If you can't imagine it, you can't do it with Helen Underhill (Research Adjacent Episode 90)

Helen is experimenting with how to turn research into transformation

[00:00:01] **Helen Underhill:** You cannot expect to have transformative impact based on a 12 month research project. That's not how change happens.

[00:00:09] **Helen Underhill:** I just fell in love with the idea that knowledge can be a pathway to creating change.

[00:00:18] **Helen Underhill:** In every single role I've had, it has ended up somehow with me supporting others to bring them up in really achieving what they want to do.

[00:00:28] **Helen Underhill:** It is unconscionable to me that we are so far down the line of knowledge creation and we still confine knowledge to certain identities at the exclusion of others.

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[00:00:42] **Sarah McLusky:** Hello there. I'm Sarah McLusky and this is Research Adjacent.

[00:00:49] **Sarah McLusky:** Each episode I talk to amazing research adjacent professionals about what they do and why it makes a difference. Keep listening to find out why we think the research adjacent space is where the real magic happens.

[00:01:04]

[00:01:04] **Sarah McLusky:** Hello and welcome to a fresh episode of Research Adjacent. Today my guest is the remarkable Helen Underhill, who has so many strings to her boat that I secretly wonder if she has one of those Harry Porter style time turners, because otherwise I do not know how she is managing to fit it all in. Helen's research adjacent role is his manager of the Research for Transformation Lab at the University of Manchester's Global Development Institute.

[00:01:28] **Sarah McLusky:** Here, she's working across a range of projects to explore what truly transformative research might look like. Then Helen is also an independent researcher working on a variety of social justice and international projects. These range from her specialism of fire safety in refugee camps to young people and museums.

[00:01:48] **Sarah McLusky:** In our conversation, we talk about how on earth she ended up where she's now given she started out as an IT programmer at the time of the Y2K millennium bug. We also explore power and participation in global research partnerships, why real impact takes time and how change happens through how we connect with people.

[00:02:06] **Sarah McLusky:** Listen on to hear Helen's story.

[00:02:08] **Sarah McLusky:** Welcome along to the podcast Helen. It is fantastic to have you with us. I wonder if you could tell our audience a little bit about who you are and what you do.

[00:02:19] **Helen Underhill:** First of all, thank you so much for welcoming me into this lovely little research adjacent tribe. Every time I put that word out there, people are like, oh, that sounds really exciting. I am just meeting nothing but really lovely, grounded, inspiring, creative people. So I'm very honored to be

[00:02:38] **Sarah McLusky:** Oh, thank you so much.

[00:02:39] **Helen Underhill:** joining you today. So yeah. I'm Helen Underhill. I am based 0.5 in terms of my job at the moment 0.5 of it at the University of Manchester in the Global Development Institute.

[00:02:52] **Helen Underhill:** And I'm leading a new initiative called the Research for Transformation Lab which I'm sure we'll get into. When I say that's my 0.5, it's because like you my week can be very varied exciting, exhausting in all of the good ways. So the rest of my week is freelance. And I make up that kind of time, whether it's through continuing to be a researcher.

[00:03:17] **Helen Underhill:** So I have a fellowship at the moment again through the University of Manchester. I am involved in different projects, so I've just had funding to do a project around participation and moving from participation to global partnerships. I just finished an Impact Accelerator Account. I do, I have a project coming up with Manchester Museum funded by the British Academy.

[00:03:44] **Helen Underhill:** So all of these projects I'm leading, which is really exciting. And then I also do, in my freelance time, I continue my research on fire risk and fire safety from a justice perspective. And that's based on work that I started in 2017 around fire in informal

settlements and refugee camps. And from a, yeah, justice oriented and gendered lens across the world.

[00:04:09] **Helen Underhill:** And then I, the other part, I still do lots of mentoring, coaching, ad hoc lectures, supervision support for PhD candidates and things like that. So in any given week, there can be a lot going on.

