



Yearbook 2025
Master of
Arts in Design
Hochschule
Design Film Kunst
Lucerne

HSLU Lucerne University
of Applied Sciences
and Arts

**MASTER OF
ARTS IN DESIGN**

Homo Ludens in Crisis

We ask questions, engage stakeholders, experiment, and prototype to fuel innovation.

How might we:

- inspire and drive change through design?
- transition to and embrace regeneration?
- tackle crises, take risks, and create impact?

Head MA Design programs

MA Design
MA Digital Ideation
MA Eco-Social Design
MA Service Design

Hochschule Luzern Design Film Kunst

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Jan-Christoph Zoels

What are your ambitions?



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MA Design

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046	Andy Polaine	MA Service Design
047	Axel Vogelsang	MA Design
048	Bianca Herlo	MA Eco-Social Design
049	Christoph Zellweger	MA Design
050	Daniela Zimmermann	MA Design
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052	Gabriele Fackler	MA Digital Ideation
053	Isabel Rosa Müggler Zumstein	MA Design
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056	Klaus Marek	MA Design
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Join Nodo alumni pool!

Michael Speranza
Isabel Tobler

Letter matter

Handwritten letters as commons to reclaim space from digital noise.

The project helps people reclaim time and calm away from digital noise. It creates space for thought, connection, and writing without pressure. By utilizing fewer resources and encouraging meaningful exchanges, it supports well-being and inspires positive change in society and the environment.

Why?

This project responds to a world shaped by speed, the attention economy, and data-driven systems. It encourages reflection on how we spend our time, who benefits from our attention, and how we might reclaim space for presence, care, and more human ways of connecting.

What?

The revival of handwritten correspondence as an alternative to digital overload. Inspired by the Slow Food Movement, it promotes thoughtful, human communication that values the process over efficiency, making letter writing an accessible, social, and creative habit.

How?

The project hosts social events, provides monthly prompts, and fosters a community around letter writing, making handwritten correspondence feel fresh, creative, and relevant in today's context.

For whom?

This initiative is aimed at individuals seeking privacy and deeper connections, as well as those looking to escape digital overwhelm. It serves communities building alternative communication spaces, postal services striving for renewed relevance, and policymakers addressing digital sovereignty and the need for non-extractive communication systems.

Anja, a communication designer, explores the beauty of slowness, human rights, digital sovereignty, and alternative communication to foster intentional and meaningful connections.

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Anja Geissbergerová



Sharing the canvas

A tool for civic participation in public spaces

By enhancing transparency and participation, the project builds trust, increases user satisfaction and fosters a stronger sense of ownership and care among the community. Ultimately, the platform's goal is to ensure that the development of public spaces aligns with the priorities and real needs of the users.

Benedetta is a Designer with a BSc in Architecture; her work focuses on the development of tools that support inclusive participatory practices in public space development.

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Why?

Participatory processes significantly enrich projects but can be time-consuming and often fail to involve users from the beginning. Digital tools can facilitate and streamline these processes, providing an invaluable source of knowledge and creativity.

What?

A digital platform that simplifies participatory processes for public space development by integrating physical and digital methods. It aims to transition from a top-down model to a more inclusive, user-driven approach.

How?

Sharing the Canvas enables users to share ideas and concerns for public spaces in their city, helping neighbourhood associations to identify and prioritize key areas for improvement. The platform offers new ways of participation and updates visitors about process phases and outcomes.

For whom?

A tool intended for everyday users of public space, neighborhood associations, urban planners and local governments.



Benedetta Zucchi | Sharing the canvas

Benedetta Zucchi

Composing with the senses

Exploring design processes through sonic intervention

Her work fosters a multi-sensory learning environment, encouraging openness, playfulness, experimentation, and a rethinking of conventional learning models. She challenges repetitive methods prevalent in the linear education system through critical design interventions.

Why?

Burcu's work opens up alternative approaches of thinking about design and education by expanding the sensory palette we use to create and learn. She promotes a playful and iterative approach to design by engaging multiple senses. This mindset encourages a departure from rigid structures and opens new ways of sensing, learning, and designing.

What?

The voice-based tool informs the ideation process, offering a dynamic approach to experimentation and faster prototyping. The platform challenges conventions by encouraging users to consider which senses they use in their creative processes, and advocates for a sensory-driven perspective on design.

How?

The program transforms voice input into 3D objects through digital programming. It detects frequencies and generates different shapes based on patterns associated with each frequency range.

For whom?

The tool is intended for designers, workshop creators, and educators who are willing to question traditional methodologies and enhance their creative processes. It is ideal for those open to experimentation, engage multiple senses, and willing to embrace a playful, iterative approach to design.

Burcu is an industrial designer passionate about hands-on experimentation. She blends functionality, expression, and material exploration to rethink design and the learning processes.

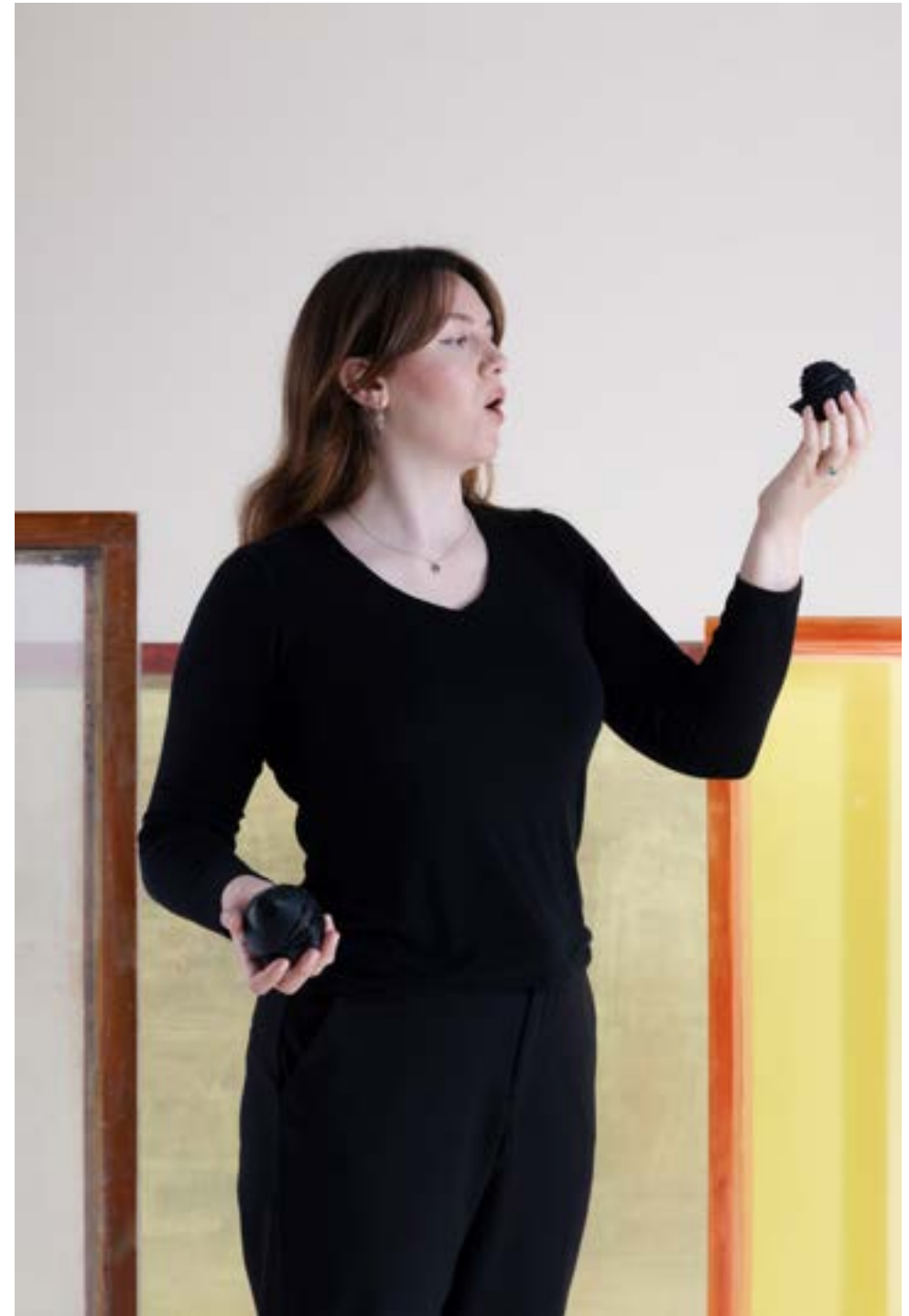
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Burcu Gülboy



Burcu Gülboy | Composing with the senses

Feuil·leaF

New materiality from leaves,
exploring nature's potential

This initiative opens new avenues for designers and creators, pushing them to rethink traditional ideas regarding value and permanence. It fosters meaningful engagement with materials, sparking dialogues about sustainability and the aesthetic potential of what is often overlooked.

Dana, a Fashion Design graduate, is passionate about blending design, art, and nature. Her work focuses on material research and creative transformation to promote sustainability in design.

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Why?

In an age of overconsumption and waste, this project explores the hidden potential of natural waste. It addresses the urgent need for sustainable innovation by rethinking material resources.

What?

The project reimagines waste as a resource by reclaiming and reworking leaves into innovative materials. This transformative process creates a tactile experience prompting viewers to rethink their relationship with nature and the resources we use.

How?

Using a material-driven, process-based "Research through Design" approach, leaves are collected, cleaned, softened in an oil bath, and reassembled. A limited quantity of leaves is harvested allowing the material to evolve through minimal and sensitive interventions without industrial transformations.

For whom?

This new resource provides designers and creators with a fresh medium that challenges conventional notions of value and permanence. It encourages a deeper interaction with materials, igniting conversations around sustainability, impermanence, and the beauty found within natural waste.



Colors of recycling

Exploring the color possibilities and aesthetics of recycled fibers in textile design.

The project encourages the recycling of multi-colored “textile waste”. By avoiding bleaching and dyeing processes, valuable resources are conserved. The uniqueness of the material is consciously embraced in design decisions and is appreciated by both designers and consumers.

Florence is a textile designer and researcher. Her work focuses on advancing sustainability in products and processes, with a strong emphasis on color and aesthetic realization.

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Why?

The textile industry faces serious challenges that negatively impact the environment and people. Currently, only about 1% of textiles are recycled in a closed-loop system due to issues with quality, technology, irregularities, and aesthetics.

What?

Recycled fibers have inherent properties including color and material composition, making it challenging to achieve uniform color. “Colors of recycling” explores the coloring potential of recycled fibers, their aesthetic qualities, sustainable applications, and related design processes.

How?

The color study highlights material distinctiveness and design opportunities. Sorting strategies for used textiles are developed, and color mixtures are explored at the fiber, yarn, and surface levels. These studies inform principles for a customized color process in textile design.

For whom?

The “Colors of Recycling” prototypes target textile designers, showcasing the potential of recycled materials, promoting sustainable color use, and raising consumer awareness about the diverse aesthetic possibilities of recycled fibers.



Florence Schöb | Colors of recycling

Florence Schöb

Beyond scents

Understanding complex systems of objective data and subjective experiences.

This approach converts sensory encounters into scientific insights promoting collaboration between quantitative scientists and researchers of human experience. This collaboration helps to overcome barriers between the measurable and the experienced, extending beyond olfaction.

Why?

Olfaction influences our experiences and memories but lacks a unified categorization system, hindering cross-disciplinary advancement. Gaia offers a speculative science project that connects personal experience with quantitative data, providing an alternative framework for analyzing heterogeneous data.

What?

This research explores a possible methodology for integrating chemical data with human perceptual experiences through artificial intelligence and coding. The study investigates how a hybrid system might capture scientific properties of molecules and the emotional, cultural, and sensory responses they trigger.

How?

The tool connects qualitative and objective data. By processing documented scent information together with chemical databases, the system creates multidimensional analyses simplified into visual coordinates. The resulting analysis could reveal relationships that traditional methods might overlook.

For whom?

While this tool uses scent as a case study, it is applicable across diverse research fields. Processing heterogeneous data bridges subjective experiences with objective measurements, enabling novel cross-disciplinary approaches ranging from healthcare to cultural studies.

Gaia is a creative innovator who bridges disciplines, innovation, and traditions to deepen our understanding of the world.

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Gaia Paris



MA Design

While you wait ...

Designing interventions to spark connections between strangers in non-places.

This project transforms overlooked spaces into vibrant hubs of connection and play. Reimagining non-places is not just about filling empty time – it's about shaping public spaces for spontaneous encounters, creating a ripple effect of joy, community, and connection in the everyday lives of strangers.

Why?

Loneliness and social disconnection are rising challenges. Non-places, where people often spend idle time, hold untapped potential. By reimagining these overlooked spaces, we can spark interactions between strangers, build community, and infuse moments of joy into everyday life.

What?

This project brings playful, approachable installations into non-places such as stations, waiting rooms, and bus stops – places we pass through daily. Sparking natural connections and interactions can turn idle moments into shared experiences full of joy and spontaneity.

How?

By incorporating playful, intuitive activities like shared art projects and interactive games, these installations encourage direct and indirect interactions, transforming mundane spaces into playgrounds for connection.

For whom?

This initiative is for anyone who feels disconnected – whether you're waiting for a bus, passing through a station, or just killing time – it is designed for commuters and travelers looking for moments of joy and connection.

Hazel has a background in Mechanical Engineering and is passionate about creating location-based experiences that combine technical expertise with a love for play and fun.

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Hazel Lewis



Hazel Lewis | While you wait ...

Play to meet

Fostering neighborhood encounters in public urban spaces through play.

Sharing outdoor resources promotes social exchange & cohesion. It reduces social isolation & loneliness, strengthens citizens' mental & physical health and fosters networking & trustful relations. It also activates communities & identity of place while informing socially inclusive urban planning.

Why?

People everywhere seek contact with others, but due to cultural conventions, norms, misplaced politeness, fear of commitment or habitual prejudices, many are hesitant. This project has identified a lack of informal opportunities for casual encounters in public urban spaces – not just in Switzerland.

What?

The concept of a 'bench park' introduces interactive seating designed to encourage socializing, play, collaboration, self-expression, and spontaneous engagement among community members. This familiar yet innovative public environment aims to foster long-term community bonds.

How?

The 'bench park' employs playful, language-independent, low-pressure seating interactions to lower social barriers, encourage spontaneous encounters, and strengthen community bonds. The design transforms public spaces into inviting entertainment centers, connection, and social engagement.

For whom?

The target audience includes the public of all ages and social backgrounds. Residents: easy access opportunities for social encounters. Communities: strengthens identity, cohesion. Urban planners: offers scalable social design models. Researchers: advances urban sociology, psychology.

Jiaqi studied Industrial Design in China. As a socially isolated foreigner in Lucerne, he began to evoke social interactions and critically explore his new urban outdoor culture.

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Jiaqi Chang



My silk journey

Reimagining the threads of Thai silk.

The project promotes cultural awareness and emotional engagement, encouraging the audience to reflect on disappearing traditions and their role in preserving them. This transforms spectators into active participants in cultural continuity.

Why?

Kamonwan, a Gen Z creative in Thailand, felt disconnected from the value of Thai silk. Through conversations with artisans, she realized the importance of reconnecting with this craft. Her project aims to revive appreciation for silk by blending traditional and contemporary storytelling.

