise money to pay for their annual DAB licence, thus increasing their listeners and sponsors. Our action weeks will include a variety of tasks, such as using our design skills to create visual marketing content, including merch, poster design and video content. Students will have creative freedom while developing their design skills, using Photoshop, Illustrator and InDesign. We will also take part in exciting fundraising events to share our content and interact with the wider community. This project will be a great opportunity to promote and elevate Radio Diamond, allowing them to continue being a positive light within the Moss Side community.

During the 'Action Weeks' of May, we divided our tasks into three parts: posters/prints, merchandise, and social media content, with each group tasked to create marketing materials which will increase visibility and public awareness of Radio Diamond. The station can re-use our content each year.

## Social Impact

When we first met Theresa and Yola from Radio Diamond, they highlighted problems within the Moss Side community such as:

Mental Health Difficulties , Lack of Finances, Gang Activity and Unemployment.

They are passionate about the radio station being an environment where people are offered an escape from this environment. Through creativity they believe they can help to shift the focus of young people in the area away from crime and other difficulties and provide them with a community hub. In supporting the growth of Radio Diamond, we're also playing a part in helping them better respond to social challenges.

# TIMELINE

## PRE ACTION WEEK

- 1 Meeting with collaborators at MTC
- 2 First visit to Radio Diamond station
- 3 Created the group poster, and started the blog. Prepared the Action Plan, Risk Assessment and Budget Proposal

## ACTION WEEK-1

- D1 Full Team Meeting: Introduction, task distribution & site visit
- D2 The hand-drawn design concepts were created by the print and merch team, while the video team focused on capturing video content.
- D3 Print & Merch teams share ideas and develop designs, starting to digitalise. Video Team shared all the clips from the previous day.
- D4 Print & Merch teams give each other feedback and continue design development. Video Team started to edit video content
- D5 All teams to continue with ongoing tasks from home. The Video Team continued to edit the content.

## ACTION WEEK-2

- D1 Print & Merch teams finalise designs, adding text and QR codes to prints. Print team research printing options. Video team create plan for RD to use of posting and continue editing.
- D2 Print team print copies. Merch team research manufacture options, create plan/order samples for RD. Video team buy adhesive supplies. Full team meeting to discuss next day.
- D3 Distribution of prints to promote fundraiser. Groups distribute posters, leaflets etc, targeting different areas of Manchester.
- D4/5 Master's students to complete submissions.

# LAUNCH DAY

## Introduction

Team members meet each other in the classroom. Master's students introduce key information about Radio Diamond and the brief.



## Tasks Distribution

We discussed everyone's skill and interests before dividing into three groups: Print Team, Merch Team and Video Content Creation Team and created the online fundraiser page.

Print Team

Merch Team

Video Team



## Site Visit

All the group members went to the Radio Diamond studio, where the staff gave us a warm welcome. We got to know more about the site and learned a lot about the studio's culture. After that, we had a discussion with the team about the direction of our upcoming work. We agreed that highlighting Radio Diamond's positive involvement with the Carnival Afterparty and their wider community impact will be a key focus going forward, and we hope our designs can really bring this to life.



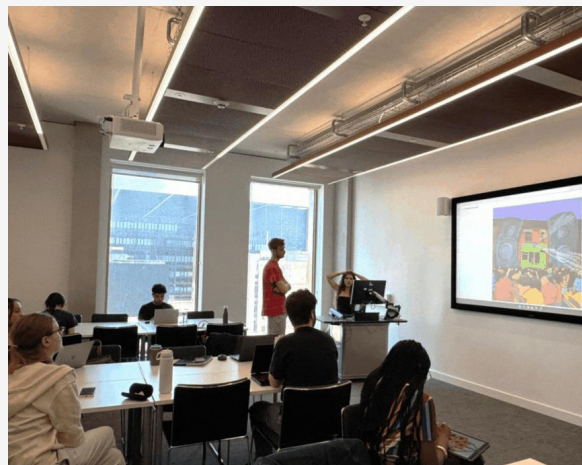
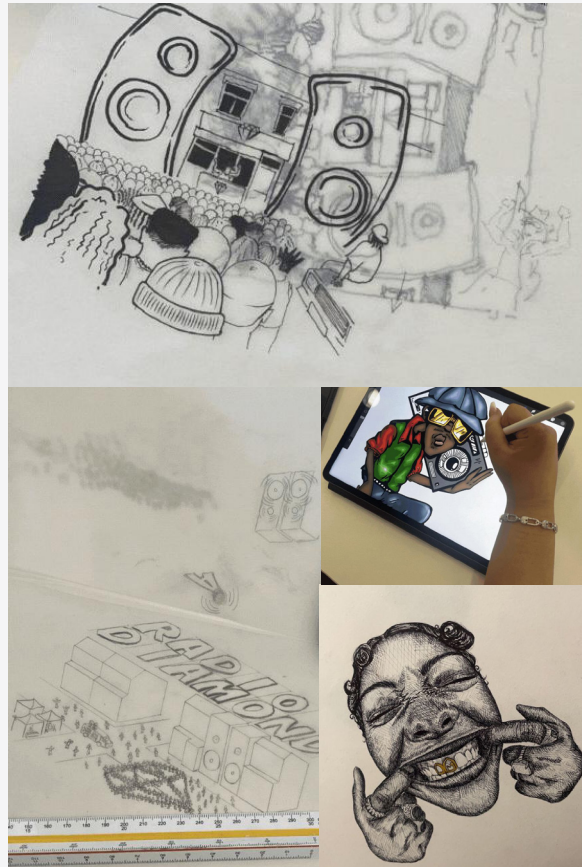
# Print Team