[00:04:23] **Sarah McLusky:** It definitely sounds like it. And you really are straddling this boundary, aren't you between research and research adjacent, and some of the work that you do might fall into one camp and some of what you do might fall into the other camp, and it just makes it really clear how tricky it is sometimes to try and put people into particular categories and job families. And I know that's a whole saga that goes on in universities at the moment. So yeah. Tell us then about, first of all, this Research for Transformation Lab. What does that role entail? What sorts of research are you helping to transform there? Yeah. Yeah.

[00:05:05] **Helen Underhill:** So within the Global Development Institute we have around 70 academics who work on issues of global development, poverty, inequality, sustainability everything from tax in Ghana to agrarian calendars in Kerala. Around informal settlements and urban development through to the charities and NGOs.

[00:05:32] **Helen Underhill:** It's really exciting. And then we have the kind of more theoretical work around the second Cold War and my role, so it's a new initiative that was started just under a year ago on a 0.5. And my role has been to help shape how GDI as an Institute is thinking about our research having an impact in the world.

[00:05:55] **Helen Underhill:** So our slogan is where critical thinking meets social justice. And what's so exciting about that is having been very much grounded in that kind of social justice work, whether when I was a teacher, back in my days when I was an adventure travel tour guide, I like started to see these development issues in practice when I was working in Egypt or working in Libya or Ethiopia. And issues of social justice. And working across the spectrum of GDI with researchers and fully independently getting to think about what critical approaches we can bring to the idea of research impact. It's incredibly exciting. For the first, so for the last year, so it started end of February, 2025.

[00:06:46] **Helen Underhill:** We were really looking internally and I was hosting conversations around what do we mean by research impact what does it mean to do research for transformation?

[00:06:56] **Helen Underhill:** So really interrogating the role of research in illuminating structures and conditions. How should research be contributing to those conversations?

[00:07:04] **Helen Underhill:** How do some of our researchers do that. How have they done that? And the internal conversation culminated in what I call transformation lab week in November last year, where we looked at storytelling, the unintended consequences of the research impact agenda, how you build partnerships and the different roles and personas that academics get into, and a really strong theme.

[00:07:30] **Helen Underhill:** And we actually did a session on it, but really strong theme was about how impact happens slowly. You cannot expect to have transformative impact based on a 12 month research project. That's not how change happens. If we're really talking about transformation being structural and systemic change in complex systems, it doesn't happen in a 12 month project.

[00:07:55] **Helen Underhill:** That was very much the first year and this year we are looking to, I'm currently in a process of consultation of how we build that outwards and how that will help shape GDI's strategic direction for the next few years. So it's really exciting. The fact I get to play around with ideas, I get to have conversations with people across the university and beyond the university and they've really allowed me to embrace taking a much more critical and holistic approach to what research can do in the world.

[00:08:26] **Helen Underhill:** Yeah.

[00:08:26] **Helen Underhill:** So it's been great.

[00:08:28] **Sarah McLusky:** Yeah, it's sounds really interesting. And it sounds like on paper your job title is like manager, but that sounds like quite a strategic role that you've got there?

[00:08:42] **Helen Underhill:** Yeah, I think I could have I think we could have gone in and just made it about okay take some of the researchers work and help them to amplify it. But we already have a brilliant comms team, a comms and impact team that I get to sit alongside and work with.

[00:08:58] **Helen Underhill:** They already do amazing work, and it felt like actually this role should be something more than that. I've made that myself. And, because of the various roles I've had before that have been very strategic leadership roles I couldn't, it didn't feel right to me to just sit and go, oh, I'll do something little about this project when actually the remit was run with it and see what what could happen. And I'm hopeful that it will, that, that taking time over really interrogating what transformation means and what the role of research in that then hopefully it can be more and it can have a much more of a strategic contribution to the institute because in this age of global development and the reduction for those people that don't know or have been living in a bucket for the last few years, the reduction in ODA and the reduction in funding available for both projects and research in global development, it's really important that our work does something.