What?

The immersive installation features film, sound, and reflection. Visitors relax in a hammock as they watch a documentary about artisans and engage in a communal loom activity, creating a shared moment to reconnect with the cultural legacy of Thai silk.

How?

Through travel, interviews, and film, Kamonwan documented the voices of artisans. Her role evolved from designer to storyteller. The outcome is an emotional experience shaped by observation, reflection, and shared spaces – more of a witness than an intervention.

For whom?

My silk journey is for Gen Z and those disconnected from their heritage. It is a platform for artisans whose voices deserve recognition, as well as for designers and cultural thinkers. It serves as a mirror to reflect on what we preserve, what we may lose, and what we carry into the future.

Kamonwan is a Thai art director who explores silk, identity, and tradition through storytelling and film, inviting Gen Z to reconnect with fading traditions.

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Kamonwan Wanaklang



Kamonwan Wanaklang | My silk journey

Sensational wood

Heightening the senses through sustainable, tactile wooden interfaces.

This work reimagines our relationship with technology, shaping wood into intuitive, living interfaces that awaken our senses. It sparks a shift towards biodegradable electronics, where design serves the planet but also empowers communities and rekindles our connection to nature.

Simon is a visionary designer and educator with a Master's from HSLU. He excels in interdisciplinary teams, creating sustainable and emotionally resonant designs for our future.

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Why?

Simon transforms sustainable wood into an expressive medium to foster a deeper sensory and emotional connection with everyday objects. His work invites us to reconnect intuitively with nature, our surroundings, and ourselves.

What?

The crafted interfaces respond to touch, breath, and movement gracefully. His innovative prototypes blend natural haptics with digital expression, merging sustainable innovation with emotional design through sound, light, vibration, and scent.

How?

Wood is transformed into a conductive surface using IC-LIG, a bio-based innovation from ETH. This natural texture and sensory responsiveness engage users, inviting them into a state of flow and creating a multi-sensory experience through touch, breath, and movement.

For whom?

While these prototypes are tailored for music therapists, interior designers, and curators, they represent a broader vision: reinterpreting design as an organic, human expression rooted in our connection to ourselves and the natural world.



Simon Yves Litschi | Sensational woodtraining

Simon Yves Litschi

Her city

The city belongs to everyone

This project raises awareness about women's safety, challenges harmful norms, fosters empathy, and promotes collective responsibility. It empowers communities to rethink public spaces, support each other, and build safer, more inclusive cities for everyone.

Why?

In many societies, women walking alone at night face real risks that are often overlooked. The game "Her city" aims to raise awareness, foster empathy, and teach practical safety strategies, making these invisible fears visible and actionable.

What?

The game empowers women to rehearse safety strategies and make quick decisions under pressure. It also provides men with insights into women's experiences while teaching respectful conduct, empathy, and boundary awareness in public spaces.

How?

The interactive board game developed by Yujing features real-life scenarios, emotional triggers, and escalating fears. Players navigate urban environments, make strategic decisions, share their reflections, and unlock expert cards that provide practical advice for walking alone at night.

For whom?

Young people/youth (16–30 years old)
Women and gender minority groups
Men/male allies
Bystanders/general public

Yujing works across graphic design, illustration, and publishing projects, focusing on storytelling through design that incorporates symbolic imagery, language, and social critique.

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Yujing (Iris) Zhang



Yujing (Iris) Zhang | Her city

Sustainable UX-Design

A design framework to optimize content for energy efficiency.

The project promotes sustainable UX design and demonstrates that digital products can be functional, aesthetic, and eco-friendly. It aims to raise industry standards, inspire global design cultures, and help reduce the digital carbon footprint, marking a significant step towards more conscious UX design.

Andrin is a passionate UX designer dedicated to creating innovative solutions that seamlessly blend user-friendliness and sustainability. MA'25 Digital Ideation, HSLU.

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Andrin Bühler

Why?

The digital landscape is burdened by resource-intensive designs that waste energy and are often not user-friendly. UX design lacks systematic methods to embed sustainability into its cultural and institutional practices. Andrin addresses this gap by combining ecological, social, and cultural design elements with a focus on web applications.

What?

The „Sustainable UX Design Value Framework, offers a newly developed approach that combines sustainability and UX principles and can be integrated into the ISO 9241-210 standard. This strategic approach is applied to the sustainably optimized HSLU Design Film Art website of the Master's program.

How?

The framework utilizes data-driven and user-centered approaches and values. The initial phase involves analyzing the existing content of a project, followed by the second phase, which focuses on optimizing it to improve the energy efficiency of the web application.

For whom?

The primary target group are UX designers who will benefit from this new sustainable approach. Secondary beneficiaries are visitors to a potentially more energy efficient and tailored HSLU website.



Device stories

Exploring narratives about electronic objects, sparking emotions and reviving memories.

“Device stories” personalizes museum exhibits, enhancing emotional engagement through shared memories. By giving devices a narrative voice, the project reinforces museums’ roles as interactive spaces for collective memory, dialogue, and cultural connection.

Why?

Electronic devices shape our daily experiences, yet their unique stories often remain obscured. “Device stories” seeks to reveal these narratives through interactive storytelling, fostering emotional connections, evoking memories, and enriching visitor experiences through shared tales.

What?

“Device stories” brings vintage electronics to life by allowing visitors to discover and share personal memories through a digital interface. The stories associated with each device evolve, blending both user-generated and AI-generated content into a compelling and participatory experience.

How?

Visitors engage through interactive interfaces designed in the authentic styles of the corresponding era. They can listen to AI-generated narratives about various devices or share their own memories, actively contributing to the ongoing history of technology.

For whom?

Museum visitors can reconnect emotionally through nostalgia and storytelling. Curators use participatory methods to engage visitors. Museums can gather personal memories through interaction. Educators gain tools to illustrate technology’s societal impact.

With a background in computer science, Dominik is passionate about technological progress and the evolution of user interfaces. He creates tangible experiences which breathe new life into old devices.

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Dominik Pascal Schoch



Virtual spaces, real connections

Enhancing architectural communication and collaboration with immersive features of Virtual Reality technology.

The VR model enhances communication and reduces misunderstandings early in the design process, minimizing costly changes and resource waste. This fosters sustainable architectural practices and improves project delivery and design quality.

Why?

Using 2D plans or static images in traditional architecture can lead to misunderstandings. Architects and stakeholders often visualize concepts differently, which results in communication challenges.

What?

Virtual Reality allows stakeholders to experience architectural designs in 3D. They can “walk through” the space, gain a better understanding of the design, and provide more constructive feedback from the start.

How?

Gamze designed a 60-square-meter apartment in 3D, incorporating details like electrical and plumbing systems. VR allows users to walk through the apartment, explore the space, and view hidden elements within the walls and beneath the floors, providing a deeper understanding of the building’s construction.

For whom?

The target audience includes architects, engineers, contractors (electricians and plumbers), real estate professionals, and clients. This VR model serves as a comprehensive, immersive tool for anyone involved in the design, construction, or sale of the building, facilitating improved collaboration and decision-making.

Gamze is an architect and digital designer who utilizes Virtual Reality to enhance collaboration and understanding between architects and clients.

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Gamze Günes



AI language training

A framework for dynamic practice environments

AI-supported learning environments are becoming increasingly common. Since AI does not fully understand the content it generates, the framework supports learning experiences that benefit learners by utilizing AI to produce structured and diverse patterns. Kanji learning exemplifies this trend.

Why?

Intermediate Japanese learners often reach a plateau in their learning journey after completing the beginner stage. With thousands of kanji to learn and study materials presented in fragmented methods, overcoming this stage can be challenging.

What?

By concentrating on kanji learning, Janina examined the larger subject of achieving mastery in a skill or area, and what that means for designing practice environments with the help of AI that allow learners to progress at their own pace.

How?

Janina developed a concept for a serious game that incorporates characters driven by artificial intelligence as a key element of the learning environment. While playing the game, learners can practice kanji they are focusing on, as well as additional kanji at their current level.

For whom?

This framework is intended for anyone engaged in learning Japanese who wishes to enhance their studies. It is also relevant for those interested in creating AI-supported learning environments for various topics.

Janina is a game designer and writer, currently serving as a research associate at HSLU Informatik.

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Janina Woods



Janina Woods | AI language training

Project Lioness

Beyond the predator – VR education for marine ecosystem resilience

The project helps protect marine ecosystems by equipping individuals with knowledge and skills to manage lionfish invasions, fostering biodiversity, raising awareness, and inspiring sustainable conservation actions.

Why?

The Mediterranean Sea faces an ecological threat from invasive lionfish, which disrupts marine ecosystems and biodiversity. Educating divers and the public about lionfish is essential for mitigating this threat.

What?

'Project Lioness' provides an educational experience for scuba divers and marine enthusiasts. The challenge becomes tangible through a virtual reality (VR) experience which raises awareness and encourages participation in lionfish management.

How?

Participants learn to identify and safely remove lionfish while protecting native marine life through immersive scenarios and gamified tasks, developing practical conservation skills in VR.

For whom?

'Project Lioness' is designed for divers, marine enthusiasts, and conservationists. It aims to educate and empower individuals to protect marine biodiversity through immersive VR training focused on lionfish control.

Julia is an Experience Designer specializing in immersive technologies and user experiences (UX). Her motto is, "Living is experiencing."

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Julia Merz



Julia Merz | Project Lioness

What if you had a choice as a candidate?

Transforming the recruitment experience

This project supports fair recruitment practices, reduces job seekers' stress, and promotes ethical AI usage. It fosters equity and inclusivity while building trust between candidates and employers.

Why?

Recruitment processes often lead to emotional stress and dissatisfaction. This project aims to empower candidates by providing autonomy, minimizing biases, and transforming traditional application methods to create a fairer and more compassionate experience.

What?

The prototype enables candidates to select their preferred application review method (AI or human), receive tailored feedback, and access aggregated insights from platforms such as Glassdoor and Kununu, promoting a transparent and flexible process.

How?

Utilizing a user-centered design approach, the project incorporates UX features for selecting reviewers, anonymizing personal data, and offering feedback options. These tools promote autonomy, reduce bias, and establish a recruitment system that prioritizes the well-being of candidates.

For whom?

Primarily designed for job seekers seeking autonomy and fairness, this project also benefits companies by improving employer branding, reducing biases, and ensuring equitable opportunities for all candidates.

Melisa is an education enthusiast with a background in Digital Design. She is deeply passionate about innovation and is committed to creating practical, forward-thinking solutions.

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Melisa Gūda



MA Design

Digital Ideation

Eco-Social Design

Service Design

Climate change and related emergencies are our key challenges. While design education has addressed sustainability through various lenses - material research, cradle-to-cradle design, circular economy, participatory design approaches to social innovation, and co-creation to prototyping regulations - much remains to be done.

Our students probe the scope of what is understood as designable:

We champion the next generation of change agents who reimagine material cultures. Signs, objects, materials, and fields of encounter are our playing field.

We design services from insight to implementation, coherent across digital and physical touchpoints, and the organization's ability to deliver them, for people, public and planet.

We design for the well-being of present and future communities, redefining the role of designers in driving eco-social transformation.

Head MA Design programs

MA Design

MA Digital Ideation

MA Eco-Social Design

MA Service Design

Jan-Christoph Zoels

Homo Ludens in Crisis

→ 2025

Faculty

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Andy Polaine
Axel Vogelsang
Bianca Herlo
Christoph Zellweger
Daniela Zimmermann
Daniele Catalanotto
Gabriele Fackler
Isabel Rosa Müggler Zumstein
Jan-Christoph Zoels
Karin Fink
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Jeanine Spence	Threads & Tits
Jens Badura	Tobias Kreienbühl
Joe Macloed	Ulrike Felsing
Joey Guidone	Yaniv Steiner
John Thackara	

→ Yearbook

→ Master Design

→ Hochschule Luzern – Design Film Kunst

Examiners

Daniel Schaffo
Elizabeth Tauber
Julia Leihener
Kris Krois
Reto Wettach
Sara Wirz

Design today: A Kind of Manifesto

Reflecting on the role of design in the 21st century sits at the core of this text, which is intended to raise questions while offering guiding thoughts, rather than presenting ready-made answers. It serves as a self-reflective manifesto, based on our recent book, “Design als Haltung” (Design as Attitude), a book created in dialogue between two authors. The book emerged from a regular exchange of ideas and thinking aloud about what inspires and concerns us in the field of design. This text aims to present design as a practice that contributes to shaping social constellations, devotes itself to processes, and accommodates uncertainties. A practice that faces current challenges with courage, joy, and experimentation.

Climate change, environmental pollution, the decline of democratic values, and social injustice are increasingly challenging designers to act sustainably and responsibly in protecting the lives of both human and non-human actors on our planet and restoring ecological balance. Designers, artists, and other creative professionals are uniquely positioned to take on the crucial task of mobilizing the public in the face of problems and co-imagining futures alongside those affected. They know a great deal about how we can explore connections, explain possible courses of action, and work towards change in a sensual and empathetic way. Moreover, they recognize that individual projects are often insufficient to persuade people to change their long-term thinking. What is needed is a series of projects that address diverse groups. We require many designers from various backgrounds who have the courage to develop these series and projects. We need climate-neutral, socially just, gender-equitable, and anti-discriminatory design approaches that are committed to the pluriverse, across all areas of our societies. The challenge remains: how can we create such environments, both locally and globally? We need people who can develop perspectives and practices based on ethical criteria. Through joint projects, we can adopt and integrate design practices and understandings that differ or overlap with one another. When considering design, we can ask ourselves: How can we contribute

our knowledge and skills in a meaningful way? What inspires optimism? Where can we find allies? How can we form meaningful alliances? How can we work closely with social contexts? What changes occur when we regard those for whom and with whom we design not as “users” but as people who, like us, are part of a society undergoing change? With this text, we invite you to help shape this change. We emphasize an understanding of design that focuses on the ‘how’ and has emerged in recent decades. This perspective differs not only from the modernist understanding of design but also from an understanding of design that is primarily driven by commercial, profit-making interests. Numerous projects and fields demonstrate how design can have a significant impact, illustrating ways to become actively involved. Designing means taking a stand, showing attitude, reacting to political, social, and ecological developments in society with well-thought-out, aesthetically sophisticated, playful, and deliberately provocative projects. The social responsibility of design should be reflected more strongly in the public sphere, as well as within the discipline itself, especially where design is taught, practiced, promoted, and discussed. This is the cause we are advocating for here.

In our teaching, design, and research practices, we ask about how the role of design in society is currently being shaped. Design practices emerge from social needs, respond to social issues, engage with contemporary themes, and actively intervene in the environment. In our view, it is essential for design to respond to social imbalances, particularly those related to post-colonialism, racism, gender, and social inequalities. What social challenges can design address, and how can it do so effectively? What can design draw attention to, what can it problematize? Social change alters design practices, while design simultaneously shapes our perspective of the world and influences the changes we make to our environments. It creates socially effective artefacts, systems, and structures. How can we look at design in its relationship to social reality and show design as an intervention in the “social fabric”, as a collaborative and participatory action? How do new socio-cultural, socio-political, and sociotechnical constellations change the way we think, act, and design?

