

Design for All



Continuous diversion

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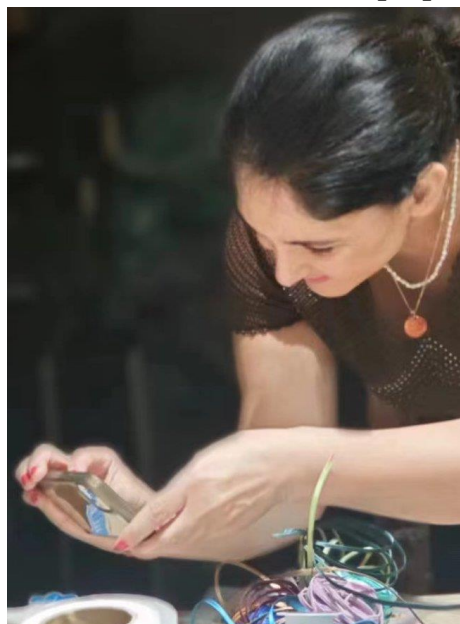
20:20 Celebrating Women Designing Design
Part III: Continuity

Guest Editors: Dr Dolly Daou
Eija Salmi FRSA

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Dr Dolly Daou

Advisory Board at Cindrebay University's, Dubai. Co-founder and Co-Chair of Food Think Tank, Cumulus Association. Chair of Food Design Research Studio, Design Research Society.

Dr Dolly Daou's academic and industry experience spans over 25 years, during which she has established higher education programs and led non-for-profit organisations in Australia, Asia, Europe and in the Middle East. Dr Daou is currently on the advisory board at Cindrebay University in Dubai, and, since 2018, has served as co-founder and co-chair of the Food Think Tank at Cumulus Association.

In recognition for her career trajectory, Dr Daou achieved the Kingston Community Award of Citizen of the Year (2024) And was the finalist for Kingston Community Award, Women of Year (2024). Dr Daou was also awarded Al-Safeer Congress Ambassador Award from the Ministry of Economy and Tourism in Dubai.

Combining her Doctorate in interior architecture and urbanism with expertise in ecological food designmanagement, Dr Daou has become one of the global food design experts with distinctive trans-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary skills and knowledge. Dr Daou is author to many publications including: Unbounded on the Interior and Interiority (Cambridge scholars) and co-editor of The Transformative Nature of Food (Routledge, forthcoming January 2026).

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Eija Salmi FRSA

Secretary General at Cumulus Association

A global citizen and advocate since 1990 for international education and research in art, design and media. Responsible to empower the next generation of youth by encouraging their alma maters to collaborate and play an impactful role to place the needs of the earth first and to create the right balance between people, planet and any profit.

Background in finance, art history and languages, jumped from finance to university internationalization. Happy to join as speaker, provocateur, participant to inspire and support. Eija has been leading the Secretaryat General of Cumulus since 1990, and playing a key role in connecting design education and innovation. Cumulus secretariat is a hub, a centre of the network suggesting connections with satellite activity. Ready to navigate and carry responsibilities to process things in uncontrolled and unlimited situations and environments. To create credibility with thought leadership, able to

align and leverage as keys. Optimism and tomorrow are burned in her DNA.

Cumulus is a non-for-profit association, endorsed by UNESCO and the only leading global association of art and design education and research. Cumulus represents a dynamic ecosystem for internationalisation and global mobility, knowledge exchange, and collaboration since 1990 established by Aalto University in Helsinki with Royal College of Art in London. Today 395 members from 71 countries, reaching with partners over 2500,000 students, academics and staff, which demonstrates the importance of collaboration in a 21st century higher education landscape that is increasingly complex and global.

Bring the planet forward. Cumulus is the entry code.

Editors Note for

20:20 Celebrating Women Designing Design Part III & IV: Continuity and Limitless

Dr Dolly Daou

Eija Salmi FRSA

Continuity is a privilege. When we share and celebrate meaningful stories, we continue to grow. We learn from the diversity of perspectives that shape our vision and inspire limitless ventures.

It is a privilege to be invited for the fourth time as a Guest Editor at Design For All and to collaborate with Eija Salmi, Secretary General of Cumulus Association as co-editor. This connection began when Christian Guellerin introduced me to Design For All through his association with Eija Salmi. Now, this collaboration returns to its original point of contact to continue a meaningful collaboration.

As with every issue we thank Dr Sunil Bhatia for inviting us to be guest editors in celebration of significant milestones in Design For All's history: its 20th year anniversary and the publication of its 250th issue . To honour its 20th anniversary Design For All is dedicating 2025 to celebrate women designers. For 20 years, has demonstrated its continuity, global and diverse expression, receptivity, and limitless achievement by inviting guest editors for its monthly publications.

Continuing on from the success of the previous two issues, 20:20 Celebrating Women Designing Design Part I & II Receptivity and Expressions, we celebrate and share the special issues: 20:20 Celebrating Women Designing Design Part III & IV: Continuity & Limitless. One more time, through these issues we share the voices and achievements of 20 inspirational women. We thank each one for accepting our invitation to contribute and trusting us with their stories.

As with Part I & II, 20 women designers from diverse disciplines and cultural backgrounds were invited to write 1,000 words on a topic of their choice. Each issue features 10 authors, invited from a global network with a proven track record of impact on design. We look forward to recognising more designers, as we are sure there are many others across all genders, who also deserve recognition.

The authors were invited to choose their writing style and format. Both special issues contain a variety of academic articles, essays, reflective pieces, and interviews, all shaped by the authors' professional experiences and personal preferences. The issues offer an open platform for authors to share their perspectives, knowing that their voices will be respected, heard, and celebrated. Throughout the editing process, we made sure the authors' original voices were preserved in their cultural and linguistic context.

The combined October and November issues feature articles by twenty authors from eighteen different countries across five continents, covering a wide range of design and architectural disciplines. This global representation demonstrates the diversity of perspective in design.

The journal issues are designed sequentially to celebrate different areas of design and demonstrates the diversity of stories from multi-cultural and multi-disciplinary backgrounds. The October issue Part III Continuity, celebrates women's achievements by sustaining their vision, overcoming challenges in leadership, pioneering new disciplines, exploring new cultures, and launching innovative ideas, products, services, methodologies, and business ventures. The November Issue, Part IV, Limitless examines the limitless creative power of women and their ability to envision and create a new world amid current challenges. These issues reflect the resilience and creative force of women worldwide. Both issues are connected across the globe and by the limitless power of design and the diversity of stories of humanity that led each woman to pave a creative path through persistence and dedication to purpose.

We invite you to read, understand and appreciate the voices of these twenty influential authors, who continue to inspire, motivate, and contribute to designing design, across disciplines and continents. The cover image selected symbolises the traces of each story told in these special issues, which similar to sand print, the stories shift and transform over time, leading to limitless and endless possibilities of new stories to emerge.

Thank you Design For All, for inviting us in celebrating your 20th anniversary and your 250th issue by honouring the achievements of twenty more women designing design. We also celebrate the achievements of every individual who is designing their own life trajectory, creating positive stories for humanity.

These special issues are already evolving into impactful projects to continue to narrate the limitless stories of humanity, with all genders involved.



Anne-Marie Sargueil

**President of the l'Institut Français du Design (IFD),
(The French Institute of Design)**

With a background in humanities and a wide range of professional responsibilities in industry, institutions, and the press, Anne-Marie Sargueil ultimately chose to combine her talents. Convinced that innovation is the result of collective adventure, she has served as president of the Institut Français du Design (IFD) for over thirty years. The IFD works to promote design for businesses, individuals, and cities through its JANUS brand.

Since 1951, the IFD has been selecting products and services that prioritise respect for users and their environment.

The designer's intention, the ethical value of the creation, its appearance, the materials used, and the interest for the user are all criteria, if not values, that dictate the IFD's choice.

The French Institute of Design: Pioneers and visionaries

Anne-Marie Sargueil

I didnot know that by helping my father — Jean Sargueil - whom I deeply admired, an industrialist and President of the *Institut d'Esthétique Industrielle* (Institute of Industrial Aesthetics) in France, I was embarking on a long and beautiful story. What drew me into the world of design were the designers themselves, women and men who suffer from ugliness and discomfort, from what is overpriced or useless—confident personalities in the pursuit of creative solutions. I often compare them to psychologists — my first field of study, who help us seek harmony in our relationships with others; their common ground? The designer is a creator of connection.

Keywords: Design, Entrepreneurship, French Design, Janus Awards, Design Craftsmanship.

What binds me to the Institut Français du Design is a tribute to the pioneers and visionaries, and the desire to share and pass on this legacy.