The Print Team was tasked with creating vibrant designs which reflect the culture of Radio Diamond. Firstly, the team started with exploring precedents and sharing them to a Miro board. Team members exchanged perspectives and provided suggestions. Then, we began developing initial sketches based on the precedents we explored and our understanding of Radio Diamond.

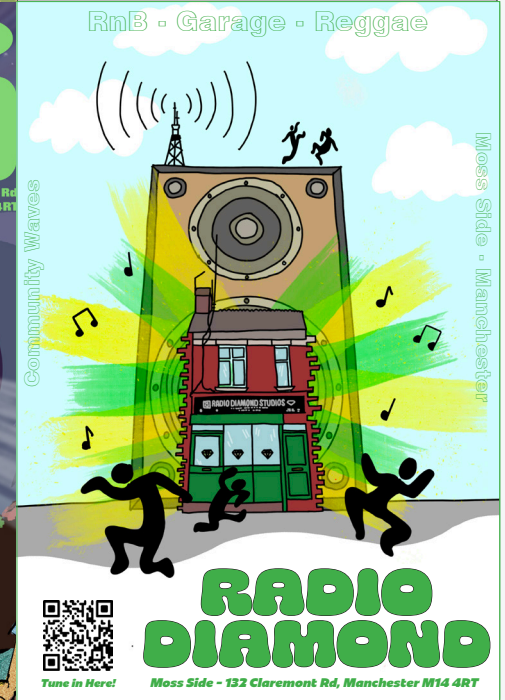
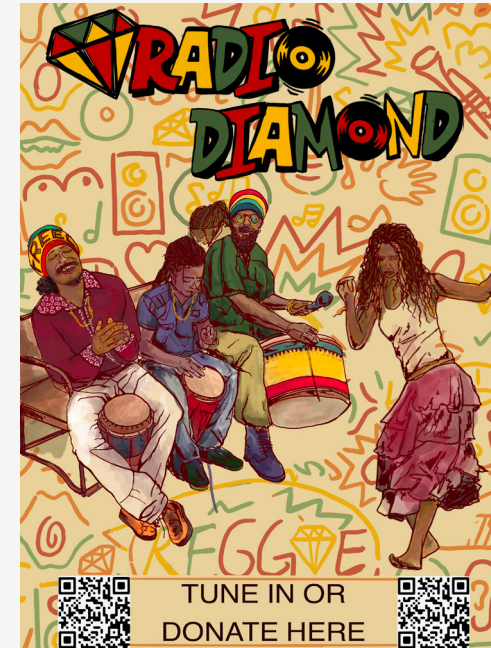
Throughout the week, the students developed their poster and leaflet designs, from initial sketches to fully digitalised visuals. They strengthened their hand-drawing skills and developed their Photoshop and ProCreate abilities.

We agreed on a vibrant colour palette which reflected Radio Diamond's culture. Following design completion, we added QR codes, key information and titles, playing with different fonts.

Throughout the design process all students gave each other feedback and the master's students assisted with design development.



## Leaflets & Posters Output



# Merch Team

The Merch Team were tasked with creating designs which could be used on a mixture of products, including t-shirts, mugs, key rings and stickers. These pieces can then be sold by Radio Diamond to generate profits which can go towards their DAB status. The diamond icon and music aspect were key elements within the designs, and the colour scheme of red, green and yellow was used throughout, ensuring visual coherence.

The entire product design went through four processes: discussion, draft, modification, and output. Everyone was encouraged to express their creativity openly around the established theme, color tone and style, and finally produced successful merch designs.