For decades, design has often been exploited as a tool for capitalism. However, by moving beyond a market-oriented focus, design has the potential to shape processes in collaboration with society. Design can challenge existing frameworks and support impactful practices. It can serve as a platform for activism, protest, and highlighting important issues; it can be a tool for raising awareness, critical design, and transformative practices. Opportunities are emerging for design in relation to new economies, such as sharing and commons, as well as in new forms of civic engagement and alternative possibilities for the production and use of technology. This includes collaboration and co-production of knowledge.

The experimental nature of design is closely tied to an openness to results and a process-oriented approach. The emphasis has shifted away from the end product to the journey of creation and the insights gained throughout the journey. Design helps us to define and identify problems. It is about seeing, analyzing, understanding, and intervening. Design can be poetic; it challenges established patterns of perception and habits. Design brings diverse perspectives to the table. Traditional design skills are not replaced but expanded to include new skills and fields. Designers are increasingly becoming strategists and have the opportunity to actively participate in processes of change and understanding. This involvement empowers them to initiate these processes with confidence and carve out their unique field of work.

Furthermore, the relationship between design and digital cultures becomes central to our reflections and endeavors. New practices and cultures of design are emerging from the convergence of aesthetic experience, social challenges, and digital transformation. How can we assess the risks associated with digital technologies and (generative) AI systems, and consider how designers can utilize AI technologies responsibly in support of their own creative work? The emerging digital cultures offer fundamentally new possibilities for interaction and connection. Design projects address contexts in which digital technologies and social and socio-political action are becoming increasingly intertwined. Today, hardly anything remains untouched by digital culture and does not incorporate digital technologies. Alongside new cultural techniques and aesthetics, hybrid work cultures and platform economies have emerged.

New alliances have developed their strength, and new technologies, such as rapid prototyping, which enables the fast and cost-efficient computer-aided production of samples, models, and objects, have expanded the possibilities of do-it-yourself. How can more designers, as well as self-taught creative individuals, utilize publicly accessible, affordable, and alternative technologies to counter the ever-dominating corporate offers?

Digital technologies shape not only the everyday experiences of designers but also those of millions of people worldwide. A new era has dawned with the advent of AI-supported technologies, which are now capable of recognizing patterns and extending far beyond their original use in marketing. There is great interest in these developments, but the greater the interest, the greater the concerns. We must be cautious not to impulsively support technological advancement without considering who is currently developing self-learning systems and for what purpose. As adopters of cutting-edge technologies, we should be mindful of how AI systems affect our lives and work now and in the future. Technologies that can be trained for automated processes with self-learning properties are already having a profound impact on society. Virtual assistants, image analysis software, search engines, voice and facial recognition systems, as well as tools from the “Internet of Things”, robots, and drones are essential parts of our daily lives. Designers, like everyone else, are affected by the implementation of these technologies and often play a direct role in their development. How can we, as designers, fully understand the developments of new technologies, including their opportunities and risks, and help shape them in the direction we want? What worries us, what makes us optimistic?

Let's look at the term “artificial intelligence”. It was coined to evoke associations with advanced technology, which has since been used specifically to market profit-oriented products and services, even those that are not yet fully developed and can cause a lot of harm. With clever sales arguments and under the pretext that the new technologies would make ‘intelligent’ decisions, systems are being implemented by companies in institutions and public bodies in an uncontrolled manner – whether in police work, the judiciary or in the search for candidates for management positions. Fortunately, there are critical

designers and researchers who, in light of recent developments, have begun to use their influence to advocate for the controlled further development of generative pattern recognition software. In many other places, critical digitization research has developed in recent years to better understand the impact of digital technologies on people and the environment. This is because with AI, “targeting” has taken on immeasurable proportions. Who has which preferences, purchasing power, sexual orientation, or views? The massive and still largely unregulated collection of data not only influences people’s purchasing behavior but also affects their mental health, voting behavior, and political opinions by analyzing data from millions of users and targeting individuals on social networks. Especially in the age of the disinformation industry, which poses a democratic challenge for us all, the question arises: How can digital environments, in general, and AI applications, in particular, be designed to prevent them from violating user privacy? And even further: How can designers use their skills to make individuals from a wide range of backgrounds and age groups aware of the possibilities and dangers of the latest technologies?

For instance, what’s at stake if working with text and image-generating AI technologies becomes the new standard? Your craft? Our self-image as designers? Something much more fundamental is at stake. Because with generative AI, you are faced with the decision of how you want to deal with generative AI technologies in your aesthetic practice. “Artificial intelligence” creates images and texts that reflect the tastes of millions, as it reproduces the visuality already present in the underlying datasets. They generate marketable products. But will it also replace your design work and that of other creatives? In other words, how can you playfully and ironically use generative AI technologies to create new, experimental visual worlds and statements? So, the question is not: Can AI take over what self-confident designers, artists, architects, and other creatives see as their very own task? Rather, how can designers, artists, and other creatives manage to use AI technologies responsibly and in a meaningful way for their own creative work? AI technologies will take over tasks such as the execution and variation of typesetting and layout, motif variations, and many manual tasks. They will help you when you start a project or get stuck in a

project. The use of generative AI challenges designers to work more conceptually and, when working with AI, to look at proposals more critically than before. Because the proposals will not have been developed by you alone on the basis of your own knowledge and your own political, social, and aesthetic ideas, but by you together with a machine that decides based on patterns and similarities. Design is becoming increasingly strategic, complex, challenging, experimental, and playful than ever before. If you are ever unsure whether the technology you use in your professional practice meets your ethical expectations, experts from the fields of AI, generative AI, computer science, design, law, psychology, and sociology are currently developing principles for the responsible and fair development, design, and use of various AI technologies.

Art colleges, universities, academies, and other educational institutions are currently working just as hard on guidelines that might remind us that design cannot just be about whether someone has and uses the right tools. A willingness to experiment, a spirit of research, rich aesthetic and social experiences, and the ability to analyze designs and reflect on them critically are equally important.

Finally, the use of generative AI raises important questions that we cannot leave to the tech companies to answer or otherwise delegate, such as how they relate to copyright-protected material. As individuals, whether emerging or professional designers, we are all called upon to counteract the risks that AI-generated content entails. We can enhance the security of automated systems and maintain a focus on fairness and ethical responsibility when interacting with them. As designers, we have learned to research a topic of our choice in a structured way, to approach a design conceptually, to develop it experimentally, and to carry out a project both independently and collectively. It is precisely these skills that will now enable us not to be overwhelmed by the fantastic proliferation of new tools and technologies and the aesthetics that result from them – but to play and experiment with them, to learn, to explore, to expand our skills and possibilities and, of course, to have fun with them.

Andreas Unteidig

Andreas is a design researcher working at the intersection of socio-ecological transformation, critical technology studies, and participatory design. He co-leads the MA Eco-Social Design program at HSLU and is an affiliated researcher at the Weizenbaum Institute in Berlin, where he previously led research on digital inequality and democratic participation. Andreas is the co-director of the Social Design Network and serves on the boards of the German Society for Design Theory and Research (DGTF) and the Swiss Design Network. He has consulted on design and transformation processes for clients including the United Nations Development Programme, GIZ, Meta, and the Bank für Sozialwirtschaft. He holds a PhD from the Berlin University of the Arts.

Presentations

Herlo, B. & Unteidig, A. (2025). The Future of the Knowledge Commons (Session Chairs). Who Owns Free Knowledge? Examining Power, Platformization, and the Promise of the Commons, Weizenbaum Institute, Berlin.

Fink, K.; Das, S. & Unteidig, A. (2024). XploreESD: Collaborative Exploration in Eco-Social Design – Fostering Cross-Cultural Insights. ELISAVA, Barcelona.

Unteidig, A. (2024). Practicing Digital Sovereignty: Rehearsal Spaces & Time Machines. Prompting the Future – Art Schools as Agents between Digitality and Society, Lucerne.

Publications

Ventura, J.; Pausner, M.; Unteidig, A.; Moretti, M. (2025). Social Design for Everyone: A Granular Visual Toolkit for Social Design Education. Proceedings of Cumulus Conference 2025, Nantes.

Zoels, J.C.; Fink, K.; Unteidig, A. (2023). Three Choices. In: Budelacci, O.; Holzer, J.; Weiberg, B. (Eds.), Update Available: Transforming Education in Design, Film and Fine Arts. Nummer, 11.

Unteidig, A.; Keysar, H.; Calderón-Lüning, E. (2022). Prototypes as Agents of Transition: The Case of DIY Wireless Technology for Advancing Community Digital Sovereignty. Journal of Peer Production, Issue 15.

Conferences

Reassessing the Social – Understanding Transformation. Social Design Network Conference 2025, Lucerne & Bern, Switzerland (Chair).

On the Verge – Design in (Times of) Crisis. Social Design Network Conference 2023. Moholy-Nagy University Budapest (co-organizer).

Practicing Sovereignty. Interventions For Open Digital Futures. Weizenbaum Conference 2022, Alte Münze, Berlin (co-organizer).

Keywords

Social Design
Digital Sovereignty
Eco-Social Transformation
Commons & Participation

Links

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→ linkedin.com/in/andreas-unteidig



**Eco-Social
Design**

Andy Polaine

Andy is a design leadership coach, educator, writer, and co-author of the Rosenfeld Media book *Service Design: From Insight to Implementation*, now a standard text for Service Design. Andy has nearly three decades of experience in design and innovation across a wide range of industries. He holds a PhD from the University of Technology, Sydney. He can be found at polaine.com, writes a newsletter called Doctor's Note, and hosts the Power of Ten podcast.

Publications

Polaine, A., Løvlie, L., & Reason, B. (2025). *Service Design as a Counter-Cultural Force*. *Touchpoint*, 16(1), 20-21. <https://doi.org/10.30819/touchpoint.16-1>

Polaine, A., Løvlie, L. & Reason, B. (Forthcoming 2025) *Service Design: From Insight to Implementation*. 2nd Ed.. Rosenfeld Media, New York.

Polaine, A (2025) Foreword. In Carter, E. (2025) *Shaping a DesignedUp Organisation: The Journey to Design Maturity*. Taylor & Francis.

Polaine, A. (2025) Foreword. In Wong, G. (2025) *The Art of Design Strategy*. Springer.

Polaine, A., Løvlie, L. & Reason, B. (2013) *Service Design: From Insight to Implementation*. Rosenfeld Media, New York. ISBN: 978-1-933820-33-0.

Presentations

Navigating the Journey Into Design Leadership Masterclass. Hatch Conference Leadership Ateliers, Lisbon, 2025.

Navigating the Design Leadership Dip. Design Leaders+, Product Design Week 2024, London. <https://techcircus.io/en/events/product-design-week-london>

Navigating The Design Leadership Dip. Leadership by Design, Chicago Camps, Online. <https://www.chicagocamps.org/event/leadership-by-design-2024/>

It's Not Business, It's Personal: Leadership in Service Design. Service Design Global Conference 2024, Helsinki. <https://www.servicedesignglobalconference.com/program>

Workshops

Service Design Workshop, Fachhochschule Graubünden, 2021.
Design Leadership Masterclass. Echos Innovation Lab, 2021.

Keywords

Service Design
Interaction Design
Systems Thinking
Leadership

Links

→ polaine.com



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Service
Design

Master
Design

Axel Vogelsang

Axel is a trained typesetter and communication designer with a PhD from the University of the Arts London/Central Saint Martins. He worked in advertising, graphic- and multimedia design, and since 2008, he has taught and researched at the University of Applied Sciences and Arts in Lucerne (HSLU), Switzerland. Axel is head of the Visual Narrative research group, which explores contemporary practices of image-making and storytelling in linear and non-linear media. Since 2010, his research has focused on digital and social media usage in cultural contexts, particularly museums, and he has led several multidisciplinary applied research projects in this field. Axel Vogelsang is a core team member of the MA Design at HSLU and was for many years a board member of the DGTF (German Society for Design Theory and Research).

Presentations

Mader, R. & Vogelsang, A. (2021). *Bridging the Gap*. ELIA 2022, Helsinki.

Publications

Frei, S. & Vogelsang, A. (2024). *The Museum of Mixed Realities - Immersive Worlds of Narratives and Learning with Mobile Devices*. In W. Brückle & F. Truniger (Eds.), *Display, Disruption, Disorder - Contemporary Moving Image Practices*. p. 57-80.

Vogelsang, A., & Kummier, B. (2022). *Heldenreise mit Leerstellen—Ein Besuch im FIFA World Football Museum*. In C. Wacker (Ed.), *Sport im Museum: Gedanken zum Sammeln, Ausstellen und Vermitteln von Sport: Vol. VI* (pp. 205–222). Ergon Verlag.

Mader, R., Vogelsang, A., Janzer, M., Müller, P., & Oestreicher, N. (2021). *Preparing for a Practice-based PhD in Fine Art, Design, and Film*. [Open Online Course]. Futurelearn. <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/phd-preparation-for-fine-art-design-and-film>

Keywords

Qualitative Research
Storytelling
Graphic-Design
Interaction Design
Design Theory

Links

→ hslu.ch/en/lucerne-school-of-art-and-design/research/visual-narrative/#?filters=1216
→ linkedin.com/in/axelvogelsang/
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Bianca Herlo

Bianca is a design researcher and has been working for many years on issues of inequalities, digital justice, social and digital participation and the potential of design for eco-social, more just digital transformation. Since September 2024, she is Professor at HSLU DFK and head of the Competence Center “Transformation Design”. She is chair woman of the German Society for Design Theory and Research (DGTf) and a founding member of the international Social Design Network (SDN). Since 2022 she has co-hosted the podcast “Purple Code. Intersectional feminist perspectives on digital societies” (purplecode.org).

Exhibitions

Designtransfer Berlin, 2022 – «OTHER-Control vs. SELF-Determination», Herlo, Bianca; Irrgang, Daniel & Schaumberg, Ilka.

Weizenbaum Conference & Exhibition 2022. Alte Münze, Berlin. – «Practicing sovereignty. Interventions for open digital futures.», Herlo, Bianca; Irrgang, Daniel; Joost, Gesche; Unteidig, Andreas; Calderón Lüning, Elizabeth.

Presentations

Digital justice. Feminist futures. Open Lecture, EKA, Tallinn, 2024.

Design Uncertainties. Feminist Futures. Conference 2024 „Shifting Tectonics. Perspectives on design in changing circumstances“, HAWK Hildesheim.

Panel at Akademie der Künste Berlin together with Herrmann, Clara; Zielinski, Siegfried; Roxanne, Tiara & Ivanova, Petja. „Human Machine. About Uncertain Landscapes and the Anarchy of the Soul“. Berlin, 2024.

Publications

Brückner, U. & Herlo, B. (2024). Design als Haltung. Handlungsfelder jenseits des Kommerziellen. Mainz: Verlag Hermann Schmidt. (German)

Herlo, B.; Ullrich, A. & Vladova, G. (2023). Sustainable Digital Sovereignty. IZT – Institut für Zukunftsstudien und Technologiebewertung/CODINA, Weizenbaum Institute for the Networked Society - The German Internet Institute.

Herlo, B.; Irrgang, D.; Unteidig, A.; Joost, G. (Eds.) (2021). Practicing Sovereignty. Digital Involvement in Times of Crises. Bielefeld: transcript. Open Access.