Design without an entrepreneurial spirit is nothing more than a matter of style. I learned very early, working with Raymond Loewy's agency — a pioneer of design in France — that everything starts with a commission. Real investment always depends on the client's

engagement. At the Compagnie de l'Esthétique Industrielle (CEI), companies like Shell, Danone, L'Oréal, De Dietrich, the Dutch Railways, COOP, and NewMan sought the collaboration of designers who would later go on to found some of the most prominent design agencies. That is how I entered through the finest of doors: by meeting the best designers, building friendships (the warm, pioneering spirit of those early days), and embracing entrepreneurial ambition.

A few years spent later in government ministries and at MEDEF (French entrepreneurs organisation) confirmed my passion for serving the public interest.

What do psychology, politics, and the world of design have in common? The will to create common ground. To bring together talents from diverse backgrounds — hence the presence of the humanities in our juries — to build harmony, coherence, and serve the desire to be useful.

It was a designer, Philippe Turin — recently elected to the UFDI (Union Française des Designers Industriels) — who convinced me to take the helm of the Institut Français d'Esthétique Industrielle (now the Institut Français du Design) and its official trademark (created by ministerial decree). Professionals needed a representative and legitimate organisation; they all expressed their support and enthusiasm.

I then brought together the UFDI, SAD (Société des Artistes Décorateurs, based at the Grand Palais in Paris), and the design

schools — a collective adventure I have been leading for more than forty years, with the Janus Awards and the three founding pillars of the Institute. These pillars are: the Design Conservatory, the Observatory, and the Laboratory: to honour the history of people and objects, to describe and select key design achievements and identify talent, and to decode weak signals (of trends or issues) and promote future scenarios.

My “signature”? Juries that engage in dialogue, cross perspectives, and challenge one another’s views. Because beyond a seductive promise, there must be proof. The scenario must unfold for everyone. For me, good design orchestrates the emotions behind every interaction with a brand and all its stakeholders. Design succeeds in three stages: attracting attention, delivering on its promise in use, and respecting living beings.

If I may share a few secrets about the future: I want to enrich the world of the Janus Awards with examples drawn from public policy (the large scale) and with creations stemming from craftsmanship — not single creations, but those born of research and the potential of the creative gesture (the small scale).

Design for all, beauty that serves a purpose, the creative expression in the service of a vision for humanity: this is the ideal that has always guided my commitment. Le Dess(e)in. This term is pronounced ‘le design’ in French and is translated ‘purpose’ and without the (e) the word also translates as ‘drawing’.



Professor Vesna Popovic

**Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane,
Australia**

Vesna Popovic (PhD) is Professor Emerita at Queensland University of Technology (QUT), Brisbane, Australia. Her research focuses on experience, expertise, intuitive interaction, and product design. Vesna integrates knowledge from humanities and technology to create human-centred artefacts and systems, enhancing the understanding of skills and experiences. She co-founded the Industrial Design Course and established the People and Systems (PAS) Lab at QUT. Vesna has a strong publication record and received numerous awards. She is a Fulbright scholar, a Fellow of the Design Research Society (UK), and the Design Institute of Australia (DIA), and is a member of ACM (CHI), and DMI. She served on the WDO /ICSID Board (1997-2001), is a Regional Adviser for WDO, and an Ambassador for Good Design Australia (v.popovic@qut.edu.au).

Vision, Initiative, and Opportunity: A Personal Reflection on a Life in Design

Professor Vesna Popovic

Abstract

This reflection traces the author's career in industrial design, built around human-centred, research-driven, and interdisciplinary approaches. Navigating opportunities across Europe, America, and Australia, the author's academic and professional journey was guided by vision and initiative rather than rigid planning. Central to the philosophy is (i) the integration of teaching, research, and industry, (ii) fostering innovation through empathy and critical reflection, (iii) real-world engagement, and (iv) developing interdisciplinary collaboration spanning design, technology, health, and engineering. The author's influence extends to international policy, as the first Australian elected to the World Design Organisation (WDO), advocating for global best practices in design education. The reflection also acknowledges the challenges faced by women and highlights the importance of mentorship and ethical practice. This reflection concludes that vision, opportunism, collaboration, and human values are significant for future design leadership.

***Keywords:* career development, design education, research and practice, design leadership.**

Reflecting on my career presents both a challenge and an opportunity—an invitation to examine the path I have taken in academia and the field of industrial design. Although my journey has not followed a strict plan, it has been guided by a strong sense of vision, initiative, and a willingness to seize opportunities as they arise and to take risks. Having lived, studied, and worked across three continents—Europe, America, and Australia—I have consistently progressed by making the most of the opportunities. Australia became the country where my academic career flourished and where my core design philosophy took root and grew.

At the core of my philosophy is the integration of research, education, and industry practice through a human-centred, innovative, and interdisciplinary approach. This philosophy is based on several fundamental principles:

- Human-Centred and Research-Led: Design must start with a thorough understanding of human experience and context. Whether working on a product, system, or environment, empathy and research underpin all stages of the design process. The educational programs and research laboratory I established focused on enhancing human experiences through practice and research, going beyond the creation of functional objects.**
- Integration of Teaching, Research, and Practice: Design education should reflect the design process itself—creative, reflective, and practice-oriented. I support an educational approach that seamlessly combines teaching with applied research and industry partnerships, ensuring students and colleagues engage directly**

with real-world challenges, thereby recognising the tangible impact of design thinking.

- **Interdisciplinary Collaboration:** Innovation happens when different fields come together. I have promoted collaborative projects that connect design, technology, psychology, health, and engineering, enriching the problem-solving process and producing research outcomes with greater social, commercial, and educational impact.
- **Promoting Leadership and Independent Thinking:** My educational ethos emphasises mentorship, leadership, and fostering the ability for independent and entrepreneurial thinking among students and colleagues. By incorporating leadership opportunities into both curricula and research environments, I aimed to prepare graduates not only to fill existing roles but also to forge new paths within the global design landscape.
- **Reflective and Critical Practice:** Promoting the use of reflective practice and critical analysis as key tools for creative problem-solving. Innovative teaching methods—such as self-directed learning projects, design concept workbooks, and qualitative research techniques—aid in the development of lifelong learning skills and adaptability.

Taken together, these principles establish a human-centred, research-driven, multidisciplinary, and innovation-focused design philosophy. Its mission is to empower designers and students to create contextually relevant solutions that have lasting and meaningful impacts.

My most enduring accomplishments come from this philosophy. These highlights include:

- **Transformative Leadership and Program Development:** At Queensland University of Technology (QUT), I led the development and expansion of the Industrial Design Program during a key period for the discipline in Queensland. The innovative, research-led curriculum set new standards of excellence, producing graduates who have gone on to lead design consultancies worldwide. By forging strategic alliances and creating new program structures, I built partnerships between academia and industry that continue to shape the professional landscape.
- **Human-Centred Research and the People and Systems (PAS) Lab:** As the founder of the People and Systems (PAS) Lab at QUT, I fostered an environment where interdisciplinary research thrived, encompassing design, IT, psychology, health, and engineering. The PAS Lab became a hub for pioneering work in intuitive interaction, user experience, and cross-disciplinary research methods, attracting significant funding and producing research outcomes that impacted public safety, eHealth, and advanced ergonomics.
- **Educational Innovation and Mentorship:** My approach to education has always been focused on mirroring the design process—emphasising creativity, reflection, and real-world connections. I combined theory with practice, introduced self-directed learning and qualitative research methods, and fostered a culture of intellectual independence and enterprise. This model has produced graduates who now hold prominent academic and professional

roles, regularly winning national and international design awards, which demonstrates the effectiveness of this educational approach.

- Global Leadership and Policy Impact: My influence extends well beyond QUT and Australia. As the first Australian elected to the World Design Organisation (WDO) (formerly ICSID), I played a key role in shaping international design education policy. I led the founding of the WDO Design Education Folio, contributing to the global conversation on design, and getting voting rights for educational members of WDO.**
- Design Practice Rooted in Human Values: Central to my teaching and work is the belief in humanising technology. By integrating research, education, and professional practice, and by fostering interdisciplinary collaboration, ethical leadership, and entrepreneurial thinking, I prepare graduates not just for today but also for pioneering roles in the future of design.**

The lasting impact of these initiatives is clear in the strong growth of Queensland's design sector, the achievements of my graduates, and the standards established in design education and research. Through visionary leadership and a commitment to human-centred innovation and ethical practice, I have helped elevate the field's profile both locally and internationally.

On a personal level, my journey has been shaped by overcoming unique challenges. As a woman in a male-dominated field, recognition primarily came through visible success. Throughout my

career, I have appreciated the support from male colleagues and friends. Reflecting on my career, I was surprised to find that I had no single female supporter, and I faced significant challenges from some of my female colleagues. It would be helpful if women supported their female colleagues more.