[00:10:07] **Helen Underhill:** At least that for me was a driving question. It's one of the reasons I decided to leave being leave the traditional academic track was that I kept on saying, so all this money and so what.

[00:10:19] **Sarah McLusky:** Yeah.

[00:10:20] **Helen Underhill:** Is all this money spilling around the kind of research world and so what, because I could see some amazing academics working absolutely relentlessly to make small, incremental change. And if we can just amplify and learn from what they do, then that's, we could possibly change things for the better

[00:10:41] **Sarah McLusky:** on a much bigger scale.

[00:10:43] **Sarah McLusky:** You've said. The institute it's quite new. Your role's still quite new there, and as you said, this real transformative change takes time. But are you starting to see any shoots of what you think are gonna be really valuable ways of working, ways of collaborating?

[00:11:05] **Helen Underhill:** Yeah. So GDI as an institute has been around for decades.

[00:11:09] **Helen Underhill:** Okay. The Researcher Transformation lab is literally just me

[00:11:14] **Sarah McLusky:** Okay.

[00:11:14] **Helen Underhill:** Sitting within that institute and we, so I, it, we, singular very new, but GDI is a leading kind of voice in global development in terms of its academic and practitioner kind of work for decades.

[00:11:30] **Sarah McLusky:** Yeah.

[00:11:30] **Helen Underhill:** In terms of the shoots that the lab is having. So it's interesting you bring it to collaboration because that's the area of focus that I'm, I am looking at for 2026. All this work internally and the conversations that I've been having within GDI, within the University of Manchester and beyond, it all centers to how change comes down to relationships. That echoes my own research. Echoes, whether it's been in fire, whether it's been in social movements, whether it's in change making and young people, whether it's been in schools, change happens through how we connect with people, and that is the area that I'm really hoping to focus on for 2026 is to really understand the processes and systems that allow for change, that constrain, change that, the way that connections can be used and abused.

[00:12:22] **Helen Underhill:** We have to look at the unintended consequences. We have to look at the ethics and the values of how we create relationships. So one of the pieces of work that I've just received funding for is a project all around moving from participation to co-created partnerships within the global research context. And that is gonna take me into work around co-production, co-creation, equitable partnerships and we have some, we have researchers across the university and within GDI that are leading some really important work in that area. And I'm hoping that through this project we can support them, amplify what they're doing and also extend it into some some work to support people working across the university that are perhaps looking at doing research in global context, but have no idea how to do it.

[00:13:13] **Sarah McLusky:** Yeah.

[00:13:13] **Helen Underhill:** And they need to be doing it right from the start.

[00:13:15] **Sarah McLusky:** Yeah. Yeah.

[00:13:16] **Helen Underhill:** So equity and the values of how we do that work has to be done from the start. And so I'm hoping that there, that's just one of the shoots that we're working on. Yeah. Very much builds on collaboration.

[00:13:28] **Sarah McLusky:** So Yeah maybe just to expand on that a little bit, for anybody who's listening who doesn't know much about research as it's done in a global context, there has been this real pushback in recent years hasn't there around kind of helicopter, parachutes, whatever language they use, research where you go in research a community and then the community and then nothing changes.

[00:13:52] **Sarah McLusky:** And the community goes, what was the point of this? Why should we help you when it doesn't benefit us? What you're talking about there is this shift towards genuine, equitable partnerships, but I know that's not without its challenges. What are some of the big issues there?

[00:14:10] **Helen Underhill:** Oh that's a whole other podcast. There are so many challenges. You go you could go from the kind of macro and it's in how the systems and structures of funding are set up.

[00:14:21] **Sarah McLusky:** Yeah.