Keywords

Social Design
Digital Justice
Intersectional Inequalities
Transformation Design
Sustainable Digital Sovereignty

Links

→ [linkedin.com/in/bianca-herlo-29a57a61](https://www.linkedin.com/in/bianca-herlo-29a57a61)
→ weizenbaum-institut.de/en/portrait/p/bianca-herlo/#page=1&tags=forschung&sort=date
→ drlab.org/team/bianca-herlo/

Christoph Zellweger

Christoph has been a mentor and coach on the MA Design program at HSLU since its setup in 2008. He is a practitioner whose engagement with the artificial, the man-made constructed world of objects, bodies, and identities implies taking a critical stance to reflect on that essential human activity of ‚making,‘ of ‚designing‘ the world. Christoph has taught in over twenty countries and educational institutions since he graduated from the Royal College of Art London with distinction. His object-based work (that can take different formats from body-related artefacts to photography or speculative design) has been internationally recognised and described as thought-provoking and influential. It can be found in galleries, museums, and European, China, and North America public collections. The work won prizes in England, Belgium, and Germany and was awarded the Swiss Federal Prize for Design three times. Between 1993 and 2025 Christoph worked at Sheffield Hallam University, UK, as a senior lecturer and MA course leader for 10 years and held a professorial research post for 23 years.

Exhibitions

Marzee Gallery, The Netherlands, 2025.
MUDE Lisbon, Portugal, 2024.
MAD Brussels, Belgium, 2024.
Satrykon Gallery, Legnica, Poland, 2023.
Pharmacy Museum Lisbon, Portugal, 2021.

Presentations

Lisbon Contemporary Jewellery Biennial: keynote, The Pharmacy Museum Lisbon, Portugal, 2022.

Publications

Filipe, C. (2022); COLD SWEAT, catalogue (MUDE).

Workshops

Masterclass: Fear. ArCo, Centro de Arte e Comunicacao Visual, Ar.Co. Lisbon, Portugal 2021.

Masterclass: Point of no return. Hiko Mizuno College Of Jewelry, Tokyo, Japan 2019.

Keywords

Process-led
Concept-driven
Material-based
Prototyping
Critical & Speculative Design

Links

→ shu.ac.uk/about-us/our-people/staff-profiles/christoph-zellweger#firstSection
→ christophzellweger.com



Daniela Zimmermann

Daniela is a textile designer and a member of the BA Product Design Team at HSLU. Since 2024, she has also led the MA Design Program. Her 20 years of work experience in the globalized textile industry contribute to the values, focus, and content of her teaching. Her courses commute in the interfaces between design and art, research and technology, and socio-cultural and transformative processes. Daniela's independent projects range from mass-produced to luxury goods and artifacts, as her passion is fueled by questions of diverse togetherness, circular and regenerative design, narrative craftsmanship, and an appreciation for all forms of life.

Exhibitions

Upcoming 2026: Landesplattenberg in Engi, Kanton Glarus with the support of Migros-Kulturprozent.

Presentations

Circular Textiles, Circular Design, GTEX/MENATEX: Global Textiles and Clothing Programme, International Trade Center UN, Casablanca Morocco, 2023.

Workshops

Color in Fashion, Haus der Farbe, Zürich, 2024

Competencies in Sustainability and Education, Zentrum für Lernen, Lehren und Forschen with Dr. Yolanda Martinez-Zaugg, HSLU Lucerne, 2023

Sustainability in design, further education program, Institute Contemporary Design Practices (ICDP) FHNW, Basel, 2023

Keywords

Circular Design
Regenerative Design
More-than-human-centered Design
Sustainable Transformation Processes
Materiality & Textiles

Daniele Catalanotto

Daniele is a Service Design nerd who strives to make service design accessible to everyone. At HSLU, he is co-lead for the Master Service Design with his mate Andy Polaine. He founded the Swiss Innovation Academy, supporting over 15 000 individuals, and leads the Service Design Network Switzerland Chapter. Daniele has helped organizations such as The Salvation Army, The British Heart Foundation, Daimler China, IKEA, RTS, Romande Energie, Camille Bloch, EWZ, and the City of Carouge, among others. He holds a Master's in Service Design from HSLU and a Bachelor's from ECAL.

Awards

Best of Swiss Web Awards 2015. Nominated in the category «Creation»

Presentations

Service Design Global Conference . A Tiny Service Design History. Youtube, 2019.

Online

Swiss Innovation Academy. What is Service Design.

Conferences

Swiss Service Design Week 2025: A week of Service Design Learning (co-organizer)

Swiss Service Design Day 2024, 2025: A one day conference for Service Design practitioners in Switzerland (co-organizer)

Publications

Catalanotto, D. (2024): Service Design Principles 301-400: 100 simple ideas to improve the lives of the people you serve. Swiss Innovation Academy.

Catalanotto, D. (2022). Service Design Principles 201-300: 100 simple ideas to improve the lives of the people you serve. Swiss Innovation Academy.

Catalanotto, D. (2021): Service Design Principles 101-200: 100 more ideas to boost the user and customer experience in simple and practical ways. Swiss Innovation Academy.

Catalanotto, D. (2018): Service Design Principles 1-100: 100 ideas to improve the user and customer experience in simple and practical ways. Swiss Innovation Academy.

Keywords

Service Design
Workshop Facilitation
Coaching

Links

→ swissinnovation.academy
→ catalanotto.ch

Gabriela Fackler

Gabriela is a creative force who brings digital platforms to life. For many years and, well-known organizations across Switzerland and internationally. Generates numerous ideas and finds effective ways to implement them. Maintains the helicopter view, integrating all aspects of design.

Lead MA Digital Ideation. Taught design research and interaction design at design schools in Basel, Zurich, and Chur. Experienced juror for international design competitions.

MFA Graphic Design, Rhode Island School of Design, Fulbright Scholarship, Diplom Visuelle Kommunikation Hochschule Augsburg, CAS UX Management Hochschule OST

Awards

Master of Swiss Web 2023 and Gold Award for User Experience.

Recognized over the years for outstanding work in websites and games:
Best of Swiss Web: 1x Gold, 2x Silver, 1x Bronze

Master of Swiss Web (across all categories):
1x 1st place, 1x 2nd place, 2x 3rd places, 1x 4th place

Bilanz Prize, Orbit Prize, Rabbit in bronze from 10vor10 / Hochparterre,
6 stars from PC-Tipp.

Juror

iF Design Award, Design Prize Switzerland, ZHDK, RISD, SFG Basel School of Design.

Presentations

IT-Beschaffungskonferenz, BFH 2022.

Barrierefreiheit für Inklusion & Diversität – Keine Digitalisierung ohne Inklusion.
Open Source Event, DINAcon Kompakt 2022.

Interaction Design & Identities, FHGR, Chur 2016.

Publications

Fackler, G. (2022): Keine Digitalisierung ohne Inklusion. In: SwissICT.ch

Keywords

Innovation in Teams
UX Design & Strategy
Thinking in Systems
Reflexivity & Reflection
Digital Inclusion

Links

→ bit.ly/4drMW09
→ ch.linkedin.com/in/gabrielefackler
→ reflexivity.net

Isabel Rosa Müggler Zumstein

Isabel is a lecturer and researcher (Competence Centre Product & Textiles) at HSLU. She explores material and tacit knowledge at the intersection of High Tech & Low Tech. During the past 14 years, her research collaboration with the design industry has resulted in novel materials and product innovations introduced in the market.

As a sustainable entrepreneur, she pioneers circular manufacturing processes with a newly built European value chain. With her brand Circular Living, she offers engineered textile materials and products based on circular flows. This range represents the vision of recycling being attractive and functional for various interior, architecture, design, and fashion applications.

Awards

Her projects have been nominated five times for the Design Preis Schweiz; in 2015, she won the Design Price Schweiz Category Research with the project team DAFAT.

Presentations

Materiality in the Post Digital World: What You See Is Not What You Feel.
Project Panel Resilience, Sustainability, Tactility. Material Trajectories Conference, Berlin 2021.

Keywords

Materiality
Research
Textiles
Sustainable Entrepreneurship
Circular Manufacturing

Links

→ circularliving.ch
→ tigerliz-textiles.com



Jan-Christoph Zoels

Jan-Christoph is head of the MA Design programs at HSLU. He co-founded Experientia, a service design studio in Turin, Basel and Singapore in 2005, where he led strategic engagements for clients such as Deutsche Telekom, Midea, Samsung, Swisscom and Stellantis. Originally from Germany, he lived for many years in the USA, where he taught at Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) and was a senior designer at Sony and director of information architecture at Sapient. He joined Interaction Design Institute Ivrea as a senior associate professor, where he ran the business innovation workshops called Applied Dreams.

Awards

ADI Index'22 Ricerca, Teorica, Storia: Humanizing Technology through Design - Curator, Conference and Exhibition, Circolo del Design, Turin 2021.

ADI Index'22 Best of MA Design Thesis: Cari - Thesis Advisor, Domus Academy 2020.

Compasso d'Oro Honorable Mention Italy - CityOpt application 2018

Exhibitions

Easy as a kiss: 20 years Interaction Design Institute Ivrea, Circolo del Design, Turin 2021.

Presentations

Mad at Mudac, Swiss Design Schools, Archives du Design Romand, Lausanne 2024

What could possibly go wrong? Expert Panel, DGTF, Lucerne 2024

Eco-Social Innovation by Design: a new Masters Program. DGTF, Kiel 2022.

Services are performances that produce results. SAP Design, 2021.

Culture of Participation: digital stakeholder engagement post COVID.

By Design or Disaster UNIBZ Bolzano 2020; Swiss Smart Government Days, University St. Gallen 2020.

Publications

Zoels, JC; Fink, K; Unteidig, A (2023): Three Choices. In: Budelacci, O; Holzer, J; Weiberg, B (2023): Update Available. Transforming Education in Design, Film and Fine Arts. HSLU 11.

Doering, C; Fink, K; Ramseier, C; Unteidig, A; Zoels, JC (2022): Eco-Social Innovation by Design - Exploring Potential Contributions to Sustainability Transitions in an International PhD and a Master's Degree Program. Proceedings of DGTF 2022 - Design x Sustainability. Kiel

Workshops

Design systems. IED, Turin 2024.

Transdisciplinary design. IED, Turin 2023.

Keywords

Qualitative Research
Strategic Design
Interaction/Service Design
UX/UI, Prototyping

Links

→ youtube.com/watch?v=L_UYX-x3RnU

→ tellart.com/projects/designnonfiction



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Master
Design

Karin Fink

Karin is a geographer and relational designer working at the science-policy interface, with a focus on system analysis, strategic foresight and communication. She is co-leading the MA Eco-Social Design and is a policy advisor at the Federal Office for the Environment FOEN, where she is a project leader for the Swiss State of the Environment report. Karin curates various community-based projects at the intersection of art & natural science, between the digital & the analog space and where teaching & learning interweave. In 2021, her book «The Anthroponaut's Wordbook. Art, science and a vital Anthropocene» was published by postmedia books.

Exhibitions

Ambient Radio project at Sonohr Festival, Bern, Switzerland 2022.

Projects

Fink, K. & Unteidig, A. (2023): Navigating a safe and just space: Literacies for Eco-Social Designers. By Design or by Disaster Conference 2023, University Bolzano.

Publications

Zoels, JC.; Fink, K.; Unteidig, A. (2023): Three Choices. In: Budelacci, Orlando; Holzer, Jacqueline; Weiberg, Birk (2023): Update Available. Transforming Education in Design, Film and Fine Arts. Nummer, 11.

Fink, K. (2021): The Anthroponauts Wordbook. Art, Science and a vital Anthropocene. Postmedia Books, Milan.

Swiss Federal Council (2022): Environment Switzerland 2022.

Workshops

«Ears On» - a transdisciplinary workshop on sound and the audible sense in collaboration with the HSLU Music department, 2023.

«We contain Multitudes» - a transdisciplinary workshop on the food system between art and environmental science, 2022.

Keywords

Ecology & System thinking
Policy Design
(Online) Communities
Strategic Foresight
Sustainability Transformation

Links

→ bafu.admin.ch/bafu/en/home/documentation/reports.html

→ postmediabooks.it/2021/312fink/9788874903122.htm

→ ambienradiocrew.wixsite.com/website



Eco-Social
Design

055

Klaus Marek

Klaus is a professor at the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts. He heads the Bachelor Spatial Design, which teaches spatial design at the intersection of experience design and digital media. Klaus lectures in the Master Design program and conducts research in the Visual Narrative research group - currently on the role of visualizations in the communication mix for area development projects. He has extensive experience in architecture and product design, having worked on projects with companies such as Herzog & de Meuron, Stabilo, Somfy, and many others.

Exhibitions

Museum of Communication Berne – Exhibition DANCE! (2024–25), Spatial Design: StudioM (Klaus Marek, Christophe Merkle, Sonja Koch)

Milan Design Week 2022 – «NOTHING NEW», B.A. Spatial Design with B.A. Object Design & Textile Design.

Design Biennale Zurich 2021 – «Special Spatial Collaboration», B.A. Spatial Design with B.A. Textile Design.

Conferences

Helga Lucerne 2022, 2023, 2024 – Symposium for Scenography and Communication in Space (Organizer).

Publications

Marek, K. (2023): The Permanent Beta Curriculum – Between Clear Orientation and a Permanent Development Process. In: Update Available. Transforming Education. In: Design, Film and Fine Arts, Nr. 11, ed. by Jacqueline Holzer. Lucerne: Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts – Lucerne School of Art and Design.

Images for: Budelacci, O. (2023). Seven Theses for the Education of the Future. Shaping the World of Tomorrow (Cover Booklet). In: Update Available. Transforming Education in Design, Film and Fine Arts, Nr. 11, ed. by Jacqueline Holzer. Lucerne: Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts – Lucerne School of Art and Design.

Keywords

Spatial Design
Architecture
Product Design
Service Design
Experience Design

Links

→ hslu.ch/spatial-design
→ linkedin.com/in/klaus-marek-aa9b08a4/
→ helga-luzern.ch



056

Master
Design

Meri Zirkelbach

Meri is a graduate Conservator / Restorer (2007), dipl. Surface Designer (2014) and Designer MA (2019). Since autumn 2019, Meri has been working for the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts as a research assistant and supervising or teaching students in the Master Design.

Her research focuses on the collaboration of design and science and developing new sustainable material concepts. She is extending her master's thesis in the context of a PhD. The PhD thesis focuses on diverse and speculative material explorations with the integration of material histories. It is being developed with the Institute of Material Design (IMD) at the Offenbach University of Applied Sciences and Empa Dübendorf.

Awards

Zeugindesign Foundation Award 2019 – Winner.

Presentations

Netzwerkveranstaltung Bioökonomie. Zellulotische Materialgestaltung – zwischen Naturwissenschaft und Design. Luzern, 2023.

Swiss Center for Design and Health. Ansätze für eine nachhaltige Materialgestaltung. Biel, 2022.

Publications

Frey, M. & Zirkelbach M. et al. (2018). Tunable Wood by Reversible Interlocking and Bioinspired Mechanical Gradients. In Advance Science, Volume 6, Issue 10, May 17. Wiley Online Library.