My career has been shaped by seizing opportunities—often following an opportunity challenge rather than a strict plan. A pivotal moment came early: after completing my master's in the USA, I responded to a QUT advertisement, attended interviews across continents, and accepted a position at QUT in Brisbane after a chat in an Italian restaurant. This unconventional journey was driven by vision and ambition, and I have no regrets.

In summary, reflecting on these achievements reaffirms the value of an opportunistic approach, powered by vision and initiative, contradicting the current approach—'everything must be measured'. The legacy continues in the successes of my students, the evolution of design education, and the standards our programs now exemplify. I remain optimistic that the evolution of the field will favour collaboration, mentorship, and ethical practice—creating a more supportive, innovative, and humanity-centred future for all.



Associate Professor Teresa Franqueira
University of Aveiro. Cumulus Association

Teresa Franqueira is an Associate Professor at the University of Aveiro and holds a PhD from Politecnico di Milano. She is the Vice-President and Executive Board Member of Cumulus Association and was International Coordinator of the DESIS Network (2022–2025). She directed the Design Factory Aveiro from 2016 till 2022. Teresa sits on editorial boards, scientific committees, and juries of international design competitions. She teaches in Europe and Asia, coordinates European projects, and is frequently invited as a keynote speaker. Her research focuses on design for social innovation, sustainability, product and service design, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration for positive change.

Women in Design: A Journey Between Invisibilities and Affirmations

Associate Professor Teresa Franqueira

Abstract

This article reflects on the intersection between gender experience and design practice, tracing a personal journey through engineering, architecture, industrial design, teaching, research, and leadership. It argues that the gender lens — marked by a constant yet often invisible presence — is not a biographical detail, but a critical factor that shapes challenges and opportunities in the field of Design. Through a first-person account, persistent barriers and paradoxes in academic and professional contexts are identified, concluding that gender equity is a fundamental pillar for the creation of truly inclusive and innovative design ecosystems.

Introduction

Design, as a discipline, has historically developed anchored in academic traditions associated with the fine arts, architecture, and engineering—domains where the female presence, although real and significant, has remained systematically invisible. Consequently, the canonical narratives of design history still, to this day, lack consistent representations of female trajectories, be it in education, professional practice, research, or leadership.

This text contributes to the debate on this gap by drawing on a personal experience that spans different roles—student, design

professional, teacher, researcher, and manager. The objective is twofold: to highlight the challenges and achievements that mark the journey of women in design, and to reflect on how this singular perspective informs and enriches the practice of Design. Ultimately, the struggle for equity within the discipline is both a mirror of and a precondition for the ambition to create equitable and inclusive solutions for society.

Academic Training: Persistent Disparities

I studied mechanical engineering in the late 1980s, and this first experience in higher education offered an initial contact with gender inequality: in a cohort of 160 students, there were only 10 women. Nearly four decades later, despite undeniable progress, statistics continue to reveal significant imbalances in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) areas. Subsequently, I enrolled in architecture, where parity among students was greater, but the inequality reappeared in the teaching staff: there was not a single woman teaching design studio (architecture). The same pattern replicated itself in the design course. Although the proportion of women in the cohort was significantly higher than that of men, design studio teaching remained an exclusively male domain. Throughout my entire design education, I never had a female design studio professor.

This absence shapes not only pathways but also aspirations. Upon retrospectively analysing the professional trajectories of my peers, a clear trend is observed: men more frequently occupied prominent positions in the design job market and in teaching the discipline within higher education institutions, while many women moved

towards teaching visual arts in secondary education or left the field altogether. Cases of women who founded companies or assumed leadership roles in the private sector were rare. The absence of female role models creates a cycle of invisibility that is difficult to break.

Professional Practice: Gender Challenges on the Shop Floor

Entering the job market, with my own design studio and as an industrial designer meant immersion in strongly male-dominated contexts, such as the shop floor and the management of production processes. There, the presence of a woman was often met with distrust, requiring an additional effort to legitimise technical competencies.

Although integration was ultimately successful, it is evident that initial acceptance would have been more immediate for a man. This experience illustrates how gender stereotypes continue to condition perceptions of competence and authority in technical areas, a bias that every designer must recognise to avoid replicating unintentional exclusions in their own practice.

Teaching and Institutional Leadership: The Paradox of Representation

An academic teaching career, developed over more than 25 years, has allowed me to observe significant advances in female presence among students—in Portugal, in 2022, approximately 61% of higher education graduates were women. However, this numerical predominance is not reflected in the composition of the teaching staff, particularly in design studio areas.

In my current experience, in a group of 15 design studio teachers, I am the only woman. This discrepancy, which echoes my own experience as a student, extends to other study cycles and design courses, revealing a persistent academic glass ceiling.

The presence of women in academic management and leadership roles also faces resistance. Throughout my career, I have held roles such as degree director or director of a design-driven innovation centre (Design Factory Aveiro), among others. These positions required, in addition to the inherent competencies of the role, an additional effort of affirmation, especially in contexts external to design, where female leadership is still often met with surprise. This paradox is symptomatic: women lead in the number of graduates but remain under-represented in positions of power and decision-making.

Research: A Space of Greater Equity?

The research experience, particularly during my doctorate in Italy at one of the largest design schools in the world, was marked by strong female leadership. This reality provided a notably more equitable context, contrasting with the asymmetries experienced previously and demonstrating that diverse environments are not only possible but also highly productive.

Research in design for social innovation and sustainability, the area in which I work, tends to show a greater gender balance. However, upon returning to my home university, I faced resistance in legitimising the topic. As it was an emerging field, introduced by a woman, some proposals were often met with less attention or even

scepticism. Scientific authority ultimately prevailed, but it required extra effort. Innovation, when proposed by voices outside the traditional canon, struggles to be heard.

Final Considerations

In revisiting my journey, I conclude that being a woman in design has implied a continuous, additional effort of affirmation. At various moments, the validation of my competencies and achievements may have been conditioned by persistent gender perceptions, albeit in more subtle and sometimes unconscious ways.

If I had to summarise this trajectory, I would say it was marked by significant advances, but also by silent obstacles, which required resilience and persistence. I am convinced that if I were a man, the path would have been more linear. This experience, however, is also a source of unique insight. The lens of invisibility trains us to see what others do not see, to listen to the unheard voices, and to challenge established norms. It is precisely this sensitivity that is at the heart of Design for All. The struggle for equity within our discipline is part of its essence. Only a diverse, inclusive, and equitable design community can aspire to create a world that is also diverse, inclusive, and equitable. Sharing these experiences is, therefore, an act of design in itself: it is to prototype a more inclusive future for the profession and for the society it serves.



Dr Rachelle Viader Knowles PFHEA

**Head of International for Arts and Humanities, and
Reader in Creative Practice, Manchester Metropolitan
University, UK**

I lead the strategic development of global engagement across a large faculty that includes the Manchester School of Art, my academic home. A pioneer of collaborative online international learning (COIL) in the creative arts since the early 2000's, my scholarly interests in 'translocal dialogues' combine my background as a creative researcher, and my experience in international educational leadership and curriculum design. I hold a PhD in Art+Media from Plymouth University in the UK, an MFA in Visual Arts from the University of Windsor in Canada, and a BA (Hons) Interactive Arts from the University of Wales. I am a member of the International Advisory Board for the School of Arts and Design at Woxsen University in India, and a Principal Fellow of Advance HE.

Leading with COIL: Towards Translocal Education in Art and Design

Dr Rachelle Viader Knowles

Abstract

This reflective paper traces shifts in my thinking over two decades of practice and leadership in collaborative online international learning (COIL). Beginning with early intermedia art projects at the University of Regina in Canada, the narrative follows the evolution of my academic practice exploring translocal pedagogies that connect students across borders through shared creative inquiry. Drawing on practitioner experience and practice-based research, the paper introduces a framework of 'translocal dialogues' and showcases projects addressing global challenges such as vaccine hesitancy. The paper culminates in current strategic work at Manchester Metropolitan University, embedding COIL within transnational education (TNE) and reimagining TNE as translocal education (TLE) in partnership with The British University in Egypt. Addressing COIL within art and design education as a critical pedagogy for fostering global citizenship and inclusive learning, we aim towards a model for sector-wide innovation in internationalised higher education.

***Keywords:* Transnational Education, Translocal Education, Design Education COIL, Translocal Dialogues**

Introduction

I am grateful for this opportunity to set out my practice and leadership in COIL over the last twenty years, and to 'think out loud' in a personal, reflective and reflexive voice. This paper provides an overview of key problems, projects, ideas and underpinnings I have worked through over the years, in line with the brief to share a personal narrative and a professional journey of significance to design, and in this case specifically to design education and curriculum design in higher education. I have approached this article in three parts. The Start outlines how I found my way to developing innovative curriculum-based teaching projects that connect students with counterparts in other countries. The Middle provides the theoretical frameworks and ways of working that have informed my practice. The Now gives insight into the strategy I am leading, how this is being deployed through an example of innovative practice in the design curriculum within the Manchester School of Art as part of a transnational education (TNE) partnership, and the next steps we aim to achieve, rethinking TNE as TLE, translocal education.