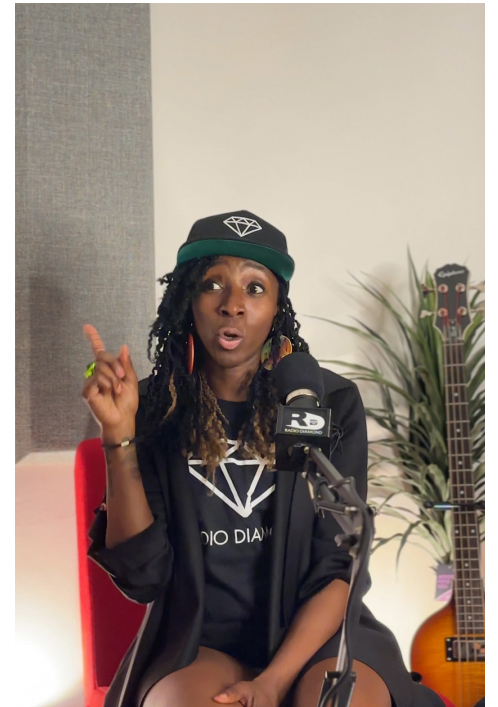
# Video Team

On Day 2 morning (13 May), the Video Content Creation Team met up to discuss our research and start planning the videos. Drawing on social media trends, we prepared interview questions and planned key shots to take in the studio.

We spent the afternoon filming at Radio Diamond. During the interviews with the radio presenters, it was great to hear stories of their career highlights and challenges, their favourite music genres and artists, and heartwarming stories of how they've helped the local community.

We learnt how to take professional videos throughout the studio, with tours of the broadcasting and podcasting spaces, and personal interviews.

Over the next few days, we worked as a team to edit the videos, creating engaging content for their TikTok and Instagram. We clipped the key moments and created a mixture of videos, adding music, text and effects, which will spread the word of the station's amazing work.



# Printing and Distribution

We used the budget to purchase adhesives and high-quality laser paper for printing the promotional posters.

We split into groups of 2-3, and assigned areas across the city - ranging from, Hulme, University Campus/Oxford Road, Moss Side, Rusholme, City Centre, Northern Quarter, Fallowfield and Withington.

We targeted areas with lots of footfall where the prints could remain protected, such as shops, restaurants and barbers.

This task allowed students to engage with the public and promote our project with Radio Diamond.