Keywords

Material Driven Design
Human Centered Design
Material Science
Object Design
Sustainable Transformation Processes

Links

→ white-wood.ch/
→ linkedin.com/in/meri-zirkelbach-977874151



057

Master
Design

Robert Bossart

Robert is a trained signwriter and a Lucerne Jazz Music School graduate. After several years of teaching and performing as a musician, co-developing musical electronic gear, he studied Graphic Design. With his diploma thesis he was the co-winner of the Lucky Strike Junior Designer Award 2001 and co-founded the studio Reflector. Since 2002, he has been lecturing at the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts in visual communication at Bachelor and Master levels. Since 2005 he has been sporadically involved in research projects to visualize complex data and facts.

Awards

German Design Award 2016 - Winner Editorial Design
Lucky Strike Junior Designer Award 2001

Projects

OceanCare, Scientific Report 2024/25, Book Concept and Design, in collaboration with the Lucerne based Artist Ursula Stalder

Erfolg und Wirkung der Operette am Stadttheater Sursee, 2023 -. Development of a web archive, Research Project of HSLU Music.

Bottom-up visualization of energy data - A user-centered and interdisciplinary approach for reducing energy consumption, 2020. Research Project with Klaus Marek and HSLU T&A .

Development and design web archive for Jazzfestival Schaffhausen, 2018.

Publications

Brechbühl, E.; Richer, B. (2017). Postertown. Leipzig: Spector Books

Betschart, J.; Henseler Lüthi, L.; Hurschler Lichtsteiner, S. (2017). Unterwegs zur persönlichen Handschrift: Lernprozesse gestalten mit der Deutschschweizer

Basisschrift. Luzern (2010 - 2019). Lehrmittelverlag Kanton Luzern.

Workshops

Typografie und Schriftvermittlung, Tagung zur Basisschrift.
Pädagogische Hochschule Luzern, 2019.

Keywords

Visual Communication
Graphic Design
Typography
Screendesign
Data Visualisation
Visual Exhibition Experience

Links

→ [instagram.com/reflector.ch](https://www.instagram.com/reflector.ch)
→ [Instagram.com/robo.07](https://www.instagram.com/robo.07)



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Master
Design

Research

FM 01	The Experience Sandbox	Marta Lago Arenas
FM 02	InclusionXDesign	Dr. Isabella Pasqualini
FM 03	Socio-spatial development and participation	Prof. Bea Durrer Eggerschwiler

Futures

FM 04	Design & Ethics	Prof. Dr. Dr. Christof Arn
FM 05	Design for systems change	Kristel van Ael
FM 06	Strategy prototyping for the planet	Dr. Samuel Huber

Foundations

FM 07	Drawing practice practice - 3D to 2D	Christoph Fischer
FM 08	Visualisation & Layout	Robert Bossart
FM 09	Visual storytelling	Samuel Frei

Design

FM 10	Data visualization	Darjan Hil
FM 11	Speculative design	Prof. Christoph Zellweger
FM 12	Can you tell me how to get to Kardashev Street?	Matt Jones

Interactions

FM 13	Hitchhiking design systems	Prof. Gabriele Fackler
FM 14	Creative machines? - From theory to real-world applications	Yaniv Steiner
FM 15	Accessibility and inclusion beyond feel-good activities	Bernhard von Allmen

Services

FM 16	Project Love - a route towards design activism	Clive Grinyer
FM 17	50 ways to change behaviour	Prof. Jan-Christoph Zoels
FM 20	Facets, embracing nuance and context to understand users	Jeanine Spence

Sustainability

FM 18	Design with an for more-than-human-worlds shelters	Karin Fink
FM 19	(Re)Designing the human	Dr. Andreas Unteidig Prof. Jonathan Ventura

Focus modules fall semester '24

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	<i>Research</i>	
FM 01	Data literacy for designers	Silke Zöllner
FM 02	Design and crisis	Dr. Andreas Unteidig
	<i>Futures</i>	
FM 03	Design for future collaborations	Donia Hamdami
FM 04	A design standard for the polycene	Justin Cook
	<i>Foundations</i>	
FM 05	Drawing practice practice – The world is a stage	Christoph Fischer
FM 06	Print & Politics (in Milan, IT)	Karin Fink Robert Bossart
FM 07	Sketching and visual ideation for szenario development	Samuel Frei
FM 08	UX writing fundamentals	Erin O’Loughlin
	<i>Design</i>	
FM 09	Immerse. Observe. (Re)connect.	Angela Wicki
FM 10	Material circularity from a practical design perspective	Lea Schmidt
FM 11	Information design grammar	Darjan Hil Nicole Lachenmeier
	<i>Interactions</i>	
FM 12	Approach UX as if your life depends on it	Bernhard von Allmen
FM 13	Agents by design	Yaniv Steiner
FM 14	Enjoying complexity	Prof. Gabriele Fackler
FM 15	High fidelity spatial prototyping	Gregor Finger
	<i>Services</i>	
FM 16	Mapping customer journeys & service blueprints	Prof. Jan-Christoph Zoels
FM 17	Good design is good business	Kim Mingo
	<i>Sustainability</i>	
FM 18	Meals, microbes and muses	Karin Fink Dr. Sabine Fink
FM 19	Local examples of adaptive reused buildings	Mario Stübi
	<i>Performance, Display, Presentation, Exhibition</i>	
FM 20	Szenography in presentations	James Dudley

Adrienne Schäfer

Adrienne graduated in Economics and Social Sciences and holds a PhD from the University of Augsburg, Germany. She worked in several positions for Daimler in Germany and the US and was responsible for Aftersales Marketing of DaimlerChrysler in Switzerland. In 2004, she joined the HSLU – School of Business as head of the Competence Center Service and Operations Management. She is a lecturer in Marketing, Services Marketing & Management, CX/CRM, Strategic Management, and Innovation Management at the bachelor and master levels and in different postgraduate programs. Transformative Service Research and Service Ecosystems are her fields of research activity.

Alison J. Clarke

Alison is a Professor of Design History and Theory and founding Director of the Papanek Foundation at the University of Applied Arts Vienna, Austria. She is a design historian and a trained social anthropologist. Her recent books are “Victor Papanek: The Politics of Design” (2020) and “Design Anthropology” (2017).

Angela Wicki

Angela is a research associate in the research group Product & Textile at HSLU. In her MA thesis, Regenerative Education, she focused on behavioral change and networking. She completed her BA in art education at ZHdK and has been continuously training as a nature and wilderness trainer since 2019. She also works as a self-employed graphic designer.

Barbara Mutzbauer

Barbara is an interior designer, scenographer, and university lecturer. As creative director at Aroma Zurich, she creates exhibitions, spatial designs, and narrative spaces. Her career includes significant roles at renowned agencies across Germany, China, and Switzerland. Barbara’s academic background encompasses studies in interior design at Rosenheim and Copenhagen and Ethnology at Zurich and Munich. She explored themes of perception and atmosphere for her doctoral thesis in philosophical aesthetics and cultural studies at the University of Potsdam, Germany. She teaches design theory and practice at ZHdK and the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts (HSLU).

Barclay Palmer

Barclay is Executive Editor at Climate and Capital Media, covering finance, investing and policy around climate, tech, sustainability, regenerative practices and risk. As Principal of Black Birch LLC, he serves as strategic advisor, consultant or board director in cleantech, media, energy, and edtech. He has been an award-winning journalist over 30 years at CNN, CBS News, Bloomberg, Reuters, Newsweek, RealVision, Times Mirror, PBS NewsHour and other outlets. He played senior roles in launching Amanpour, Anderson Cooper 360, and Newsnight 2.0, and in producing for CNN Newsstand, CNN & Fortune and CNN Business News, managing coverage of 9/11, Flight 800 etc.

Bea Durrer Eggerschwiler

Bea holds a master's degree in agriculture (ETH Zürich) and an executive master's in urban and regional development (HSLU SA). Since 2004, Bea has been a lecturer and project manager at the Institut for Sociocultural Community Development at HSLU. Bea heads the competence center for urban and regional development. In close collaboration with all parties involved, she develops tailored solutions through participation, inter- and transdisciplinarity, and a practical, process-driven approach. In teaching, she is responsible for the modules «Socio-spatial Development» and «Sustainable Development and Social Work.»

Bernhard von Allmen

Bernhard von Allmen works in the field of UX for 30+ years. He was the Chief Usability Engineer at Roche Diagnostics for 10 years, where he worked on over 50 projects, both physical and digital. In 2021, he founded his own company, combining his passions for user experience (UX) and software engineering.

Christian Schnellmann

Christian studied philosophy and economics in Bern and Paris. After working in the advertising industry, at the Kunstmuseum Bern and as a freelance game designer, he has been working in communication and research at HSLU. He works primarily with augmented and mixed reality in spatial planning and cultural mediation, from which the start-up BLOP Space emerged in 2023. In 2022, Christian Schnellmann curated the exhibition “Hyperscapes” at the Kornhausforum Bern about virtual landscapes.

Christof Arn

Christof headed the Center for University Didactics at Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts for seven years and now works independently as an ethicist (ethikprojekte.ch) and university didactician (agiledidaktik.ch). Together with Jean-Paul Munsch and others, he founded the University of Applied Sciences for Agile Education (hfab.ch) as a laboratory for jointly developing prototypes for entire degree programs, forms of performance assessment, continuing education formats, and more related to development-oriented education.

Christoph Fischer

Christoph is a freelance Illustrator and drawing teacher in Lucerne. He does editorial design for newspapers and his own art and book projects:

- Book “Während ich schlief” with drawings of his dreams
- Reportage drawing projects “Chicago Westside”, “Bahnhofplatz Luzern”
- Long-term documentation of “Teufelskreisel Kreuzstutz“ (Book Edition Patrick Frey).

Christoph Schneider

Christoph is a graduate of Hyperwerk Basel and is currently a master's student in the Digital Ideation program. As an assistant in the Visual Narrative research group, he works on the development of augmented reality applications for participatory urban planning and climate communication, with a focus on 3D modeling. He specializes in process design, haptic interface research, and the development of innovative forms of interaction between digital and physical space.

Claudio Madella

Claudio is a letterpress wizard, graphic designer and activist.

Clive Grinyer

Clive was the Head of Service Design at the RCA in London and has created and led design teams at Samsung, Orange, Cisco, and Barclays Bank, as well as founding the design consultancy Tangerine with Jony Ive. Clive is a strategic advisor to Bosch and leads executive education courses for numerous companies. His book Redesigning Thinking will be published early next year.

Dagmar Steffen

Dagmar is an expert in product language and design semantics with international recognition at the Competence Centre Design & Management.

Donia Hamdami

Donia is a University Teaching Designer exploring creativity and team dynamics at Hasso Plattner Institute. Holds diplomas in Industrial Design and Production Design for Film. Prior Prof. at TH OWL for University Didactics in Architecture, Interior Design + Urban Planning.

Erin O’Loughlin

Erin is a Content Design Manager with extensive experience in communications, UX writing and content design. Over the past decade, she has worked with design teams to craft user-centered content for B2B and B2C digital experiences. She currently leads the content design team at Mews, voted best Property Management System 2024.

Evelyn Steiner

Evelyn worked as a curator at the Zentrum Architektur Zürich until 2022 and curated the Salon Suisse at the Architecture Biennale in Venice in 2021 on behalf of Pro Helvetia. In addition to her curatorial activities, she works as a publicist and moderator with a focus on architecture and art.

Fabio Hendry

Hot Wire Extensions, a design studio in Switzerland led by Fabio Hendry, explores sustainability. Using waste SLS 3D nylon powder, he creates organic bone-like structures around wire inspired by vine growth. His work encompasses a diverse range of products, furniture, installations, and bespoke commissions, reflecting his commitment to mindful material exploration.

Florian Hauswirth

Florian Hauswirth is a versatile designer with extensive experience across various fields. He thrives in team settings, combining social flair with design ingenuity. Advocating for the “human factor” in an anonymous work environment, he believes in shaping our surroundings and moving towards more cooperative societal structures.

Gabriela Christen

Gabriela works at HSLU as a researcher and lecturer dedicated to Sacral Landscapes, redefining the future common usages of spiritual places. She is active on various foundation boards and accompanies the Baldegg Monastery in a strategic process as it moves into the future. From 2010 to 2022, she served as the director of the Department of Design and Art at the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts.

Gemma Copeland

Gemma is a London-based designer, researcher, organiser and educator. She is a founding member of Common Knowledge, a not-for-profit worker cooperative that uses design and technology to help social movements build power.

Gordan Savičić

Gordan is a media artist and interaction designer living in Lausanne, Switzerland. He studied at the University of Applied Arts in Vienna with Prof. Peter Weibel and finished an M.A. in media design in Rotterdam with Prof. Dr. Florian Cramer in 2008. He has exhibited his work in numerous solo and group shows, including the Seoul Biennale in South Korea, ZKM Center for Art and Media in Karlsruhe, Germany, and the Ars Electronica Center in Linz, Austria. In 2016, he joined the new bachelor’s program in Digital Ideation at HSLU Lucerne. Before this, he was interim director of the M.A. Media Design program at Haute école d’art et Design (HEAD) in Geneva. He also taught at universities in Vienna, Zurich, and Rotterdam. Savičić co-founded the media art collective moddr_ in Rotterdam.

Gregor Finger

Gregor is co-founder of the Oslo-based spatial design startup Ordinary Objects. OO aims to make prototyping spatial experiences exponentially more intuitive, powerful, and fun. Previously, he worked as a Creative Technologist and Spatial Computing Lead, conceptualizing, prototyping, and leading R&D and commercial projects for leading international brands such as IKEA and BMW.

Isabella Pasqualini

Isabella Pasqualini is an artist, urban designer and scientist with a PhD in architecture and cognitive neuroscience (EPFL 2012). Her works explore the mutual and intimate relationship between body and space using immersive and interactive multimedia, with a particular focus on the multisensory enhancement of the user’s horizon.

Isabelle Deschamps

Isabelle is part of the PhD program Eco-Social Innovation by Design and the Research Group CC Transformation Design at HSLU. Her research focuses on “Conscious Co-Creation for Social Transformation.” She is exploring how mindfulness practice can support participatory design processes in Eco-Social Communities.

James Dudley

James, a UCL graduate of The Bartlett School of Architecture, established his design studio in London, specializing in large-scale 3D brand experiences. He later moved to Switzerland, working as a designer and creative director while teaching in the Master Design program at HSLU. Leveraging his expertise, James offers innovation coaching and sprint workshops, assisting organizations in problem-solving, prototype development, and gathering quick user feedback. Led the R&D process at the National Portrait Gallery, London, running 10 Design Sprint workshops.

Jeanine Spence

Jeanine, a firm believer in the power of human connection, collaborates with companies of all sizes to envision innovative solutions that deliver exceptional value to customers. Having worked on both the engineering and design sides of software development at Microsoft, she draws together the vision and the plan to provide unique experiences. Jeanine is the lead author of the Customer Experience Capability Model, a strategic framework that teams use to examine their current skills against exemplary examples and define a transformation roadmap.

Jens Badura

Jens is the head of BA Transformation and Sustainability at HSLU and co-director of the Graduate School at the Uri Institute for Alpine Cultures, University of Lucerne. He focuses on “Alpine Futures Literacy” and holds a doctorate with a thesis titled “The Search for Appropriateness.”

Joe Macloed

Joe is the founder of the world’s first customer-ending business. A veteran of the product development industry with decades of experience across service, digital, and product sectors. Head of Engineering at AndEnd. TEDx Speaker. Wired says, «An energetic Englishman, Macleod advises companies on how to game out their endgames. Every product faces a cycle of endings. It’s important to plan for each of them. Not all companies do.» Fast Company says, «Joe wants brands to focus on what happens to products at the end of their life cycle—not just for the environment but for the entire consumer experience.» He is the author of the Ends book, which iFixit called «the best book about consumer e-waste.» And the new book – Engineering «defines and maps out a whole new subdiscipline of study».