The Start

In 2002, I accepted my first academic post, leading the area of intermedia in the Department of Visual Arts at the University of Regina in the Canadian prairies. Originally from the UK where I am now based again, I had already lived in Ontario for six years by the time I moved to Regina, however the context of the province of Saskatchewan brought considerable new richness to my understanding of Canada. Specifically, teaching students from farming backgrounds and Indigenous students from First Nations

and Metis communities reshaped my thinking and were foundational to practice as an educator.

The subject area of intermedia art offers broad scope for experimental pedagogies, enabled by the flexibilities of the Canadian curriculum. I started conceptualising and designing a series of increasingly ambitious teaching and learning projects that connected my students through shared briefs and technologies such as Skype, Facebook and bespoke online interface designs, with counterparts in institutions around the world including the UK, the Netherland, Serbia, Finland and Turkey. I forged a collaboration with colleague Dr Kathleen Irwin, Professor of Scenography who published on these projects as examples of “telematic performance” (Irwin, 2011), long before either of us was introduced to the concept of ‘collaborative online international learning’, or COIL, the term I now align with.

Explaining the impulse I felt to bring global connectivity into the studio, I used to focus on the fact that I taught some students who had never seen an ocean. Twenty years later, in the context of environmental crisis and a deeper understanding of global positionality thanks to Dr Karen Pashby, Professor of Global Citizenship Education at Manchester Met, my thinking has significantly changed. We are all equally ‘in the world’ and it is our responsibility as educators to design curriculum that challenges deficit models of margins and centres and instead celebrates and shares the diversity of localised knowledge, heritage, culture and experience.

The Middle

Though a practice-based PhD, “A Translocal Approach to Dialogue-based Art” (Knowles, 2017) I developed a methodologic framework I call ‘translocal dialogues’ that underpins my practice, as an educator, creative scholar and academic leader. The findings of my research were a set of ten characteristics of translocal dialogue-based practice, tested through a project called VacZineNations, a design brief undertaken by students in the UK, China and Canada. Together, they shared their outcomes addressing a question of how design can contribute to challenging vaccine hesitancy (Knowles, et al. 2020). This project was showcased as part of Immune Nations at UNAids in Geneva, Gallery KiT in Trondheim, Norway and McMaster Museum of Art in Hamilton, Canada (Loveless, 2022). The project was prescient given the global COVID-19 pandemic that would unfold three years later. It anticipated critical conversations regarding vaccine availability and the rise of the anti-vaxxers, but also the global pivot to online delivery in higher education. This switch normalised online practice and therefore removed the real and perceived technical and practical barriers that had previously limited the take-up of COIL.

Environmental crisis and the pandemic, both pertinent examples of wicked problems that no one discipline, or nation, can solve unilaterally, trigger consideration for teaching design as a transdisciplinary nexus that requires a multiplicity of geographic and cultural perspectives. I suggest that encounters with teaching and learning through the pedagogy of COIL can provide that multiplicity of perspectives within a context that Kudo et al. (2020) have termed ‘the space for translocal learning.’

The Now

At Manchester Metropolitan University, I have led a strategic commitment to provide internationalised opportunities for all our students. My vision is to utilise critical pedagogies such as COIL to ensure that students who might not have the possibility to participate in international mobility also have access to the career enhancement and cultural learning that global engagement brings. In Arts and Humanities, I work closely with two colleagues to progress this initiative. Dr Benedicte Brahic from the School of Sociology and Criminology is leading the development of a critical-evaluative framework to demonstrate the impact of COIL 'in-pact' with students (Knowles et al. 2025), emphasising the solidarity and connectivity we want these projects to bring to learners across borders through collaborative learning addressing critical challenges. Rachel Kelly from the Manchester School of Art is leading ethical COIL design and academic practitioner experience, developing best-practice guidelines for reflexive and decolonised practice and scholarship, empowering academics to co-create contextually relevant, translocal, sustainable and equitable joint teaching initiatives.

Our mission is also to embed COIL within our transnational education (TNE) partnerships. We are currently designing projects with our partner The British University in Egypt (BUE) who deliver six dual-award programmes in art and design. Led by Rachel Kelly and Patti Crozier from the Manchester School of Art, and Suada Tivari and Professor Iman Gawad at BUE, our proposed projects bridge outwards from our institutions to collaborate with local communities in Egypt and the UK. For example, fashion and textiles

design students in both countries will work with Egyptian 'Tally' embroidery artisans, participate in online workshops, and co-design collections which will explore cultural preservation and women's economic empowerment.

Through embedding COIL into our TNE approach in art and design, we are rethinking transnational education as translocal education, TLE to foreground equity, diversity and inclusion, and local to local knowledge in our pedagogies. We aim to advance sustainable collaborative academic practice and to share best practices for 'translocal education' in the sector.

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Dr Julie Nichols

UniSA Creative, University of South Australia

Dr Julie Nichols is a registered architect and Senior Lecturer at the University of South Australia. Her research bridges cultural heritage, sustainability, and collaborative design with First Nations communities in Australia and Indonesia. As Director of the Vernacular Knowledge Research Group (VKRG) and Community Engagement Lead at the Australian Research Centre for Interactive and Virtual Environments (IVE), she integrates architectural ethnography with both digital and manual documentation methods into conceptual as well as applied research projects.

Julie's work offers a distinctive contribution to vernacular studies, revitalising local knowledge systems as critical frameworks for addressing the climate emergency. She co-directs the national digital humanities platform Time Layered Culture Map (TLCMap), which embeds community knowledge within spatial, temporal, and cultural contexts.

Her emerging field of pyro-vernacular studies investigates how observing and participating in traditional land management practices, such as, First Nations cultural burning, can inform non-Aboriginal designers around the siting and design of future built environments under changing climate conditions, with more holistic appreciation of designing with and for Country.

Through participatory and field-based approaches, Julie's research reshapes disaster recovery and adaptive reuse, positioning cultural heritage as a driver of regenerative, community-led design. Her development of the Aceh Method and expansion of VERNADOC across Australia and Indonesia have gained international recognition for pioneering new models of data curation, as well as research into culturally responsive, environmentally attuned built environments by non-architects.

Languages of Connection: A Design Life Across Cultures and Communities

Dr Julie Nichols

Where I Stand: Philosophy and Place I have lived across cultures my whole life — the 'sub-cultures' of Australia in Darwin, Brisbane, regional South Australia, Berri in the Riverland, Adelaide, and overseas in Malaysia, Edinburgh, and Liverpool UK — inhabiting houses [pole houses, terrace houses, tenement flats, stand-alone bungalows, high-rise apartments as well as friends couches] tents, and swags. These experiences have shaped my fascination with how humans sustain life — not just in buildings, but through stories, rituals, relationships, and practices that connect people to each other and to Country.

I always wanted to be an architect, but in Year 10, a high-achieving Adelaide architect visiting my school warned that architecture was a career of long hours, little money, and “sweat and tears.” This made me hesitate. It was not until my second year at university that I embraced architecture fully (after unenthusiastic beginnings of an arts/law double degree). This decision guided a lifelong curiosity about the interplay between dwelling, movement, and enduring fascination with people, culture, and relational knowledge. My work is grounded in the question: *How do communities embed wisdom in the ways they dwell, care for their environments, and move deliberately in response to changing conditions?*

Keywords: *Interrelational, First-Nation Communities, Pyro-Vernacular Methods, Architecture, design language.*

Designing Relationships, Not Just Spaces

My design philosophy is *interrelational*. I approach architecture as a medium for fostering relationships between people, land, materials, stories, and more-than-human worlds. Through architectural ethnography and co-design with First Nations communities in Australia and Indonesia, I investigate how built environments can carry knowledge, memory, and care across generations.

I explore *languages of connection* — the ways communities express and sustain relational knowledge through environment modification of fire practices, material culture, seasonal cycles, journeys, and rituals. These are not abstract concepts; they are lived, embodied, and actionable. Design is a method of translation: transforming cultural and ecological wisdom into spaces, forms, and practices that respond to context, climate, and community priorities. It comes from embodied knowledge in the ways we experience and feel the effects of our surroundings – the people, the climate, as well as that of the intangible in stories and memories.

Grounded and Moving: A Life in Architecture

My vocational trajectory reflects both groundedness and movement. After embracing architecture at university, I sought experiences that would expand my understanding of culture, environment, and the role of design in sustaining life.

