School of Textiles and Design
Application for Ethical Approval for Research Project

1. (a) Title of Research Project
   Identifying the markers of authenticity in relation to hand-woven textiles from the narratives of Harris Tweed, Bhutanese and Mosuo Weavers

(b) Name of Applicant(s)
   Joseph La

2. Purpose of Study
   PhD Research

3. Start and Finish Dates
   - PhD: September 2010 – September 2013
   - Field Research: August 2012 – November 2012

4. Type of activity:

   Research by member of Academic Staff: Yes
   Supervised Postgraduate Research: Yes
   Supervised Undergraduate Research: No

Other
   Please Specify

5. Is ethical approval required by another body linked to the research? Yes
   If YES, submit documented confirmation to Director of Research.
   If NO go to 13

6. Does the Research involve the use of human subjects? Yes
   If YES what is the nature (if the research e.g. focus group, questionnaire, etc.)
   This study will span 3 different communities – Harris Tweed weavers in Scotland, Mosuo Minority Ethnic Group in China and textile weavers in the Kingdom of Bhutan - to elicit weavers' understanding on markers of authenticity in their own textiles based on their traditional and tacit knowledge.

   The research will adopt an ethnographic approach in 2 phases: The first phase will be conducted through open structured interviews, examination of old and new textile samples, artefacts as well as experiencing the workroom and requesting the interviewee to guide the researcher through the production process. Information for the first phase will assist in the development of the second phase where the same interviewee will be verbally asked (via a semi-structured questionnaire) to confirm the findings.

   The interview procedure and the questions will be screened through UNESCO's Culture Diversity Lens to ensure that both are culturally appropriate. (Please see attached for interview procedure and questions)

   Interviewees will be selected through snowball sampling methods where one weaver will be asked to introduce the next interviewee. Local organizations and institutions will be sought to identify and introduce the 1st interviewee from each of the 3 groups - Harris Tweed Authority for Harris Tweed weavers, Seal of Origin for Bhutanese weavers and State Ethnic Affairs Commission for Mosuo weavers. The study intends to interview a minimum of 9 weavers from each community (3 x
Master Weavers + 1 for contingency, 3 x Intermediate-Skilled Weavers + 1 for contingency and 3 x Trainee/Apprentice + 1 for contingency. As this method relies on the informal network of weavers, it is not possible to identify each of the interviewees at this moment in time until upon arrival at the various research sites.

Each weaver will be requested to fill in a personal particulars form and sign a consent form to show that they are agreeable to participate in the study (Please see attached). Interviewees will be assured that information obtained will be used only for the research purpose.

The tentative periods of study are as follows:
- Harris Tweed Weavers – August 2012
- Mosaic Weavers – September 2012
- Bhutanese Weavers – November 2012

N.B. The researcher should have considered the use of secondary data sources and should be clear that the aims of research cannot be met without new primary research involving people.

7. Is written consent to be obtained? Yes No

If YES please attach a copy of the consent and information form or indicate when it will be supplied.
If NO please justify
For the local institutions, letters of request have been written to:
1. The Harris Tweed Authority
   Town Hall
   2 Cornwell Street
   Stornoway
   Isle of Lewis
   SHI 2DB
   Attention: Ms Jane Macleod

2. Agency for Promotion of Indigenous Craft
   Ministry of Economic Affairs
   Royal Government of Bhutan
   Thimphu
   Bhutan
   Attention: CEO

3. State Ethnic Affairs Commission
   Beijing
   China
   Attention: Ms Zhangnan, Project Manager

Copies of the letters are attached.

For individual interviewees, each one will be given a letter of information explaining in detail the purpose and nature of the research. Time will be allocated for them to clarify and ask any questions. Upon agreement, each interviewee will be required to sign a consent form. (Please see attached)

8. How long will the subject have to decide whether to take part in the study? Time

(Note that it is common for face to face interviews not to give significant advanced notice. This is acceptable in view of maximising the response rates and reliability of some survey based research.)

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The identification of interviewees will be executed through a snowball sampling method. Therefore, the researcher will establish initial contact through phone calls after the subject has been identified and recommended. Upon initial agreement during the tele-conversation, the researcher will visit the interviewee at his/her work studio/room to conduct the interview. Shortly after introduction, the letter of information will be given to the interviewee to provide more detailed information. As mentioned previously, time will be allocated for questions and clarification. Once the interviewee has agreed to participate, he/she will be requested to fill in his/her personal particulars and asked to sign the consent form. Hence, because of the nature of this research, it is not possible to give a specific time frame for the subject to decide whether to take part in the study.

9. Will any of the subjects be from one of the following vulnerable groups?  
   Children under 18 (16 in Scotland)  
   People with Learning Difficulties  
   Patients in hospital  
   Other vulnerable groups (e.g. mental illness, dementia)  
   Yes/No

10. If any box in 9 is ticked, what special arrangements have been made to deal with issues of consent for the subjects (e.g. consent from parents, professional carer, relevant institution, etc).  
    Not Applicable

11. Are there any potential physical, psychological or disclosure effects which might be harmful to human subjects that can be anticipated from involvement in the research?  
    Yes
    No

If YES, describe how these will be addressed

12. Will steps have been taken to safeguard the confidentiality and anonymity of subjects?  
    Yes
    No

Soft copies of the master list will be kept on a single computer while no hard copies of the data will be duplicated. Any quotations will either be anonymised or pseudo names will be used. Finally, if quantitative or semi-quantitative data is to be presented, no interviewees will be identifiable individually.

13. Does your risk assessment of the health and safety implications of the research confirm the possible need to use potentially hazardous materials.  
    Yes
    No

I understand that answering YES requires rigorous compliance with COSHH regulations. (Consult the health and safety officer for guidance).

14. Does the research project comply with the requirements of current Data Protection Legislation (e.g. data storage and security), including in relation to the use and (non) disclosure of secondary data sets.  
    Yes
    No
I, as a lead investigator (supervisor) have checked the above for accuracy and am satisfied 
the information provided is a true reflection of the intended study.

Name (please print)  BRITTA KAUkreUER 
Signature  BrTTa kaUkreUer 
Date  06.08.2012 

I am satisfied that the researcher has properly considered the ethical implications of 
the intended study and has taken appropriate action.

[Signature]

Director of Research  Sept 2012