[00:14:22] **Helen Underhill:** Where the money sits and resides, how it's released, and then follow that, that through to a community organization that you as a researcher have kind of say that you are partnering with and yet, how long does it take them to get paid? What do they have to do in terms of the bureaucracy to get paid? We have to think about how our systems and structures within the UK institutions that hold all the money, whether it's the university or the donors, the funders, whatever kind of institution it is that holds the money, how they release that what does that say for the relationship and the power structures and the imbalances there? It says a lot about where knowledge resides. And for people that haven't done research in a global context, you have to be much more critically engaged. And this goes back, 30, 40 years really interrogating where you hold meetings when you hold them. Who does it constrain in being part of a project? When are you actually opening up the conversation? We hear a lot of people talk about co-production. But is it actually co-production? When are you actually starting the conversation? Some funders are being much more open to getting that seed funding that allows you to co-produce properly projects and research where the partners define the problem. The partners define the way of working. The partners lay out what for them are the kind of ethics and the concerns. There's been some really important work that takes us there, but we've still got a long way to go.

[00:16:02] **Sarah McLusky:** Yeah. Yeah. Are there any examples you can think of, projects that you've been involved with, where you feel it's just been done really well?

[00:16:10] **Helen Underhill:** It's more the projects that I see within the institute. So, one of our, key researchers Professor Diana Mitlin has done so much work over the last 30 years around really highlighting the kind of power structures involved in work around informal settlements and informal settlement upgrades.

[00:16:32] **Helen Underhill:** The partnerships that have been developed with SDI, so Slum Shack Dwellers International, for example. Where, this is now, the partnership over 30 years has actually led to really mutual learning. Yeah. Mutual respect. But still the university system doesn't get that right.

[00:16:53] **Helen Underhill:** Yeah. And still there are still structures that mean that there is a certain amount of power held within the global north institutions, within the higher education institutions in the UK. No matter how much an individual academic, or a group of academics are really trying to push against that. And that's, yeah. There's still work to be done, but there are people many people working within the academy and with partners that are really trying to do it differently.

[00:17:25] **Sarah McLusky:** Yeah. It's fantastic to hear that there are people working on figuring it out. It's very similar people, anybody listening who is in the engagement world and even within a UK context will recognize the challenges that you're talking about there. Yeah, this power dynamic between the big powerful universities, and I know that when we work in universities, we don't always feel that we've got that much power, but trust me, within society it's huge.

[00:17:51] **Sarah McLusky:** Yeah. So clearly the way you're talking about this, something that you're really passionate about. How did you find yourself in this work? You've hinted adventure travel and teaching and all kinds of things. How did we end up where we are?

[00:18:07] **Helen Underhill:** Oh, crikey. So I guess what I would say is for anybody listening who's at the start of their kind of career and thinking, I really like the idea of continuing to learn, but is the kind of traditional academic route for me. I would say I have what I like to call a

portfolio career. Everything I have done has, to me, given an additional layer to all of the things that I have done previously and where I am now.

[00:18:39] **Helen Underhill:** And

[00:18:39] **Helen Underhill:** So when I was my first job as an IT programmer, what? Yeah. And then pretty soon I was headhunted into a role that allowed me to work with the technical teams that supported people on the ground to show them how to relate to people and the actual people who use computers and just to show my age, this was in the Y2K bug.

[00:19:03] **Sarah McLusky:** Oh my goodness.

[00:19:04] **Helen Underhill:** Supporting people who thought that their computers,

[00:19:06] **Sarah McLusky:** everything was the world was gonna end.

[00:19:08] **Helen Underhill:** Yeah, exactly.

[00:19:09] **Sarah McLusky:** So yeah, for anybody who wasn't around at that time, people genuinely thought like the world was gonna end. It was a bit mad,

[00:19:15] **Helen Underhill:** they genuinely thought that their computers were going to just explode and turn off as, as soon as we went from 1999 to 2000. So that was like my first job. And then I went backpacking for a year through East and Southern Africa and then along, you know, the Antipodes up through China, Mongolia, et cetera.

[00:19:34] **Helen Underhill:** And I really started to see the kind of inequalities that I knew about and that I had been thinking about. My granddad did a lot of work around the kind of, trade union movements. But it was when you see it. And so that was a decision to make that took me into teaching. So after doing six years doing where I got paid to travel and do that and create those relationships and do the adventure travel stuff, I went into teaching and I started to again, see these structures that when you have a student who's worked and worked and worked and was told that the best they could get was an F.