My work led me to live in numerous places, both temporarily and with greater degrees of settling. I travelled for six months in Southeast and South Asia; in South America for nine months and then through Europe and the UK on the weekends based in Edinburgh, Scotland for two years. Inhabiting diverse dwellings, cultural contexts, and environments has given me a practical and empathetic lens on how people inhabit and care for spaces. This mobility informs my research on what I call 'discursive settling,' exploring how stories, narrative, and memory inform how movement and grounding interact, both in human life and in the design of socially-cohesive communities.

Projects in Practice: Stories, Spaces, and People

- Pyro-Vernacular Studies with First Nations Communities**
Working with Nukunu community, I investigate the relationships between cultural burning, material reuse, and ecological cycles in the siting of buildings. This work informs design interventions, such as wall cladding and furniture making, translating fire and debris practices into built and programmatic forms that sustain knowledge and care for Country.
- Aceh Method and Architectural Ethnography**
I have applied architectural ethnography in Indonesia through the Aceh Method, documenting vernacular and trial-and-error building practices. This work highlights adaptive, relational, and culturally embedded design principles, and has informed collaborative projects with Australian communities.

- **Time Layered Culture Map (TLCMap)** TLCMap is a digital humanities infrastructure platform where my contributions include co-leadership for advocacy of Indigenisation projects. This focus is to capture relational, intergenerational knowledge, connecting story, place, and practice across First Nations communities in Australia. It allows communities to visualise dynamic, living networks of cultural knowledge, rather than static data, supporting cross-cultural and interdisciplinary collaborations.

Mentoring, Making, and Mapping Connections

I lead studio and project-based courses such as Mnemonic Nodes, where students design architectural interventions that articulate a place's significance on Country. The studio emphasises designing on Country, food security, and cultural protocols, integrating precedent studies, site visits, and guest lectures. Through these pedagogical methods, students develop skills in relational, community-driven design and cross-disciplinary thinking.

I also mentor students and early-career researchers, emphasising reflective practice, ethical engagement, and the importance of relational knowledge systems. Workshops with First Nations collaborators introduce students to pyro-vernacular methods, co-design principles, and hands-on making, bridging theory and practice.

Shaping Change: Advocacy Through Design

My work advocates for community-led, culturally responsive design, particularly in the context of climate change, heritage preservation,

and First Nations engagement. Through collaborations with ICOMOS, Shelter SA, and cross-cultural partners, I promote the recognition of vernacular knowledge and relational design principles in policy, education, and practice.

I also champion digital and hybrid tools, such as TLCMap, to make intangible knowledge accessible while respecting cultural protocols. These platforms amplify voices often excluded from mainstream design discourse and support future-making grounded in community priorities and ecological care.

Settling, Moving, and Designing in Between

At its heart, my design journey is about balancing grounding and movement, both literally, in my lived experiences across houses, tents, and swags, and figuratively, in my research practice. Design, for me, is not only about creating structures but observing, learning from, and translating the relational practices of communities into tangible, adaptable, and resilient forms.

My vocational trajectory, from initial hesitation to committed practice, reflects a continuous negotiation of staying in a place to mobility, stability and adaptation, personal and collective care. These lived experiences directly inform how I approach architectural research, teaching, and engagement.

Continuing the Journey: Design as Lifelong Practice

My work asks fundamental questions about how people sustain life, knowledge, and relationships across time and place, how design can embody and support these interconnections, and how we can

balance grounding and movement in both human life and community practice. Through architecture, ethnography, co-design, and teaching, I continue to learn from, respect and share the wisdom embedded in lived, relational ways of dwelling. This perspective shapes every project, workshop, and collaborative endeavour I undertake, guiding me to ensure that design contributes meaningfully to people, place, and future resilience.



Professor Dr. Cláudia de Souza Libânio

Federal University of Health Sciences of Porto Alegre (UFCSPA)

I am a professor at the Federal University of Health Sciences of Porto Alegre, in Brazil, where I conduct research, teach and supervise both undergraduate and graduate students. I serve as a member of national and international committees engaged in initiatives related to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. I am also the convenor of the Global Health Special Interest Group at the Design Research Society, a Fellow of Loughborough University, and a Harvard Alumni. My research areas include inclusive design, architecture, and social innovation, with a research focus on people with disabilities, vulnerable communities, women, and populations in low- and middle-income countries.

Designing Global Health Education for All

Prof. Dr. Cláudia de Souza Libânio

Abstract

My career as a professor and researcher in Brazil has been shaped by experiences and moments that raise reflections on teaching and learning, on students' competencies as well as ways to foster an educational health environment that respects diversity and promoting inclusion, equity, and accessibility. Therefore, I present some reflections to design global health education for all, such as learning about people, their life contexts, and their realities; recognising that we must be agents of change as individuals within a society; preparing students to become future inclusive health professionals; promoting inclusion, equity, accessibility, and diversity in health higher education; encouraging higher education for all; reinforcing with governments inclusion as a value for higher education in low- and middle-income countries. I hope these reflections resonate and that, together, we can promote a behavioural change toward a world that respects and values diversity.

Keywords: career path, inclusive design, global health education, participatory design.

Introduction

My career as a professor and researcher has been shaped by experiences that help me grow as a person, professionally, and as a global citizen. I began teaching driven by an enthusiasm to learn

more and constantly challenge myself in pursuit of a better world. Fortunately, those genuine motivations remain with me today and emerge whenever I witness or experience social inequalities and injustices in everyday life.

I have a multidisciplinary background, in architecture, business, and design, which often puzzles people. Why does a professor working in health sciences study inclusive design in health, striving to respect diversity and promote inclusion, equity, and accessibility in our society? However, this multidisciplinary education has given me a broad understanding of the many worlds we live in. This search for technical knowledge also sparked in me a curiosity to understand other realities, other people, other contexts, other worlds, and other kinds of knowledge. It broadened my critical thinking and empowered me with the knowledge to advocate for the issues I believe in. It also motivated me to work for a better world, defending ethics, inclusion, respect, and social justice. I mention this because Brazil, the country where I was born and live, is a “continental” country. Brazil is a vast territory and a culturally, socially, and economically diverse population, marked by resource disparities and vast differences. I grew up seeing and experiencing these disparities, and my education was shaped by these lived experiences.

Today, I am part of the faculty at a federal university of health sciences in Brazil. I teach, advise undergraduate and graduate students, and conduct national and international research. I interact with people from diverse cultural, social, and economic backgrounds, navigating a variety of academic environments in

education and research, both in Brazil and globally. Moreover, I working practical settings with my students, facing the realities of the Brazilian public health system.

My professional achievements come with challenges. I carry the experiences of prejudice and discrimination as a woman, Latina, born and raised in a middle-income country. I see others with similar stories of exclusion and injustice. Today, I am respected for who I am and what I have built. As an educator, I have the privilege to engage in dialogue with my community of students and colleagues. It is a privilege to learn from them and contribute to the formation of future professionals in the health field. These moments raise reflections on teaching and learning, on the competencies we should develop in these students and in my colleagues to foster an educational health environment that respects diversity and promotes inclusion, equity, and accessibility. Inclusive, respectful, ethical, and fair education are integral to my beliefs and attitudes. Consequently, I bring here some reflections I consider valuable to be addressed in designing global health education.

Reflections in designing global health education for all

I start by emphasising the importance of learning about people, their life contexts, and their realities; recognising and respecting differences; and having empathy for others by putting ourselves in others' shoes. Throughout my academic career, I have recognised the richness of our community's vast diversity. Diversity is a strength, and it is vital to live with, to engage in dialogue with, and value people from various backgrounds, educations, ethnicities, and unique characteristics.

Another important point is recognising that we live in a world with deep inequalities. As individuals within society, we must be agents of change, striving to promote social justice and acting inclusively, empathetically, ethically, and responsibly. Individualistic thinking does not contribute to our community life. Let empathy guide our words and actions, extending beyond self-focused thinking. When we realise we live in a community and that our actions make a difference, we can recognise ourselves as agents of change, seeking to promote a more inclusive world and a fairer society for all.

Preparing students to become future health professionals in a low- and middle-income countries is essential. In health education, where we work with care, we must understand our communities' realities and the effective resources management (human, material, financial, environmental). By developing co-participatory design practices and learning about our population, we can identify the real needs, contexts, limitations, and unique characteristics of individuals. In this way, we could design more assertive, quality services with a duty of care and respect expected in human relationships.

Another aspect to be developed in education environments is the promotion of inclusion, equity, and accessibility, and the respect for diversity. It is essential to foster competencies in both faculty and students, which includes knowledge, abilities, and attitudes that respect differences, thereby promoting inclusion, equity, and accessibility in higher education.

Encouraging education for all is another crucial goal to develop, aiming to remove barriers to higher education in low- and middle-income countries. When people with disabilities and vulnerable groups have access to university education, they can express themselves and become voices of change in these environments, with their needs acknowledged, heard, and respected. By fostering participatory practices and discussions on these topics, we promote reflection within the university community and across society. We can build and strengthen groups that diffuse discussions on these topics, giving a voice to minorities in our community, to gain confidence, respect, and strength, to enable them to gain access to more opportunities to study and work, nationally and internationally. It is also essential to encourage students to face the challenges of low- and middle-income countries and recognise themselves as global citizens.