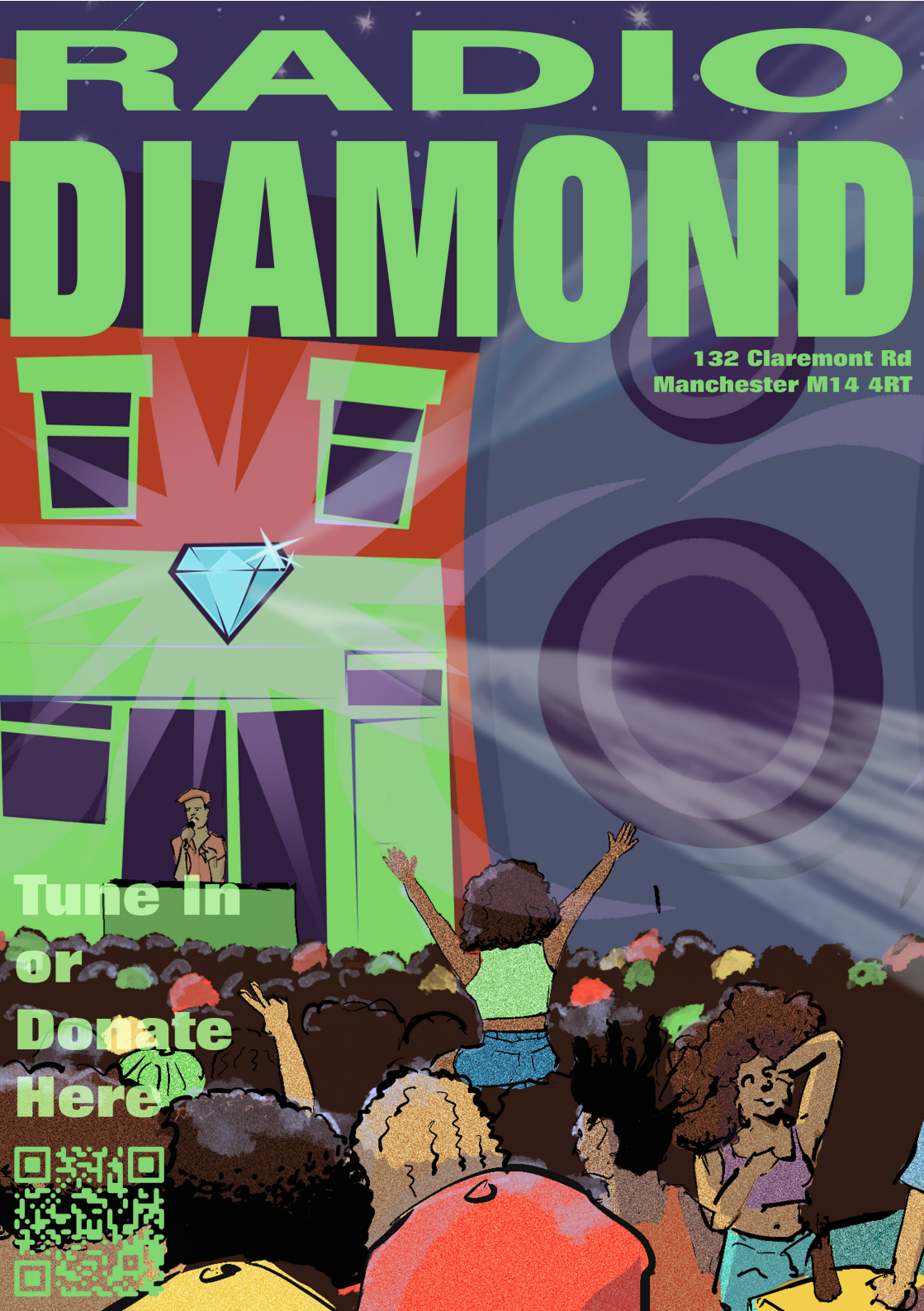
# Reflection

The Community Waves project has been an inspiring and rewarding experience that demonstrated the power of design in supporting grassroots community initiatives. Working collaboratively with Radio Diamond—a volunteer-run station rooted in Moss Side—allowed us to use our creative skills in a meaningful way. Over two weeks, we engaged in a diverse range of tasks that not only enhanced our practical design abilities but also deepened our understanding of how creative communication can uplift underrepresented voices.

The structure of the project, dividing students into smaller teams focused on video content, print design, and merchandise, helped streamline our work and encouraged collaboration across different year groups. The initial team meeting and the visit to Radio Diamond were particularly valuable in helping us connect with the organisation's ethos and drive our initial design decisions. Engaging directly with the Radio Diamond team gave our work direction and purpose, making us more mindful of the real people behind the brief.

Each team faced its own set of challenges—whether it was managing frequent deadlines, navigating design software, or editing large amounts of video content. However, these were met with collective problem-solving, and everyone brought their unique strengths to the table. The final week's outreach activities, especially the distribution of printed materials across Manchester and engaging with the public, were highlights of the project. Seeing our work across the city brought the project to life and successfully raised awareness of the station's mission.

Throughout the project, regular blog posts allowed us to reflect on our process and build a shared narrative of progress. Ultimately, Community Waves proved how design can go beyond aesthetics—it can inform, connect, and empower. This experience has been an important step in understanding our role as socially responsible designers.



# RADIO DIAMOND

132 Claremont Rd  
Manchester M14 4RT

Tune In  
or  
Donate  
Here



RnB - Garage - Reggae

Community Waves

Moss Side - Manchester



Tune in Here!

# RADIO DIAMOND

Moss Side - 132 Claremont Rd, Manchester M14 4RT

## ABOUT

Each year the MSA LIVE programme unites Masters Architecture year 1 and Masters of Architecture & Adaptive Resuse students with those in BA year 1 and year 2 and Masters Landscape Architecture 1 in mixed-year teams to undertake live projects with external partners to create social impact.

## LIVE PROJECTS

All MSA LIVE projects are live. A live project is where an educational organisation and an external partner develop a brief, timescale, and outcome for their mutual benefit.

## SOCIAL IMPACT

All MSA LIVE projects are for community benefit or have social impact. Social impact is the effect an organization's actions have on the well-being of a community. Our agendas are set by our external collaborators.

## EXTERNAL PARTNERS

MSA LIVE projects work with many organisations: charities, community groups, social enterprises, community interest companies, researchers, practitioners and educators.

## STUDENT-LED

Our MSA masters students take the lead in the project conception, brief development, delivery and co-ordination of a small project. Other cohorts joined for an eventful 2 weeks of activities at the end of the academic year.

## KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

Working in teams within and across year groups and courses; MSA students participate in peer to peer learning. In addition, collaborators, participants and students engage in the transfer of tangible and intellectual property, expertise, learning and skills.

## LARGE SCALE

This year approximately 650 students from 5 cohorts in MSA have worked on 40 projects with partners.

## QUESTIONS

For questions about MSA LIVE please contact the MSA LIVE team:

**[msalive@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:msalive@mmu.ac.uk)**

## BLOG

**[live.msa.ac.uk/2025](http://live.msa.ac.uk/2025)**

## SOCIAL

**#MSALive25**

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## WEBSITE

**[www.msa.ac.uk](http://www.msa.ac.uk)**