Joey Guidone

Joey is an Italian illustrator known for his vibrant and playful style, characterized by the bold use of color, often incorporating elements of nature and pop culture references. He studied illustration at IED, Turin, and MiMaster, Milan. Salzman International has represented him since 2015. Joey has contributed illustrations to various publications, including The New York Times, Science magazine, Harvard Business Review, Die Zeit, and The Economist. He has received recognition from Communication Arts, the New York Society of Illustrators, 3 x 3 Magazine, and Applied Arts. He has collaborated with clients like Apple, Adobe, ESPN, Barilla, and Mayo Clinic.

John Thackara

John is a writer, advisor, and event producer dedicated to sustainable futures, focusing on social, ecological, and relational design. John curated the celebrated Doors of Perception conference for 20 years – first in Amsterdam, later across India – and was commissioner of the UK social innovation biennial Dott07 and the French design biennial City Eco Lab. Currently, John Thackara is a visiting professor at Tongji University, focusing on urban-rural reconnection, a senior fellow at the Royal College of Art, a Fellow at Musashino Art University in Japan, and a visiting professor at Milan Polytechnic University.

Jonathan Ventura

Jonathan is a design anthropologist specializing in social and healthcare design. He directs the Unit for History and Philosophy of Art, Design, and Technology at Shenkar and is a Research Fellow at the Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design, RCA, London. He co-founded the Social Design Network and co-authored Introduction to Design Theory (Routledge, 2023).

Julie Harboe

In a transdisciplinary practice of action research, she explores and combines various real-world challenges, focusing on creativity and positive transformations. Her core interests include supporting open innovation processes, the circular economy, and future-proof change.

Julius Lange

Julius studied Sociology and Philosophy, focusing on communication, media theories, and empirical research. He earned his Master’s in Sociology in 2019 with a thesis on the American Tea Party. He is a photographer and musician, currently studying in the Master’s Film program at the Lucerne School of Art & Design.

Jürgen Buchinger

Jürgen is an artist and researcher in the field of media art and sound with a special interest in public space and interactive and participatory art.

Justin W. Cook

Justin is a strategic designer working on problem sets in climate, health, and governance. He is the Director of the Center for Complexity at Rhode Island School of Design, a platform for research and experimentation. Formerly, at the Finnish Innovation Fund, he focused Finnish society on sustainability and well-being. He received a Master of Architecture from Harvard.

Karin Ohashi

Karin is an architect and research assistant at Sacred Landscape of Central Switzerland Platform, Institute of Architecture IAR – HSLU.

Kim Mango

Kim is a Design Leader with 25+ years of experience in design-led innovation at Johnson & Johnson, Motorola, and Sony. Formerly a Design Director at McKinsey, she now runs her own design consulting practice, building capabilities and driving business impact through design. She holds multiple patents and serves as a mentor globally. Passionate about social innovation, she co-founded HardCoro, a startup using the power of collective singing for social impact.

Kristel van Ael

Kristel is a business partner at Namahn, a humanity-centred design agency based in Brussels. She is the lead author of the Service Design (servicedesign-toolkit.org) and Systemic Design (systemicdesigntoolkit.org) toolkits. Kristel is also guest professor in product-service-system design and lead teacher in systemic design at the University of Antwerp, Faculty of Design Sciences.

Laura Helfer

Laura is a designer at Liip, from user research and ideation to crafting pixel-perfect Figma prototypes, from building brands to designing comprehensive systems.

Lea Schmidt

Lea is a researcher at Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts, research group products and textiles, and a doctoral candidate at TU Dresden's chair of Industrial Design Engineering. Her research focuses on sustainability, design, and technology, with a particular interest in material circularity and its design implications.

Mario Stübi

Mario (BA in Cultural Studies) is co-owner of the urban planning office OSRI and is responsible for adaptive reuse and interim use at the Catholic Parish of Lucerne. He was a co-founder of the interim use project Neubad and was a member of the construction commission of the Lucerne City Parliament for ten years.

Marta Lago Arenas

Marta is a service designer and strategist with 20 years of experience in human-centered innovation, focusing on health and care. At the biotech company Amgen, she led patient-centric innovation across Europe, Japan, and Canada, developing new services and solutions – digital and not – to improve the lives of those affected by serious diseases and their caregivers. Marta is passionate about transforming healthcare ecosystems towards humane and equitable care for all.

Matt Jones

Matt has been designing digital products and services since 1995. Most recently, he served as Head of Design at Lunar Energy, a company developing the world's best clean energy products to deliver home electrification at scale. From 2013 to 2021, he worked at Google Research as a Principal Designer, where he worked on advanced AI concepts for both hardware and software. From 2009 to 2013, he was a principal at BERG, a design and invention company in London that had projects exhibited at MoMA and products featured in The Financial Times, Fast Company, Wired, and Marvel Comics. He initially studied architecture and has written on interaction design for 25 years at petafloptimism.com, and has taught design at the RCA, Goldsmiths, SVA, Umeå, and CIID.

Minh-Nguyet Le

Minh-Nguyet is a design researcher at the intersection of academia and public institutions. She has an MFA in Transdisciplinary Design at Parsons, the New School for Design, focusing predominantly on design for social innovation and participatory methods for public sector innovation. She was a research fellow with the DFG-funded program – Wicked Problems, Contested Administrations at the Universität Potsdam, Faculty of Economics & Social Sciences. As part of the interdisciplinary research project «Voice Assistants: People, Practices, and Routines» (VA PEPR), she integrated digital ethnography and speculation to understand the lived experiences of voice assistants in the home and to make policy issues more visible.

Myriel Milićević

Myriel is an artist, interaction designer, and professor in the Department of Design at the University of Applied Sciences Potsdam. She explores the hidden interconnections between people and their natural, social, and technical environments, inquiring into spaces of impossibility, the realignment of perspectives, and coexistence with other beings. These explorations are primarily participatory and collaborative, taking the form of practical utopian models, processes, mappings, and narrations.

Nando Schmidlin

Nando is a sustainable innovation strategist specializing in design-led innovation for sustainability at Milani. Building on an MA in Design from Aalto University, Helsinki, his goal is to foster a future society that is co-creative, human-scale, and cosmopolitan.

Nicole Lachenmeier and Darjan Hil

Nicole and Darjan have been doing information design in their agency Superdot, visualizing complexity for 10 years. Their work has been recognized with several awards, including the German Press Agency Award and the Information is Beautiful Award. They have been teaching for 7 years and are currently publishing a book on their methods. Superdot's clients include private companies, NGOs, government agencies, and universities.

Pascal Wullschleger

Pascal is a dedicated professional in machine learning, data science, and software development, currently pursuing a PhD in Computer Science with a focus on Natural Language Processing at Dublin City University. He holds a Master of Science in Engineering from HSLU. Pascal has been a Research Associate at the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts since September 2022, working on applied research projects in machine learning and data science. His earlier experience includes Siemens Building Technologies, where he worked on full-stack development and test automation of fire safety products.

Sabine Fink

Sabine is a researcher at the Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research WSL and lecturer at ETH Zürich.

Samuel Frei

Samuel works as a Design Researcher and Lecturer at the Lucerne School of Design, Film, and Art. He leads research projects and implements them in collaboration with praxis partners, teaching visual communication and storytelling and questioning design knowledge while exploring creative processes in various research projects. Throughout his academic journey, he worked as a freelance exhibition designer and scientific illustrator for multiple institutions in the conservation and education sector.

Samuel Huber

Samuel is a founder of For Planet Strategy Lab, which introduces planetary perspectives to organizations. Prior, he was Strategy Director at Japanese design firm Goodpatch, co-founded future think tank UBS Y and worked long nights at a NYC art gallery. He holds a PhD on 'Strategizing as Prototyping' and studied at the Universities of Zurich, St. Gallen, Stanford and Keio in Tokyo.

Sarah Hauser

Sarah is a computer scientist who earned her computer science degree from ETH Zurich and an Executive MBA in International Management at the University of Zurich. Sarah has a professional background in the IT industry, and her research expertise includes Social Network Analysis, Computational Music Thinking, and Multi-Party Computation. Along with her passion for Computer Science, Sarah has a keen interest in art, having studied at the University of the Arts in Berlin for a semester. She was named one of the Top 100 selections by Women in Business magazine in 2018. Since 2021, Sarah has been Vice Director and head of Education at the Department of Computer Science and Information Technology at HSLU.

Silke Zöllner

Silke has a BSc in Human Geography, an MSc in Business Administration, and a CAS in Applied Statistics. Senior Research Associate at the Competence Center for Regional Economics & PhD candidate at Cranfield University, UK.

Silvia von Allmen

Silvia has been supporting all Master's programs at the Hochschule Luzern DFK as an administrative assistant since 2025. With a sharp eye for structure and what truly matters, plus a splash of color in everyday administration, she brings clarity, creativity, and valuable experience to academic coordination. As a "colorist of office life," she combines strong administrative expertise with a passion for thoughtful, human-centered organization.

Simon de Diesbach

After a BA in Media & Interactive Design at ECAL, Simon co-founded the studio fragmentin.com, with which he won the ARTS at CERN residency and collaborated with Pierre Soulages and David Dufresne. In 2017, he undertook an MA in Film at HSLU DFK and directed *Limites*, which premiered at the Locarno Film Festival and earned him a lecture at MIT Media Lab. By giving a central place to nature, often relegated to the rank of decor, he makes it a full subject of his artistic practice. Simon also gives workshops in animation and design at various Swiss schools of applied arts and universities.

Simon Lanz

Simon is a multidisciplinary designer and artist based in Bern. He is passionate about creating narrative objects and tools for musical expression. His work spans a range of mediums, including instrument making, performance, visual design, scenography and installation art. Simon graduated in product design at the Hochschule Luzern DFK, where he honed his skills in crafting and designing objects that look good and function with precision and purpose. Previously, he worked as a graphic designer, contributing to his keen eye for aesthetics and attention to detail. Since August 2023, Simon has been an artistic assistant at HSLU, supporting students in the Master Design program.

Spartaco Albertarelli

Spartaco is a seasoned professional game designer with decades of experience and has published more than 150 games worldwide. He collaborates with Tambu as a creative consultant, bringing his expertise to bear in the development of a catalog of new and innovative products. His specialties: everything needed by a publisher to design and print a board game, from the basic concept to the final printing process. Owner of KaleidosPublishing srl

Stefano Mirti

Stefano is a Designer, teacher, and partner at IdLab, Milan. He has been working for years on new ways to teach and share knowledge: Design 101, Relational Design, and several other projects. For two years, he led the social media team at Expo Milano. From 2017 to 2024, head of Scuola Superiore di Arte Applicata del Castello Sforzesco in Milan. On February 20, 2018, he started the Letterine project.

Teresa Palmieri

Teresa is a lecturer and researcher at the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, co-author of ‘Change Agents — Blueprints for Interinstitutional Collaborations,’ an open-access publication to support social design education and practice and, in turn, drive meaningful societal impact.

Threads & Tits

Threads & Tits act as agents for socio-ecological change, using artistic interventions to inspire vision and courage. With humor and sharp analysis, they draw attention to social and ecological injustices, which they bring into various spaces in the form of desirable “reality corrections.”

Tobias Kreienbühl

Tobias is a researcher at HSLU. After a bachelor’s in computer science, he is pursuing a master’s in digital ideation. As part of the immersive realities research lab, he creates immersive solutions in virtual and augmented reality next to other electronic media. Applied games for training, education, and therapy are another part of his research and development.

Ulrike Felsing

Ulrike is a lecturer in the BA Graphic Design and Data Design + Art programs and leads the +RE course “Knowledge Images in Media and Society.” From 2021 to 2025, she co-lead the Sinergia research project, “Participatory Knowledge Practices in Analog and Digital Image Archives,” funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation. Her dissertation is on “Reflexive Catalogs: A Medium of Translation as Exhibition, Film and Hypertext.”

Yaniv Steiner

Yaniv Steiner is a technologist and designer specializing in computational linguistics and generative AI. For three decades, he has worked with companies, governments, and academia to design solutions that bridge the gap between humans and computers. He taught physical computing at the Interaction Design Institute Ivrea, contributing to the development of both the Wiring and Arduino platforms, and served as a Senior Information Architect at the European Commission, where he developed enterprise-level services, tools, and methods in the fields of NLP and data science.

+NM 1	<p>RED Vienna: Searching for social activist roots in design & a vegan Schnitzel</p> <p>This study trip to Vienna takes the city's rich social-activist past and present as its starting point. We explore the "Wiener Viertel," including the former "Arbeiterviertel," Karl-Marx-Hof, Albertina Modern, Angewandte Wien, the Victor Papanek Archive, Hundertwasser houses, MAK, and more.</p>	Christoph Zellweger			<p>Connect projects' – One week of ideation, one week of prototyping: Connect Projects are two-week agile design sprints to respond to a briefing from external partners in business, research, society, or politics.</p>
+NM 2	<p>Design for care: Elements of trust</p> <p>The workshop discusses the importance of trust in health-care scenarios where individuals entrust vital aspects of their lives, such as health data or care for loved ones, in the hope of achieving better outcomes. We emphasize that trust is essential for forming effective partnerships and facilitating healing experiences. The course explores what makes processes and organizations trustworthy, examining cases like data empowerment, digital health trustworthiness, and best practices in service design to foster trust.</p>	Marta Lago Arenas	CP1	<p>Holy Spaces, Real Places: The Catholic Church in Lucerne, facing a decline in parish members since the 1970s, is exploring the adaptive reuse of its properties. This initiative addresses the declining need for religious spaces resulting from secularization, aging populations, and other societal shifts. It aims to reinterpret sacred spaces for community engagement, non-economic interactions, and eco-social responsibility while fostering collaboration with local parishes, St. Johannes and Philip Neri, to transform their heritage for the future.</p>	Gabriela Christen Jan-Christoph Zoels Isabelle Deschamps Karin Ohashi Catholic Church Lucerne
+NM 3	<p>More than games: Learn the potential of game engines for interactive experiences</p> <p>Game engines like Unity, Unreal, and Godot provide more than just gaming options. They can be used to create serious games, animated videos, WebGL plugins, and mobile apps. These engines enable animation with imported clips and offer basic to advanced visual programming for object manipulation. Shaders and Materials let you create and experiment with your style. You'll define a space within your thesis topic where a game engine can support your work.</p>	Tobias Kreienbühl	CP2	<p>Betting on Rain: Our project aimed at enhancing the user experience of the Swiss National Weather Service's precipitation forecasts. By improving our understanding of the probability of rain, snow, or other types of precipitation, we provide more accurate and accessible weather information to the public, thereby contributing to the safety and prosperity of Switzerland.</p>	Gabriele Fackler Bernhard Wagner MeteoSchweiz
+NM 4	<p>Moving pictures: Cinematic narratives with Generative AI</p> <p>Dive into the fascinating world of moving pictures, where individual frames come to life through cutting-edge technology of AI. In this workshop, you will learn how to create short cinematic narratives that blur the line between human creativity and AI-generated. Whether you are a filmmaker, storyteller, or intrigued by the future of AI, you and AI will become creative partners, assisting each other to brainstorm, generate ideas, criticize them, and collaboratively produce compelling visuals, one frame at a time.</p>	Yaniv Steiner	CP3	<p>New packaging for soil: Students explored sustainable packaging solutions for Ricoter, replacing plastics and drawing on historical material use. Supported by Laboranten-Zentralschweiz (https://laboranten-zentralschweiz.ch), Materio-Lab developed innovative prototypes that strike a balance between speculative and practical approaches. The project also supports the future integration of a BioFabLab into the strategy of the Hochschule Luzern – Design Film Arts.</p>	Meri Zirkelbach Ricoter
+NM 5	<p>Digital participation in urban planning: Ensuring inclusivity and relevance in real-world scenarios</p> <p>Challenging and evolving various aspects of practice and positioning as designers and innovators, this approach uses care lenses: careful framing, recognizing that design as problem-solving limits the ability.</p>	Ulrike Felsing Christoph Schneider Christian Schnellmann	CP4	<p>Mind the Gap: An AI experiment on student wellness. Students tested the abilities of AI systems to provide meaningful, unbiased analysis, where AI is tasked to decipher the well-being of a large group of people from a flood of survey data. Will it crack the code of the group's happiness or be left scratching its GPUs?</p>	Yaniv Steiner
			CP5	<p>From Nose to Tail: Raising awareness of conscious meat consumption. On the steep meadows and pastures of Obermettlen, where no arable farming can be carried out, and therefore no food can be grown directly for humans, a small herd of suckler cows of the endangered old Swiss breed Rhaetian grey cattle graze. Students explored the potential valuable applications and utilization of leather and bones/skulls, as well as communication strategies to raise awareness of conscious meat consumption.</p>	Robert Bossart Farm Obermettlen

Service Design as a Counter-Cultural Force

This article examines the rise of product over the past 15 years and argues that service design can and should act as a countercultural force in product-led organisations, rather than reconfiguring itself to match product's cadence and structure.