Finally, may the governments reinforce inclusion as a core value for higher education in low- and middle-income countries. Government support and partnerships with public and private organisations are fundamental to promoting and encouraging an inclusive culture in university education environments.

Final Considerations

I hope to continue developing my work within communities and to be an agent of change toward a more respectful and just society for all. I also hope these reflections resonate and that, together, we can promote this behavioural change toward a more inclusive world that respects and values diversity.



Anne-Sophie Flores

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Anne-Sophie Flores is a French-Mexican food and product designer based in Lyon, France. She holds a Master's degree in Food Design and is the co-founder of Cōmi Design, a studio specialising in food and branding design. Her multicultural background deeply informs her work, which explores the intersections between culture, sustainability, and sensory experience. Through projects like *Olotl*, she aims to transform local traditions and food waste into opportunities for sustainable innovation, bridging craft, ecology, and design thinking.

Olotl: Reimagining Corn Waste Through Food Design

Anne-Sophie Flores

Abstract

This article explores *Olotl*, a food design project by French-Mexican designer Anne-Sophie Flores, developed from corn cobs "*Olotl*" in Nahuatl, meaning the skeleton of maize. Rooted in Mexico's cultural and agricultural heritage, the project transforms this underused by-product into a biodegradable material for tableware, addressing both environmental and social challenges. By creating a circular economy model in rural communities, *Olotl* aims to empower women artisans while reducing plastic waste generated by street food vendors. Through this case study, she reflects on the potential of food design to connect sustainability, culture, and identity, highlighting how design can bridge tradition and innovation while serving as a catalyst for ecological awareness and inclusive development.

Keywords: Circular economy, sustainability, biodegradable, food design, Mexican corn.

I know you are here because you expect to read an analysis or a research study but the truth is, I wanted to write you a letter. A story about where I come from, what I design, and why. You might be wondering how a young dreamer from Mexico ended up in France. People often ask me, "*Why aren't you in Mexico if you love it so much?*" And they are right—I always say, "*Mexico has everything.*"

Yet, here I am, living in Lyon, building my dreams one project at a time.

No matter where I go, my culture follows me. It lives in my accent, my name, and the way I approach design. Even while in Europe, I have always felt a responsibility to give visibility to my culture. For me, design is more than a form or aesthetics—it is a way to create value through social, economic, and ecological impact.

The Birth of Olotl

That philosophy came to life during my master's degree in Food Design, when I created *Olotl*. The word “*Olotl*” comes from Nahuatl, meaning *corn cob*, the skeleton of maize.

In Mexico, maize is more than food; it is our identity. My father, a social anthropologist, used to tell me that Mexico's true gold was never the mineral, it was the corn. During colonisation, we gave away our precious metals, but we protected our roots.

During my research, I discovered that the corn cob, despite being part of every harvest, was rarely reused. In rural areas, farmers often burn it, releasing black smoke harmful to both the environment and their health. That observation became the foundation of *Olotl*: transforming what was considered waste into a valuable material. Through experimentation, I developed a substance with similar properties to cork—rigid yet flexible, natural yet strong. When dyed with hibiscus, it revealed beautiful pink tones, proving its aesthetic and material potential.

From Waste to Resource

The next challenge was contextual: how could this material respond to a real problem in Mexico? While eating *esquites*, a popular street food dish made from corn, I noticed the large amount of single-use plastic generated by vendors every night. When I asked one vendor why he still used plastic, he said, “ *It’s cheaper.*” That moment became the turning point.

Mexico’s 800,000+ food stalls generate thousands of tons of waste daily, much of it non-biodegradable. *Olotl* proposes a simple solution: using the corn cob waste to produce biodegradable plates. The design allows two plates to fit together, creating an easy *to-go* container that naturally decomposes after use.



Testing bio-material: Olotl 2019 © Anne-Sophie Flores.



Biodegradable plate made from corn cob waste: Olotl 2019 © Anne-Sophie Flores.

***Olotl* goes beyond sustainability, it aims for circularity. The vision is to establish cooperatives where women in rural communities can manufacture the plates using local corn waste. This model not only reduces pollution but also creates new economic opportunities and educational value for children who learn about ecology through participation.**

Design as a Bridge

At its heart, *Olotl* is not only a design project but also a social statement. It connects craft, ecology, and cultural identity through material innovation. It reflects a belief that design should serve as a bridge between tradition and technology, between local communities and global conversations.

After completing *Olotl*, my path took another turn. Following my experience in Madrid, where I discovered how rapidly food design was evolving, I decided to return to France and open my own studio.

Today, I co-direct Cōmi Design, a studio based in Lyon specialising in food and branding design. The name *Cōmi* carries a double meaning *commis* in French means “kitchen assistant,” while *comí* in Spanish means “I ate.” It perfectly represents the blend of my two worlds.

Running a business is a constant learning curve, but it allows me to design experiences that awaken emotions and connect people through food. When I say I am a food designer, people often ask, “What *is that?*” Even my parents needed years to understand it. But once people experience it, they always leave with curiosity, reflection, or awe, and that is when I know design has done its job.

What Food Design Means to Me

To me, food design is a multidisciplinary practice combining product, graphic, and spatial design to create sensory experiences that evoke emotion and awareness. It is about using food as a medium to tell stories, question systems, and build connections. By integrating color, texture, material, and space, we can design not just objects but moments. *Olot!* embodies that philosophy: a humble material turned into a message of renewal.

Because in the end, design is not only about creating things it is about creating meaning.

And for me, it all began with a single grain of corn.



Nila Rezaei RK Collective

Nila Rezaei is an Iranian-Australian industrial designer, educator, and co-founder of RK Collective, a female-led design studio focused on ethical innovation and social impact. Her practice weaves material storytelling, co-design, and cultural memory into products and experiences that honour the emotional and political dimensions of design. Nila's internationally recognised project *Crafted Liberation* transforms discarded headscarves into stadium seats, reclaiming symbols of exclusion through participatory design.

Nila teaches at UNSW Art & Design, where she mentors emerging designers in socially engaged practice. Nila is a Good design Australia Ambassador and Chair of the NSW Council at Design Institute of Australia (DIA). She lives and works on unceded Gadigal land (Sydney), where she continues to explore design as a method of healing, resistance, and continuity.

The Distance Between Two Homes

Nila Rezaei

Abstract

This article is a personal reflection on design as a bridge between cultures, memories, and identities. As a young Iranian woman who migrated to Australia to pursue design at the age of 19, I found myself suspended between two homes, between constraint and freedom, silence and voice. This in-between space, once a site of grief and displacement, became the method that shaped my practice.

I trace my journey from a determined design student absorbing 'Western' framework to an educator and studio founder who now teaches through co-design, cultural memory, and emotional resonance. I share how reclaiming my Persian heritage transformed the way I teach, make, and lead, not by rejecting what I learned, but by weaving it with what I remembered.

My work, including the project Crafted Liberation, which transforms discarded Iranian headscarves into stadium seats, is an extension of this philosophy: that design can be a vessel for healing, protest, and belonging. This piece is not just about a career. It is about how design held me, and how it became language when I had none, and how it continues to offer a seat, not just for me, but for those still waiting to be seen.

The Distance Between Two Homes

I arrived in Australia with a suitcase, a university admission, and a secret promise: that I would make this move worth it. I had left my mother behind, my language behind, my home behind. So I worked like it mattered, because it did.

Design school was a world I had only imagined. Clean lines. Process maps. Words like “methodology” and “human-centred.” I was captivated. Every week I learned something that felt like a small superpower. I was determined to become a “good designer,” which, back then, I thought meant mastering the Western canon: Bauhaus, Brutalism, Scandinavian minimalism. I was obsessed. I treated it like religion, and maybe I still do.

It took me years to notice what was missing.

The In-Between is the Method

I never thought to bring my culture into my work. I believed design was neutral, and that neutrality meant Western. It was not until years later, after I began working professionally, that the ache arrived, slowly, then all at once.

I remembered the textures of my childhood: my mother’s stitches, my grandmother’s carpet, the rhythm of Persian poetry on the radio. I remembered the way we fixed broken things, the way beauty was not separate from survival. And I realised: I had been taught to see design as an invention. But where I come from, design is inheritance.

That is when my practice began to change. I started asking different questions—not just “how does this work?” but “ what does this remember?” or “ Who is this serving?” I began designing from absence. And I realised the “ in-between” was not a weakness. It was a method. A lens. A power.

