

# Case study

## Dr Leah Barclay

### Details

**What:**

Dr Leah Barclay is a Queensland composer, artist and creative producer specialising in electroacoustic music, sound art and acoustic ecology. Investment from the Individuals Fund enabled Leah to participate in a US-based mentorship program with renowned artists and creative leaders, Joel Chadabe and Annea Lockwood in New York City, and Dr Garth Paine in Arizona, US. Joel Chadabe is an acclaimed composer, author, environmentalist and pioneer in interactive music systems. Dr Garth Paine is an internationally regarded innovator in interactivity in experimental music.

Leah presented her work and ideas in different environments and engaged directly with cutting edge practitioners, producers and developers in the field. Her experiences and connections were invaluable in shaping her approach to creativity and how music and technology can cultivate environmental awareness and engagement, opening up new markets and audiences for her practice.

The mentorships were invaluable in developing Leah's international reputation as a leader and innovator and helping her to secure significant international presentation opportunities.

**When:**

September – November 2015

**Where:**

New York City and Arizona US



Leah Barclay in Paris. Image courtesy Leah Barclay.

**Arts Queensland contribution:**

\$4,700 – Individuals Fund

**Contact for further information:**

Email: [leah@leahbarclay.com](mailto:leah@leahbarclay.com)

Website: [www.leahbarclay.com](http://www.leahbarclay.com)

**Links:**

Link to *River Listening* promotion:

[www.riverlistening.com](http://www.riverlistening.com)

*Rainforest Listening* augmented reality project:

<http://www.rainforestlistening.com/>

## Outcomes

- Leah gained extensive skill and professional development, increased her reputation and networks and expanded international market development opportunities.
- Leah launched a new augmented reality acoustic ecology installation, *Rainforest Listening* in Times Square during Climate Week NYC.
- Leah participated in the Social Good Summit in NYC and presented *Rainforest Listening*.
- Two live concerts were performed with Garth Paine at the South by Southwest (SXSW) Eco conference in Austin, Texas, and three sessions on acoustic ecology and virtual reality were hosted with the UN Foundation Conference at SXSW.
- Directly after the USA tour, Leah travelled to Paris for the climate change conference, COP21, to present *River Listening* and *Rainforest Listening* at the invitation of eco-organisation, Rainforest Partnership.
- Leah will return to the US in 2016 to launch a new River Listening installation on the Hudson River and compose a new work for the 10th Anniversary of Ear to the Earth in New York City at the invitation of Joel Chadabe.



Leah Barclay: Field recording with Biosphere Soundscapes.  
Image courtesy Leah Barclay.

## Learnings and reflections

Leah reflected on the career development outcomes of her mentorships:

*This experience has solidified many of my recent ideas into sustainable projects that will have a life span well beyond this trip. This was an incredible opportunity to present my work and ideas in different environments and learn directly from leaders in the field. Every day was filled with new experiences and connections that have been invaluable in shaping my approach to creativity and my exploration in how music and technology can cultivate environmental awareness and engagement.*

*The main intention of all three mentorships was to investigate the acoustic ecologies of natural environments and explore the value of remote experiences through original immersive compositions and virtual reality installations designed to generate environmental awareness and engagement. This resulted in multiple presentations, performances and installations across each location and the development of new works including Rainforest Listening ([www.rainforestlistening.com](http://www.rainforestlistening.com)). Developing River Listening in NYC with Annea Lockwood was an incredible experience that has influenced the design and development of the overall River Listening project.*

*I now have much more awareness about emerging technologies and confidence in the work I am presenting. I also have much greater knowledge around the value of my work in the context of conservation and how to connect my work to global climate change initiatives.*