The rise and rise of product

The field of digital product development – or 'product' – has had a meteoric rise in prominence in the last ten years since its emergence roughly 15 years ago. It has significantly reshaped companies through Lean and Agile practices, rituals and frameworks. From a design perspective, it has also been a movement rolling up various disciplines – such as UX, UI design, UX research, information architecture and interaction design – under the moniker of 'product design'.

While these approaches have improved efficiencies in several organisations, in many cases product often reintroduced the industrial mindset and language ('products', 'shipping', 'feature factories') and a preoccupation with copying Silicon Valley's mantra of velocity as the prime directive. There is no doubt that there are plenty of success cases of organisations becoming product-led, but, in the words of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, "words create worlds". The industrial language gives rise to industrial thinking, which gives rise to industrial practices all over again.

In practice, this has often meant a return to siloed command and control structures with strategy disconnected from a delivery focus on widget (feature) throughput. This has allowed organisations to slip back into bad old habits along with all the problems service design, with its ecosystem metaphors

and mindset, had traditionally tried to change. Service design recognised that modern organisations are complex, generally offering services to the world even when they are referred to as products. 'Big tech' companies like Airbnb, Slack, Netflix and Facebook are all services, accessed via digital product touchpoints. As soon as their servers go down, all we are left with are placeholder blocks on the screen, which is the tell that a digital product is actually a service ecosystem.

The changing role of design

In suboptimal product environments, design has often become assembly-line work, stripped of strategic purpose. The feature team or squad model often recreates silos, leading to disjointed, incoherent user experiences across touchpoints. As we wrote in our book, *Service Design: From Insight to Implementation*, "services created in silos are experienced in bits".¹

The initial, utopian optimism of service design was that it was going to radically transform industrial-minded organisations into service-minded ones. In some fields this project has been a success as a key discipline in digital and customer experience transformations. Many public services, such as Gov.uk, have been shining lights of this work. There are still plenty of disjointed, inconsistent and frustrating services in the world, however. There is much work still to be done.

Service design as a counter-cultural force

Where do service designers now live in product-led organisations and what is their mandate? Is this a different kind of service design altogether or the same discipline applied in a different context?

While we do not have dogmatic answers to these highly context-dependent questions, we would like to take the opportunity to explore this new constellation and role.

Recent experiences have shown service designers increasingly being brought into product-led organisations to map out an overview of 'the bits' and help glue them back together. Some of this is driven from product leaders who see that there are problematic inconsistencies across a suite of digital products – often within a single product or app – that are eliciting negative responses from customers. This is a familiar mandate for service designers.

But it's not just the customers who struggle. Business leaders frequently report no longer understanding the multitude of mini factories they are presiding over, having spent a decade trying to grow the company as fast as possible by adding features and products to their offering. Here, service design once again plays a more strategic, yet practical, role in helping business leaders understand the complexity of their organisations.²

Words create worlds and artefacts of design are boundary objects that help differing disciplines understand each other and align on purpose.³ Here design has a distinct superpower: the ability to take abstract ideas and turn them into tangible artefacts, such as sketches, prototypes and maps. Designers all too often take this ability for granted.

Such artefacts not only provide a shared understanding of the issue at hand, but also an opportunity for conversation, one in which we believe service design can and should serve as a counter-cultural force in the organisation. Service design should continue to advocate for ecosystem thinking – mapping and tending to connections across touchpoints and disciplines – precisely because the momentum of product organisation tends to pull in the opposite direction.

Service design does not need to reconfigure itself to match product's cadence and structure. It still should challenge and change the organisational models whose systems produce fractured, broken and harmful services. Service design is the counterbalance to 'move fast and break things' by knowing when to move slower and glue the broken parts back together. This does not, by any means, mean an us-versus-them conflict. Just as the advice to hire smarter and more diverse people than yourself is sound, countercultural voices should be welcomed by organisations keen to avoid remaining stuck in a harmful status quo.

¹Løvlie, L., Polaine, A., & Reason, B. (2013). *Service Design: From Insight to Implementation*. Rosenfeld Media, New York.

²Gimenez, R. (2024). *Work in Progress: Service Design at Airbnb*. Online conference presentation at *Advancing Service Design*. Rosenfeld Media, New York. URL: <https://rosenfeldmedia.com/advancing-service-design/sessions/the-messy-middle-inside-airbnbs-service-design-experiment/>

³Mark, G., Lyytinen, K., & Bergman, M. (2007). Boundary objects in design: an ecological view of design artifacts. *Journal of the Association for Information Systems*, 8(11), 546–568.

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Ben Reason is a Co-Founder of service design consultancy Livework. Over the past twenty-three years, Ben has led the company and developed the service design practice into new fields and sectors from public services to design-led transformation. He is a co-author of *Service Design: From Insight to Implementation*.
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Join Nodo alumni pool!

→ Nodo – Creative Hub

Nodo is a creative hub at the Lucerne School of Art and Design (HSLU DFK) that connects higher education with real-world practice in design, film, and art. It enables students and alumni to take on paid professional assignments from internal university projects or external partners – gaining practical experience, building their portfolio, and easing the transition into working life.

Practice-based projects are at the heart of Nodo. Students and alumni are matched with companies, institutions, or internal clients and supported throughout all phases of the project. These assignments are carried out independently of the regular curriculum and offer deep insights into future work environments. Participants receive expert coaching and fair compensation. The projects sharpen professional skills, foster collaboration, and build confidence.

Nodo acts as a launchpad, linking emerging talents with university staff, businesses, and institutions. It ensures quality, enables interdisciplinary exchange, and supports participants on both a creative and entrepreneurial level.

For partners

Nodo coordinates collaborations with companies, institutions, and public clients – from study projects with entire classes to bachelor's and master's theses to individual practical assignments. Projects should be open-ended and ideally planned a year in advance for curricular integration.

For students and alumni

Interested in gaining real-world experience, building your portfolio, and earning money during your studies? Join the Nodo talent pool by sending your portfolio and a short motivation letter. You'll be notified when matching projects become available. You remain in the pool for up to five projects or five years after graduation.

Entrepreneurial support

Nodo also collaborates with Smart-up – HSLU's entrepreneurship program – to support students interested in starting their own business.

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Terms of exposure

A speculative exploration of consent and identity in synthetic image generation.

This work challenges how we relate to AI-generated selves and bodies. It opens space for critical reflection on consent, exposure, and representation within art spaces. Furthermore, it sparks conversations about autonomy and the emotional weight of synthetic identity in future cultures.

Why?

Synthetic images can feel real, but are they truly us? This work investigates our relationship with AI-generated selves and the emotional, ethical, and identity-related implications of seeing ourselves represented in forms that resemble us but are not entirely under our control.

What?

A personal encounter with one's AI-generated nude self is at the core of this project. Nudity is chosen as an intimate and radical form of representation, prompting a confrontation with digital vulnerability, consent, and the evolving boundaries of identity. Once seen, these images cannot be unseen.

How?

A photobooth captures your portrait and generates a nude version using a custom AI model. You can choose to shred the print or keep it. Those who save their images contribute to a growing, real-time projection in the gallery space, creating a collective archive of synthetic, exposed selves.

For whom?

The installation is intended for anyone navigating identity, technology, and self-image in the digital age. It offers a safe and intimate environment to engage with synthetic self-representation, placing agency and consent at the center of this controlled yet confronting experience.

Raphaela is a photographer and artist specializing in visual representation. Her work explores how technology, particularly AI, reshapes our understanding of self and identity.

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Raphaela Pichler



GD codex algorithm

A virtual archive of game design
AI systems to support design decisions.

This project aims to preserve the history of AI in game design, keeping past innovations accessible. It makes tools and knowledge accessible to developers, fostering innovation, insight into AI evolution, and skill development in the industry.

Why?

In video game development, locating and re-searching algorithms is becoming increasingly challenging. The term “artificial intelligence” is overused, making research on algorithms and automation techniques time-consuming, often due to the prevailing presence of machine learning algorithms.

What?

A digital library that collects AI applications, systems, and tools utilized by the game development community. This resource will serve as a starting point for game developers to comprehend the complexities of AI systems and explore their potential applications in games.

How?

This digital library consolidates AI applications, systems, and tools for game developers, providing an essential resource to deepen their understanding of AI complexities and opportunities in game design. Users can explore various points of interest and tactics employed in different games.

For whom?

Game designers and the broader gaming industry will benefit from a structured database that documents the pros and cons of various AI systems while identifying areas that require further research.

Pietro specializes in game design and digital products with a passion for merging research with digital development to innovate processes and enhance user experiences.

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Pietro Peduzzi



Pietro Peduzzi | GD codex algorithm

Rethink HERMES

Embracing creative chaos in Swiss federal project kick-offs

The HERMES method is Switzerland's most widely adopted standard for large-scale public initiatives. By redefining the initiation of projects as a creative process, teams are encouraged to transform their thinking, enabling them to tackle complex challenges more effectively.

Why?

Shared understanding, diverse perspectives, and foresight are essential for solving complex problems in long-term projects. HERMES lacks structured methods and tools to help teams align perspectives, define problems and collaborate effectively.

What?

Salomé's thesis introduces a task-based framework to initiate a HERMES project, along with a toolbox of methods and a cognitive model designed to promote shared understanding and navigate complexity in dynamic contexts.

How?

Using cognitive task analysis, method evaluation, and both real-world and lab testing, the thesis applies structured interventions to examine how teams think, interact, and align in complex project environments.

For whom?

For HERMES project teams, facilitators, and individuals navigating complex environments where structure intersects with uncertainty. This work aims to enhance problem-solving skills, foster common ground, and encourage critical thinking.

Salomé, a portfolio manager for the Swiss Armed Forces and research scholar at the University of Central Florida, bridges research and defense practices to enhance how teams address problems in complex and dynamic environments.

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Salomé Steiger



Clarity ARTherapy

A digital guide to self-management of depression

Clarity reduces the burden on health-care providers and enhances social integration. It provides valuable insights into therapy and eases communication between clients and therapists. Additionally, online therapy presents new opportunities for therapeutic activities and engagement.

Why?

For individuals with clinical depression transitioning from psychiatric treatment to everyday life, managing daily activities can be challenging. Art therapy offers a creative outlet for expressing feelings when words fall short; it can help enhance self-confidence.

What?

Clarity is a digital app that empowers users through art therapy activities. It helps them to manage emotions with guided creative exercises that promote relaxation and new perspectives. The app helps users shift their focus away from negative thoughts and focus on the positive.

How?

The toolkit provides users with various art therapy activities that help transform negative thoughts into creative self-expression, while others feature relaxing music to promote calmness and relaxation. Users record and document changes in their mental states to gain self-awareness and understanding.

For whom?

Individuals experiencing depression can access professional support immediately. Since relapses can be easily triggered, Clarity offers various self-help strategies to mitigate this risk, helping to lower stress through creative self-expression and continuous therapy.

Tanja's experience in healthcare provides insight into therapy needs. After treatment, clients often struggle with the self-assurance needed to integrate their therapy into daily life.

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Tanja Keller



Tanja Keller | Clarity ARTherapy

ClassRooms

Overcoming social barriers in education through new narratives.

Educational partners are encouraged to value human potential and recognize privilege genuinely. A society fostering equal opportunities strengthens as it reduces social tensions and promotes inclusion. This is essential for innovation, social progress, and a resilient democracy.

Why?

In Germany, education is closely tied to social background. Studies show that children from non-academic families are less likely to pursue higher education, even when they have the same abilities as their peers. Unequal access to resources, networks, and opportunities creates systemic disadvantages that reinforce class barriers.

What?

This toolkit addresses classism by reframing the narrative of social mobility in education. It challenges the myth of meritocracy, showing classism as a systemic issue not a personal failure and advocates for true freedom of choice in education.

How?

The toolkit targets three levels: individuals, multipliers, and society. It empowers individuals through workshops, mentoring, and bias checks; trains educators to recognize classism and apply fairer assessment criteria; and encourages policy-makers to adopt reforms for equal access.

For whom?

Classism harms individuals and the economy by wasting human talent and potential. Education systems benefit from reduced dropout rates and improved outcomes. A fair education system strengthens democracy and ensures diverse perspectives are available to tackle future challenges.

Ann is a strategic designer, illustrator, and design researcher. She develops and implements educational content, using visual storytelling and targeted design to communicate complex topics.

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me: we: us

Strategies, spaces, and tools for cultivating unity in a fragmented and complex world

“me: we: us” fosters social cohesion, ecological stewardship, and systemic awareness. It invites communities and individuals to navigate complexity with clarity, care, and shared values – planting seeds of transformation that can take root across various scales.

Why?

Bettina’s thesis examines eco-social tensions in communities through Central Swiss allotment gardens. She demonstrates that understanding these tensions can enhance agency, resonance, and systemic transformation in contexts such as a Kirchgemeinde, childcare settings, and other organizations.

What?

Bettina creates tools, spaces, and strategies that connect human-centered, and ecological systems, encouraging reflection, dialogue, and collective agency. She aims to nurture connections and drive regeneration across social, ecological, and governance dimensions.

How?

Conflict provides an opportunity for collective growth. Through engaging conversations, playful interactions, and reflective tools, “me : we : us” helps communities identify their tensions, envision a shared future, and transition from fragmentation to systemic unity.

For whom?

Bettina’s strategies support community initiatives, facilitators, municipalities, and engaged individuals. Her work promotes awareness, enhances participation, strengthens resilience, and ignites shared responsibility in eco-social transformation processes.