A Seat We Were Never Given

In 2022, when Mahsa Amini was killed in Iran, something in me cracked open. The Women, Life, Freedom movement flooded the streets of Tehran, and the silence in exile became unbearable. I felt powerless. But then I remembered: my tools are not banners, but materials.

That year, I started *Crafted Liberation*, a project that transforms discarded Iranian headscarves into stadium seats, the very seats women have been banned from occupying in Iran since 1981. I put out a call. Scarves arrived from around the world, each one carrying stories, loss, anger, love. We worked with an Australian manufacturer to create a new composite material, one part textile, one part grief, all recycled. The result: functional, poetic, unignorable.

Crafted Liberation is not just a product. It is a protest made into a beautiful, colourful seat. A seat made from refusal. And yet, it is also gentle, a quiet rebellion. That paradox lives at the heart of everything I now design.

Teaching from the Heart, Not the Slide Deck

As an educator, I teach students to listen to memory, to experience, theirs and others. I teach them that co-design is not a buzzword; it

is a belief system. We start from lived experience. Always. The stories we carry are not side notes; they are the insight.

When students realise that design can help them heal, everything shifts. They no longer chase outcomes; they follow feelings. We speak about memory, power, displacement. We question the rules. We provoke gently. I often tell them: Design is not just how something works. It is how something feels. And feeling is what makes us stay.

To me, design is like music, not the sheet music, but the rhythm that makes people move together, without instruction. It creates space for beauty, for emotion, for understanding. It does not solve loneliness. But sometimes, it sings to it.

A Practice Rooted in Continuity

Today I lead a female-led studio, RK Collective, where we centre ethics, circularity, and care. We build systems and products, yes, but we also build stories. In our work, design is not just solution-oriented. It is memory-keeping. It is making space for what the world does not always want to see: grief, softness, complexity, culture.

I no longer try to be a “ good Western designer.” I am a Persian woman who designs. I carry centuries of improvisation, joy, protest, craft. I am a daughter, a teacher, an exile, a maker. I am all of these things, not in conflict, but in constellations.

Closing Reflection: The Thread Between Homes

Design held me when I did not have words, as I grew into womanhood. It became a way to belong when language failed. It gave me a seat, and now, through my work, I offer seats to others. Not just literal ones, like those in *Crafted Liberation*, but metaphorical ones too: places to be heard, to remember, to speak. The distance between two homes never disappears.

But in design, I have found a thread that stitches them together. My practice is that stitching; imperfect, soft, resilient. Now, I want every material, every object, every system I touch to empower, to tell a more beautiful story of becoming. Of resistance. Of joy.

This is the design I choose. Not from the centre, but from the edges. To make with intention To make resistance visible. To continue my mother's step, and her mother's and all beautiful women of Iran ...



Paraskevi (Paris) Triantis

Designer, MedTechVic. Lecturer, Innovation and Enterprise, Design Factory Melbourne, Swinburne University of Technology.

Paraskevi (Paris) Triantis is a designer based in Melbourne, Australia, at MedTechVic, Swinburne University of Technology, whose career spans architectural design, healthcare, and MedTech. With formal training in interior architecture and graduate studies in architecture and urban design, Paris has long been driven by an interest in how design can enhance wellbeing and quality of life, specifically in the realm of inclusive and universal design. This curiosity led to her transition into healthcare innovation in her role at MedTechVic, Swinburne, where she works within an interdisciplinary team and frequently collaborates with individuals

who have lived experience of disability and professionals across healthcare sectors.

Since commencing her academic career in 2018, Paris has lectured in engineering and lectured/convened a Master of Occupational Therapy and Design unit for six years at Swinburne University of Technology. She currently serves as Design Coach at MedTechVic, where she engages in research activities, works on and leads collaborative projects, and facilitates co-design workshops with people who have lived experience. Passionate about inclusive design and interdisciplinary collaboration, Paris is equally committed to supporting the next generation of designers, using her role to enact meaningful change in everyday society.

Reframing the Problem Space: A Journey into Inclusive and Collaborative Design

Paraskevi (Paris) Triantis

Abstract

When designing inclusive solutions to design problems, an intimate understanding of user needs is essential. Traditional design education equips us with technical and analytical skills, yet often neglects the crucial front-end of the process: deeply understanding user needs before proposing solutions. This gap became clear during my honours studies, when I was introduced to design thinking and inclusive design frameworks. These approaches emphasised the value of uncovering user insights, and engaging meaningfully with accessibility, disability, and universal design. From that point, my ethos as a designer shifted. I began to see the “problem space” as a source of creativity and innovation, strengthened further through collaboration with diverse teams, collaborators and individuals who have lived experience of disability. My journey from architecture to MedTech and healthcare innovation has been non-linear, but through it all I have gained important insights into design thinking, co-design, and interdisciplinary collaboration in creating inclusive, impactful solutions.

Keywords: Inclusive Design; Co-design; Healthcare Innovation; Interdisciplinary Collaboration; Career Pathways; MedTech.

Introduction

This paper reflects on my career journey, highlighting how my educational and professional experiences have evolved my identity as a designer. Through these reflections, this article emphasises the critical importance of co-design and inclusive practices in preparing designers for meaningful, real-world impact across multiple sectors.

Educational Foundations in Interdisciplinary Practice

I began my architecture journey with a clear goal shared by many of my peers: to become a registered architect. However, during my honours year, new pathways emerged when I was introduced to interdisciplinary design. The program, delivered by Swinburne's Design Factory Melbourne, included two weeks collaborating with researchers at CERN in Geneva. Drawing on CERN research insights, our team addressed the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with my project focusing on hospital waste management. This experience ignited a lasting passion for the intersection of design and healthcare, shaping my career ever since.

After my honours degree, I received a scholarship to attend a Design Factory hackathon in Portugal, facilitating workshops with students and staff from international Design Factories. This sparked a love of teaching and facilitation, prompting a gradual shift from industry practice to academia.

After several years in industry, I began lecturing; first in a first-year engineering unit, then in a master's unit bringing together Occupational Therapy and Design students to collaborate with individuals with lived experience of disability. Through this work, my

commitment to inclusive design deepened, ultimately leading to my role with MedTechVic, where I continue to explore how design can meaningfully contribute to healthcare innovation.



Above: Swinburne's MedTechVic team working on the design of the Comfort Seat, a solution providing pressure relief and improving stability for toileting. From Swinburne. 19 July 2024.

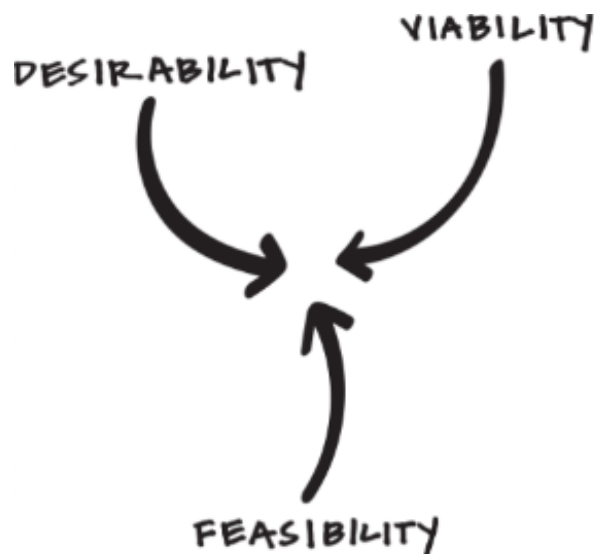
Exploring the Importance of Co-Design Through Three MedTechVic Case Studies

In my current role at MedTechVic, I work with an incredibly interdisciplinary team. Some days I collaborate with engineering colleagues, while on others I work closely with clinical advisors. Our projects range from co-designing new products with assistive technology partners to collaborating directly with people with lived experience of disability. I attribute the success of our work to the strength of our diverse team, the rigour of our design research, and the depth of our co-design processes.



Above: Photo of MedTechVic team (McDonald, 2025). Reproduced from LinkedIn. December 2025.

At MedTechVic, we use Design Thinking and the UK Design Council's Double Diamond as frameworks for creative problem-solving, empathy, and iterative design (IDEO, n.d.; Design Council, n.d.). We have refined these models to make them more inclusive, ensuring collaborators with diverse needs can meaningfully participate.



The intersection where design thinking lives

Above: Diagram from IDEO explaining the core of design thinking. From Design Thinking (IDEO, n.d.)

Case studies

I will now highlight three projects from my time with MedTechVic that exemplify our inclusive project processes across different sectors.

Department of Jobs, Skills, Industries and Regions (DJSIR), Skills Solutions Partnerships Grant (SSP), Commercialisation Training Program (2024-2025):

This Victorian Government-funded collaboration between AAMRI Victoria, MTPConnect, Swinburne Edge and MedTechVic supported early- and mid-career life science researchers to navigate pre-seed commercialisation. Co-designed with industry experts, researchers, and investors, the resulting 12-week program was piloted across two cohorts (n=44) and, following its success, secured funding for future delivery.