[00:20:13] **Helen Underhill:** They come out with two D's and the system says, yeah, but you've not got your C have you? And I'm like, but that boy has achieved everything and it's incredible. So again, questioning the structures and the systems and I decided to go out, do my Master's, stayed to do my PhD in learning for social change and social movements at GDI.

[00:20:38] **Helen Underhill:** Absolutely. Just what a privilege to be able to study and learn like when you are older. It's such a privilege and I just fell in love with the idea that knowledge can be a pathway to creating change.

[00:20:57] **Helen Underhill:** I knew quite quickly that the traditional academic route was not really, I am much more somebody who I'm at home sitting in my bank of desks with people not in a closed office.

[00:21:11] **Sarah McLusky:** Yeah.

[00:21:12] **Helen Underhill:** I wasn't gunning to be a professor.

[00:21:14] **Sarah McLusky:** Yeah.

[00:21:14] **Helen Underhill:** There was something just holding me back. I moved to Manchester Met Uni because I was offered a, I got a permanent post, which in academia is elusive. And I

carried on my kind of research work around fires because I was, I was asked to go and support a project in Lebanon because of my background in education.

[00:21:35] **Helen Underhill:** And the fire world was new to me, but that was so incredibly interesting, seeing the gender and power and knowledge play out in how people experience access to fire safety knowledge when you live in a refugee camp. That I got to, I really, something hit me to the core, and that's been the area of work that I was developing since 2017. Got a small grant from British Academy, then COVID happened, decided that the, I wanted to take a leap, a risk, and I guess that would be something I would always say. Follow the things that interest you, so I followed that and worked when I worked in humanitarian development practice, both as a researcher and practitioner for two years.

[00:22:21] **Helen Underhill:** And then I saw this job to set up the Transformation Lab and it just felt like it was bringing everything together my interest in research, the global development, the kind of, how do we make research shape, how does research support what practitioners do? Well I was just doing that for the last two years. What role does research have in shifting knowledge and how knowledge can create social change?

[00:22:45] **Helen Underhill:** That was my PhD and my time in education and it all came together. And then one of the organizations I do a lot of work with now is called One World Together, which is re-imagining how global development, charity can actually shift power to community organizations. So I do a lot of stuff with with them, which is all around learning for change making.

[00:23:07] **Helen Underhill:** That's taken me back into schools and it's just everything. You just have to believe that if you keep connecting with people that all of the skills you build over your career, they can, if you want them to really be, rewarding. And hopefully create some kind of positive impact in the world as well.

[00:23:27] **Sarah McLusky:** Yeah. Yeah. It certainly sounds like you've pulled all the threads together there, but goodness me, what a journey.

[00:23:34] **Helen Underhill:** I know. Sorry, that was very long.

[00:23:36] **Sarah McLusky:** No, that's okay. I love it. I think it's it amazes me, and this again, is why I think these stories are so powerful and why I encourage people to share them on the podcast is because people think they need to have everything all mapped out and often, like very rarely that I think in the whole time I've been doing the three years I've been doing the podcast now over three years, I think I've had three guests who had a plan and followed it through and everybody else has just made it up as they went along.

[00:24:06] **Sarah McLusky:** Yeah. But it sounds like there that you've been to some amazing places, worked on some amazing projects. Are there any that really stand out in your mind as ones that you're really proud to be part of?

[00:24:20] **Helen Underhill:** There's a lot, but I guess there's a moment that for me, that drives me, it's the reason that I will take my annual leave to do the work. And that is when I was asked to support this work with Save the Children Lebanon and UNHCR, and an amazing organization of volunteer firefighters from the UK called Operation Florian. And so my now friend and colleague Steve Jordan was doing a project with Save the Children Lebanon.