Bettina is an Eco-Social Designer with a Bachelor’s in Hotel Management. She develops tools and strategies to empower agency, foster belonging, and promote regenerative change in complex systems.

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Bettina Eiben Künzli



Cocoomune

Mitigation of urban and traffic noise pollution through urban greenery

Urban areas should provide more greenery and peaceful spaces for residents. Shifting the focus to wellness care over a fast-paced lifestyle would be beneficial. Increasing greenery can help reduce pollution and create a more temperate climate in cities.

Why?

The lack of quiet and green spaces in urban areas with heavy traffic and noise pollution is a major concern. Noise adversely affects health, wellbeing, nature, biodiversity, social functions, and even contributes to climate change.

What?

This project emphasizes the importance of accessible public green and quiet spaces within a 5-minute walk to encourage rejuvenation and social interaction in urban neighborhoods.

How?

“Cocoomune” is a design solution for urbanized cities to address the lack of quiet spaces. This model offers various options to accommodate different sizes and user capacities, making it adaptable for urban communities in every region.

For whom?

“Cocoomune” is designed for local communities and residents of designated urban areas, supporting their well-being through accessible, green public spaces. It also considers non-human entities like plants and urban wildlife as integral to creating a more inclusive and balanced environment.

Jannie is a spatial designer and an advocate of care in creating accessible wellness spaces that foster vibrant interactions and enhance social harmony through the integration of greenery.

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Jannie Mantuhac



Overcoming the mountains

Exploring paths to connect asylum seekers and host communities in rural Switzerland.

The initiative aids asylum seekers in adapting to their new environment by fostering supportive relationships and promoting empathy among local residents. It highlights the challenges faced by asylum seekers and encourages cultural exchange, aiming to create a more inclusive community for all.

Why?

Seeking asylum is filled with challenges like language barriers, emotional stress, and isolation. In rural Switzerland, this is compounded by geographical distance and limited resources. Locals may struggle to connect with asylum seekers, particularly without co-ethnic communities.

What?

This project aims to empower both rural communities and asylum seekers to navigate the “mountains” of social and environmental barriers that hinder mutual connection.

How?

Using the asylum center in Morschach as a pilot site, Cathy serves as a mediator, bringing together local community groups, non-profit organizations, volunteers, and asylum seekers to build a robust network of mutual support.

For whom?

Through workshops, interactive activities, and collaboration facilitation, the project strives to benefit government entities, civil society organizations, educational institutions, community members, and asylum seekers. The initiative promotes integration and encourages meaningful engagement among all parties involved.

Cathy Lai, a former journalist with a background in human rights, is eager to drive positive change in communities.

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Man Io Cathy Lai



MA Eco-Social Design

Nudo collab

Facilitating fair and equitable global partnerships for social and economic impact.

The project pushes the conversation around marginalized voices and equitably profit models, creating spaces for cross-cultural dialogue while building synergies of knowledge and economic opportunity to challenge global inequality.

Why?

Craft collaborations often stem from deep-rooted inequalities, and the extraction of resources, culture, and knowledge from the Global South. Nudo collab transforms this paradigm into equitable partnerships, valuing non-Western perspectives in sustainable development and compensation awareness.

What?

Nudo collab is a platform that facilitates dialogue and collaboration across craft, business, and design. It aims to create synergies among cultures, fostering equitable systems through awareness, co-creation, and social entrepreneurship rooted in dignity and mutual respect.

How?

Nudo collab drives change through mediation, storytelling, and production. We connect Colombian artisans with international designers, fostering inclusive collaborations grounded in economic justice, transparency, and respect while bridging language and culture gaps to enable sustainable business development.

For whom?

The project provides a platform for artisans, designers, brands, and businesses committed to social transformation. We offer tools for self-reflection, promote equitable opportunities, and center marginalized voices to rebuild systems towards dignity and fairness.

Fernanda is a designer and entrepreneur dedicated to leveraging collaboration for social justice between the Global South and the Global North, promoting greater equity and opportunity.

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Maria Fernanda Moreno Bolivar



Maria Fernanda Moreno Bolivar | Nudo collab

Amt für Macherei

An incubator for social transformation

The project traces an intentional design practice that promotes mutual trust and shared community goals, framing transformation as an ongoing, collective effort. It demonstrates how small interventions can create significant impacts through synergies and shared interests to address structural challenges.

Michael is a graphic designer, art director, eco-social designer and researcher focusing on visual communication, eco-social design, and transformation practices. He builds supportive structures and frameworks that aim to foster collective impact and long-term change.

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Michael Speranza

Why?

People striving for social change often face mental, financial, and systemic challenges that undermine their effectiveness. This thesis explores how we can create supportive structures to enable long-term, meaningful work.

What?

Three interconnected, pragmatic prototypes were developed – a creative hub *Nodo*, a funding platform *Basislager Nachhaltigkeit* and a community initiative *Sentigarten, Postwägeli* – each addressing a different structural gap. Together, they laid the foundation for the concept of the *Amt für Macherei*, a think tank and incubator for transformative societal work.

How?

A growing network of pragmatic interventions emerged from lowthreshold ideas and was shaped through iterative design. The *Amt für Macherei* provides a framework to sustain and expand this synergetic way of working – enabling ideas to grow into realworld impact.

For whom?

Creating meaningful spaces for socially engaged work involves building a supportive ecosystem that allows designers, educators, youth, and grassroots activists to collaborate sustainably and work together, reducing individual exhaustion and precarity.



Michael Speranza | Amt für Macherei

(Material) safety first

Rethinking how materials are designed and experienced in the Philippines.

The hub aims to create and utilise materials that are safe and compatible with ecosystems. By replacing problematic petroleum-based products, we can prevent harm and fatalities. Additionally, a localised material system would support livelihoods and contribute to shifts toward a circular economy.

Why?

Certain materials are known for the harm they can cause to a range of species and ecosystems, yet they continue to be made and used. Material and waste challenges are pervasive for island nations (e.g. the Philippines). Shifts in material practices are needed to make safe materials for the ocean.

What?

A materials hub in the Philippines, which has a physical space and a digital counterpart. The hub would educate about locally available natural materials, support research and development of ecologically safe materials, and link buyers and sellers of materials in the Philippines.

How?

The focus is on what is local in the Philippines, regarding materials and the species and ecosystems that need to be considered in developing and testing materials. Key parts of the hub are collaboration, testing for ecological safety, and access to the life cycle information of materials.

For whom?

The hub helps material designers make materials that are both ecologically safe and technically sound. It connects them with companies in the Philippines looking for alternatives to plastics, in compliance with recent policies. Workshops and tours would also be offered to schools and the public.

Roleen's work focuses on ecological and community health, materials research and systemic design. She takes on projects that support circular economy transitions and marine conservation.

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MA Eco-Social Design

2+ culture

A service design approach to help second-generation immigrant children adapt & connect

Empowering second-generation immigrants with community-driven solutions can reduce social isolation, strengthen cultural identity, and build language confidence, ultimately improving long-term integration.

Why?

Many second-generation immigrant children face challenges related to their identity, belonging, and language acquisition. This project seeks to assist them by promoting cultural adaptation, emotional connections, and integration in Switzerland.

What?

A service design platform combines workshops, family support groups, and a digital app to enhance bilingual identity, cultural belonging, and social inclusion.

How?

Over nine months, Amin engaged with 83 families through workshops, observations, and the co-creation of a tool designed for children. Monthly nudges and surveys tracked behavioral changes related to identity, language, and belonging.

For whom?

This framework is intended for immigrant families, children, educators, and policymakers. It assists parents in fostering a bilingual upbringing, helps educators cultivate inclusive environments, and encourages children to embrace their identities.

Amin is a service designer focused on cultural adaptation, helping second-generation immigrants navigate their identity, language, and belonging in new environments.

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YOUUnique

Individual birth control support

YOUUnique aims to de-stigmatize birth control by raising awareness. By encouraging open discussion and shared learning, it helps reduce stigma and promotes informed choices that affect everyone. The result is a more supportive society where individuals can have better and more positive experiences.

Why?

Negative experiences with birth control, lack of support, and feeling overwhelmed are common. Despite the availability of resources, finding tailored help is hard, leading to rushed decisions. YOUUnique brings together trusted information and personalized support, all in one place.

What?

YOUUnique connects users with customized birth control support through an easy-to-use tool. By integrating users' health records with essential information, it empowers them to make informed choices with reliable advice, cutting through confusion and enhancing the overall birth control experience.

How?

Users are guided through a short questionnaire to assess their needs and preferences. Based on their answers, YOUUnique connects them to suitable services and provides tailored advice, simplifying decisions and ensuring seamless access to reliable birth control information and solutions.

For whom?

YOUUnique supports young adults with previous birth control experience and a clearer sense of their needs, making informed choices easier and support more accessible. Contraception affects everyone, shaping lives, health, and economies as needs evolve from adolescence to menopause.

Andrea holds a BA in Visual Communication with a focus on Data Design and Art. She creates impactful, user-centered solutions that make information more accessible.

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The Menopause mindset

Empowering women through Cognitive Behavioral Therapy: rethinking menopause care with remote and family support.

This design empowers women to embrace menopause positively, strengthening family dynamics. It boosts confidence, resilience, and productivity by alleviating symptoms and improving mental health. It promotes emotional well-being for women, their families, and the broader community.

Why?

Menopause affects nearly half the population, yet 75% of women report it disrupts their lives. Despite its complex symptoms and delayed research, stigma and educational gaps leave many unprepared, limiting access to mental health support and effective treatment.

What?

The Meno Toolkit equips menopausal women and their families with digital and analog tools to foster preparedness and better communication during this life stage. It includes an informational booklet, a journal, and an app with personalized Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and symptom tracking for mental health and symptom management.

How?

The design integrates physical resources with a digital app, the toolkit offers a seamless and accessible support system. The analog materials encourage meaningful conversations and self-reflection, while the app delivers remote support through personalized CBT, symptom tracking, and on-demand guidance.

For whom?

This design supports women navigating menopause and their families, particularly partners, by providing accessible, self-paced tools. It fosters communication, encourages family involvement, and provides tailored mental health support to help users navigate the menopause journey.

Idoia is a Service Designer dedicated to creating innovative solutions that enhance user experiences, specializing in health, digital products, and remote care services to promote well-being.

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Skill swap

Encouraging students to exchange skills and resources to strengthen the HSLU campus community.

The bartering platform promotes collaboration on campus, encouraging meaningful and sustainable exchanges. It strengthens community bonds, supports personal growth, and enables resource-sharing that benefits both individuals and the broader HSLU ecosystem.

Why?

HSLU students often face challenges in accessing assistance with specific skills or services. This bartering platform offers a direct and accessible means for students to exchange resources and expertise, addressing support gaps and enhancing the sense of community on campus.

What?

A hybrid platform for skill sharing and exchange, designed specifically for university students at HSLU. It facilitates the swapping of services and expertise, promotes collaboration, alleviates financial burdens, and nurtures a more inclusive and supportive campus culture.

How?

The platform combines online and physical interactions, enabling students to share and exchange skills and needs. This hybrid method enhances engagement, fosters lasting relationships, and aims to create a more connected and resourceful campus community.

For whom?

Designed for HSLU Design Film Kunst students, this platform facilitates skill and service exchanges. It promotes collaboration, strengthens human connections, and connects students to resources, fostering a supportive and interconnected community.

Karel is a curious and driven graphic designer growing into service and innovation design, passionate about creating experiences beyond visuals to shape meaningful, human-centered opportunities that enable collaboration and connection.

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Empowering voices

Participation as a catalyst for social innovation

Participating in the Youth Parliament of Lucerne, the Transformation Team of Emmen, and the Fire Side Chat of the MA Design programs provided valuable opportunities to test and validate the principles as a reliable tool for democratic guidance and engagement.

Why?

Are individuals truly empowered to engage in the political process? Many are dissatisfied with politics, yet few act. It is essential to involve diverse participants and consider how to facilitate engagement while identifying the necessary skills for meaningful participation.

What?

To improve participation at various levels, Mariam-Sophie identified eight guiding principles: access, trust, experience, community aspects, visibility, self-efficacy, long-term commitment, and systemic implementation. She refined and tested the principles with the Youth Parliament in Lucerne.

How?

Using the principles with the youth parliament helped to define the visibility of impact and Access as starting points for a future workshop. She used them in a strategy proposal for the Transformation Team of Emmen to enhance engagement with the municipality.

For whom?

The principles are designed for organizers aiming to encourage participation, providing a clear starting point and overview. They seek to promote more democratic actions and inspire projects that create spaces for experiencing and learning about participation.

Mariam-Sophie is a communication designer focused on human-centric and participatory service design. She aims to promote an accessible democracy that respects both planetary and human life.

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Mariam-Sophie Karl



Room for wonder

The adaptive reuse of churches as third places for art and reflection

The project recognizes the human need for wonder and promotes the democratization of art. It stimulates discussions about repurposing sacred spaces to increase awareness of potential transformations for both institutions and individuals.

Why?

Many churches remain underutilized as secularization narratives dominate and Catholic Church membership declines. "Room for wonder" is an artistic experiment to reuse sacred spaces by both embracing and rethinking their purpose to embody the broader human quest for meaning in a new way.

What?

As a part of the project, "Calling" is a temporary art installation that blends call center interaction and storytelling within a church. It invites visitors to engage with the space while reflecting through secular spirituality and timeless personal questions in an explorative and open-ended setting.

How?

"Room for wonder" uses discursive design to explore how churches can serve as alternative urban environments for existential reflection. Activating these venues creates opportunities to reinterpret church spaces while addressing questions that otherwise might not have space in busy everyday life.

For whom?

The project is for seekers of meaning and reflection, local artists needing a space to co-create, and churches seeking to re-examine their identities, finally, for communities eager to reimagine churches in their neighborhoods as third places for dialogue, inspiration, and stories of otherness.

Polina is a designer and researcher who explores the potential of spaces, narratives, and experiences to foster discussion and encourage personal and societal reflection toward transformation.

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Polina Bogatisheva



Polina Bogatisheva | Room for wonder

Beyond sight: Inclusive navigation

Smart travel tools for the blind
and visually impaired

By promoting autonomy and inclusion, 'Beyond Sight' reduces barriers, enhances equal mobility access, and fosters more inclusive public spaces—benefiting society and shaping a future for everyone.

Why?

Switzerland is home to over 50 000 blind and 350 000 visually impaired people. While public transport supports their independence, it was not designed to meet their needs. This project aims to bridge that gap, making travel smarter, more accessible, and inclusive for everyone.

What?

This project provides smart tools that assist blind and visually impaired travelers navigate from planning to arrival. The digital and analog tools are seamlessly connected to transform complex connections into a smoother and more independent experience.

How?

By emphasizing user-centric design, prototypes undergo testing in real-world settings to guarantee usability. Looking forward, AI-driven features were developed to enhance travel intelligence.

For whom?

Although this project is designed for blind and visually impaired travelers, the solutions can also benefit older adults, people with mobility challenges, and anyone seeking a more accessible travel experience. Inclusivity means being made for many, not just a few.

Selina is a Service Designer dedicated to creating inclusive solutions that enhance accessibility for blind or visually impaired individuals.

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Selina Finsler | Beyond sight: Inclusive navigation

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