[00:24:54] **Helen Underhill:** That was looking at a train the trainer kind of approach to getting more fire safety knowledge out to different camps across Lebanon in 2017. And I went out to help support them on designing some of the curriculum. To basically try and, look at all the pedagogically how could you actually, 'cause train the trainer models is, they're used a lot within the humanitarian sector. Partly for simply the capacity.

[00:25:25] **Sarah McLusky:** Yeah.

[00:25:26] **Helen Underhill:** It's, you've gotta be able to do more, but in order to do that, you really have to make sure that the knowledge and the understanding is much, much deeper than just impart it and gone.

[00:25:36] **Sarah McLusky:** Yeah.

[00:25:37] **Helen Underhill:** As we know can happen with so much training. So I went out to support them and as we were actually there, there were two fires. We, one destroyed an entire camp.

[00:25:48] **Sarah McLusky:** Oh goodness.

[00:25:49] **Helen Underhill:** And in order to try and understand what had happened, we went to that camp and we were talking to some of the women and it was a very informal conversation, but it became very clear through a translator, one of the people from Save the Children that we were working with, one of the women said the men decide what we need to know. And it really stuck with all of us on that trip because it made, I already, you know, I'd been thinking about gender and knowledge.

[00:26:24] **Helen Underhill:** I'd been thinking about power and who gets to decide who's part of conversations and things. But you saw the very real effects of this in this particular setting. Where these women felt that they were not able to be part of making decisions about fire safety, despite the fact that they were the ones in the home. And that moment is what, every time I think, oh, I've still got stuff I need to do. That's what I go back to.

[00:26:57] **Sarah McLusky:** Yeah.

[00:26:58] **Helen Underhill:** It's about justice. And the gendered racialized and all of the complexities around different social identities and what that means for how fire risk plays out. And when you are thinking about people who have already been through displacement over and over again, and then you lose everything in a fire it really adjusted how I thought about what fire safety education should be doing. And it is about the systemic, it's not about just going in and saying we'll do sessions to teach the women then.

[00:27:32] **Sarah McLusky:** Yeah. Yeah.

[00:27:33] **Helen Underhill:** It's not about that. It's about looking at the systemic nature of why certain people are more at risk. And that includes why some, in some contexts, men young men, able bodied men may be more at risk because there's an expectation that they should go and fight a fire.

[00:27:51] **Sarah McLusky:** Yeah.

[00:27:52] **Helen Underhill:** Without the, equipment to do so and why certain features within a camp might mean that certain people are more at risk because they don't want to move in to a

particular area to do their cooking because of the other risks. So I think it's finding a moment. For me, that still hooks me onto why I do that work in my own time.

[00:28:16] **Sarah McLusky:** Yeah. And that's a really powerful example, and I think it just shows how everything, these things, it's very, it is very easy from the outside of any situation, whatever it is, to just be like, oh, why don't they just teach the women about fire safety, but then you realize how embedded it is in the culture and the norms and the way that they live.

[00:28:39] **Sarah McLusky:** And it's only when you really take the time to understand it that those things become clear. And I think that applies in lots of different contexts, doesn't it? But yeah. Fantastic. That it still keeps you hooked in, as you say now.

[00:28:51] **Helen Underhill:** Yeah.

[00:28:53] **Sarah McLusky:** So as you know, I like to ask all of my guests what they would do if they had a magic wand to change the world that they work in.

[00:29:00] **Sarah McLusky:** What would you like to use your magic wand for?

[00:29:03] **Helen Underhill:** Oh, crikey. In terms of a magic wand, I've gone the whole like,

[00:29:08] **Sarah McLusky:** oh, go for it. It's magic.

[00:29:09] **Helen Underhill:** Oh. So we're actually gonna dismantle the whole system. Okay,

[00:29:14] **Sarah McLusky:** fantastic.

[00:29:15] **Helen Underhill:** And we're gonna rebuild the entire kind of knowledge production, dissemination, creation thing, holding this lens of gender. From a critical perspective. So we're looking at all of the different intersecting social identities. And we're gonna rebuild the system with that at its heart. Okay,

[00:29:37] **Sarah McLusky:** Love it.

[00:29:37] **Helen Underhill:** So if you think about. I still cannot compute that we, in the UK, less than 2% of professors in this country would describe themselves as a black woman.

[00:29:52] **Helen Underhill:** It is unconscionable to me that we are so far down the line of knowledge creation and we still confine knowledge to certain identities at the exclusion of others. So I would dismantle, start again and make sure that all of the different ways. So we need a place for theory.

[00:30:14] **Helen Underhill:** Yeah. Okay. We absolutely need to help retain that space for thinking and deep thought. But we need to look at the way that publishing happens, the way that editorial decisions happen, the way that citations happen, all of that kind of traditional academic outputs. We need to have buildings that allow for connection. I love that I sit in an open plan. Love it.

[00:30:38] **Sarah McLusky:** Yeah.

[00:30:38] **Helen Underhill:** Because I still get a kind of water cooler moment. I don't believe that many academics get that so often. And that's really sad. I'm really glad that I relinquished any of these kind of attachments to a hierarchical title. Manager, director, doesn't matter to me. What's the work I'm doing? So I would, if I could, my magic wand would be to dismantle and

start it again and co-create what kind of system we actually need that would allow us to enable critical thinking to meet social justice.

[00:31:10] **Sarah McLusky:** Yeah. Oh, it sounds fantastic. I would like love to see it in reality. Maybe you can create just like a tiny little bit of that. And then see how it goes.

[00:31:19] **Helen Underhill:** If I can if I can just, so two of the projects that I've got at the moment are all about future imaginings.

[00:31:25] **Sarah McLusky:** Oh, nice.

[00:31:26] **Helen Underhill:** And if you can't imagine it, you can't do it. So it's a fantastic project with Manchester Museum. It's just a tiny little project with the British Academy, but it's all around working with young people and allowing, giving space to imagine the future through what that museum would look like, and it builds on the Carbon Ruins work, but we are doing it from a social relationship. What would the world look like if the things that are wrong in how our social relations are at the moment we're put in a museum because they no longer exist.

[00:31:58] **Sarah McLusky:** Mm-hmm.

[00:31:59] **Helen Underhill:** Can't imagine it. We can't be it. We can't create it.

[00:32:03] **Sarah McLusky:** No, I think that's it, isn't it? It's these projects, they can feel a bit like pie in the sky. But actually, unless somebody at some point has an idea of how things could be different, then nothing changes. Yeah. Yeah. Fantastic. Oh definitely magic wand granted for that one. If people wonder if only it was real, I've said that so many times, if people want to get in touch with you or find out more about the work that you do, where is a good place for them to find you?

[00:32:31] **Helen Underhill:** So the Research for Transformation Lab is going to have a page within the Global Development Institute at the University of Manchester. You can find me on LinkedIn. I'm very sporadic on there, but I am on LinkedIn, Helen Underhill. And I have a website that is supposed to go live, but that's one of the things that yeah, so with my amazing colleague, Laura Hurst called Looped Learning, and that's all about how connection and looping back and building forward. So I'm hoping that'll go live pretty soon.

[00:33:04] **Sarah McLusky:** Fantastic. Oh we'll get all the links and put them in the show notes. People can find them there. Thank you so much, Helen, for coming along and sharing your story.

[00:33:12] **Helen Underhill:** Thanks so much for having me.

[00:33:15] **Sarah McLusky:** Thanks for listening to Research Adjacent. If you're listening in a podcast app, please check your subscribed and then use the links in the episode description to find full show notes and to follow the podcast on LinkedIn or Instagram. You can also find all the links and other episodes at www.researchadjacent.com.

[00:33:32] **Sarah McLusky:** Research Adjacent is presented and produced by Sarah McLusky, and the theme music is by Lemon Music Studios on Pixabay and you, yes you, get a big gold star for listening right to the end. See you next time.