Above: Learners from the first cohort of the AAMRI VIC SSP commercialisation training program at their pitch event. Photo by the author. 7 May 2025.

Whitepaper: *How might the built environment prevent or actively support people experiencing delirium?* (Lambert et al., 2024):

MedTechVic collaborated with ACMD and Safer Care Victoria on a whitepaper document exploring how hospital environments influence patients' experiences of delirium. Through co-design with healthcare professionals, designers, families and patients, the MedTechVic team developed key recommendations. The recommendations emphasise reducing noise, optimising lighting, creating familiar and engaging interiors, and improving layout design to enhance safety and navigation.



Above: Participants at the ACMD Challenge Workshop on delirium held on July 2nd that helped inform the development of the whitepaper. From ACMD. July 2025.

National Centre of Excellence in Intellectual Disability Health Conference, co-producing a conference presentation (2025):

MedTechVic collaborated with Angus (Gus), an ambitious non-verbal young man with intellectual disability (ID), to co-produce a

conference presentation. Together, we shared recommendations for making co-design processes more inclusive and collaborative with people with ID. The project offered practical guidance for others in the disability space on effective collaboration. Since the presentation, Gus has continued to expand his professional experience and advocate for inclusive employment practices.



Above, from left to right: Paraskevi Triantis (MedTechVic), Gus, Claudia Bridge (MedTechVic), after Gus' successful conference presentation. Photo by the author. July 2025.

Conclusion

I have witnessed firsthand the benefits of engaging end-users. Through my work on design projects in the disability and healthcare sectors, it has become increasingly clear how essential the perspectives of people with lived experience are in creating meaningful outcomes. This principle applies to all design projects, ensuring that those directly affected are actively involved in decisions that shape their lives. The phrase "Nothing about us, without us" captures this perfectly, emphasising that no policy,

design, or solution should be developed without the participation of those it impacts (United Nations, 2004).

My experiences across education and professional work have reinforced that the most meaningful solutions emerge when diverse perspectives are integrated from the outset. By prioritising co-design and inclusive practices, designers can develop outcomes that contribute to a more equitable and inclusive world for everyone.

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Anupa Dasgupta

Service Designer & Product Strategist

Anupa is a service designer with a strong foundation in design strategy, leveraging service, and product design to develop process-driven outcomes for emerging tech communities, including initiatives like Unlock Protocol Dao and TrueStars NFT.

Her journey began with pioneering blockchain solutions for Ethiopian farmers and has evolved into designing Web3 ecosystems tailored for diverse communities. She is also one of the spearheads of Rolemodelrebels, a platform dedicated to amplifying women's voices in Web2 and emerging tech spaces.

Anupa has participated in programs such as Mission Impact for Global Leaders in Emerging Technologies for Women, NFT TALENTS, and SHEFI. As a proud neurodivergent individual, she is passionate about creating inclusive, innovative, and impactful solutions.

Designing for Web3 Through a Service Design Lens: Reimagining Trust, Value, and Human Experience

Anupa Dasgupta

Abstract

This article explores how service design frameworks can be applied to Web3 — the decentralised, blockchain-driven evolution of the internet — to humanise complex technologies and create inclusive, purpose-driven experiences. As a service designer navigating this emerging landscape, I examine how tools like service blueprints, value flow mapping, and co-creation workshops can transform blockchain ecosystems into more accessible, ethical, and emotionally resonant systems. By analysing the philosophical, technical, and experiential dimensions of Web3, this article highlights how UX and service design can bridge the gap between code and community, enabling meaningful participation, sustainable token economies, and equitable creator ecosystems.

Keywords: Web3, Service Design, UX Design, Tokenomics, DAOs, Blockchain, Decentralisation, Creator Economy, NFT Design, Participatory Systems

Introduction

As a service designer who has spent the last few years navigating the evolving intersections of design, technology, and community within Web3, I often find myself explaining what this new paradigm really means. For many outside the space, Web3 feels like a confusing mix of buzzwords — blockchain, crypto, NFTs,

DAOs(Decentralised Autonomous Organisations), metaverse – wrapped in futuristic promises. But beyond the noise and volatility, Web3 represents something deeper: a human shift toward reclaiming ownership, trust, and building internet community via peer-to-peer transactions with intermediaries.

At its core, Web3 is a user-owned internet built on blockchain – a distributed ledger technology that allows transparent, verifiable, and immutable transactions without intermediaries. In this model, decision-making and action flow directly between creators, communities, and users, enables shared financial wealth, ownership and governance of digital ecosystems. If Web1 was read, and Web2 was read and write, Web3 is read, write, and own.

The philosophy of Web3 stems from decentralisation, transparency, interoperability, and community governance. It takes the early ideals of the internet – openness, peer-to-peer collaboration, and freedom from gatekeepers – and makes them technically possible through blockchain infrastructure. From DAOs to token economies and digital identity systems, Web3 invites us to rethink how value and trust are designed. As a service designer, this intersection feels human-centred and design frameworks to humanise complex systems, create equitable participation, and make decentralisation meaningful.

Web3 systems are often built for technologically and financially literate mindsets. This is where service design offers both a language and a methodology for transformation and adoption. The discipline's systemic and participatory nature helps decode the

technical into the experiential — connecting human needs, business goals, and technological enablers into coherent value flows.

Service design frameworks like service blueprints, ecosystem maps, and value network mapping can bring clarity, empathy, and structure to the chaotic landscape of Web3. For example: Service Blueprints visualise every step of a user journey — from interacting with a wallet to participating in a DAO vote — exposing friction points and dependencies across frontstage (UX) and backstage (blockchain logic) layers. For example, The idea of a “wallet,” which is equivalent to a bank account, is a digital tool that lets users securely store, send, and manage their crypto assets and identities while interacting directly with blockchain applications without any intermediaries. This is a less-than-second transaction, a complete peer to peer transaction. Value Flow Maps help visualise how tokens move between users, creators, and governance systems, revealing where value is captured or lost.

Co-creation workshops can align developers, token designers, and community members to prototype participatory models for shared governance.

In decentralisation, there is no single owner or manager to “fix” the experience. Design must therefore act as the connective tissue — ensuring that technology, governance, and human intent coexist in meaningful, transparent, and emotionally resonant ways. The UX challenges in Web3 are distinct. While Web2 trained users to expect frictionless onboarding, password resets, and centralised help desks,

Web3 requires users to manage private keys, gas fees, and self-custody wallets — responsibilities that feel technical and risky.

UX and service design converge by mapping the emotional journey from curiosity to confusion to confidence designers can uncover opportunities to support trust, comprehension, and accessibility. Onboarding flows could be redesigned to include visual storytelling, progressive learning, and community-based support, turning complexity into empowerment.

An example is SheFi, a global learning platform that empowers women to learn, invest, and lead in DeFi and Web3. It combines education, community participation, and gamified rewards — a classic service design approach — transforming abstract financial systems into actionable, human experiences.

One of Web3's most powerful yet misunderstood layers is tokenomics — the design of economic systems that define how value circulates in decentralised networks. Service design helps here by viewing tokenomics as behavioural design rather than pure finance. It's about understanding motivations, fairness, and long-term sustainability.

For instance, a learning DAO might reward members for teaching or content creation. But without thoughtful design, this can create extractive hierarchies or reward speculation over contribution. A service blueprint can help visualise where effort meets reward, ensuring that participation is meaningful and inclusive. Similarly, journey mapping can highlight emotional and motivational drivers —

why people join, contribute, or drop off — informing better incentive design.

Real-world example: In a Web3 ticketing DAO I co-designed, we built a mentorship service where NFT holders could access structured learning, peer-led reviews, and token rewards for teaching others. We treated it as an end-to-end service ecosystem — where learning, earning, and belonging were all designed experiences, not byproducts.

One of the biggest barriers in Web3 is adoption. Non-Web3 users often find decentralised systems intimidating and opaque. The disconnect between decision-making, knowledge, and action leads to confusing errors or lost funds. Governance fatigue is also real in DAOs, participation often drops as decision-making becomes complex or unclear.

Service design can intervene through participation design crafting clear roles, feedback loops, and governance rituals that align incentives with purpose. For instance, voting dashboards could visualise not only proposals but their human and environmental impacts. Co-creation circles could replace passive voting with active dialogue.

Environmental concerns also call for ethical design thinking. While proof-of-work blockchains have high energy costs, the service designer's role is to facilitate responsible adoption — using sustainable systems mapping to connect energy-efficient technologies (like proof-of-stake) to community values and choices.

The creator economy in Web3 has been revolutionary. For the first time, artists, musicians, and storytellers can monetise directly and retain ownership through NFTs and smart contracts. Creators no longer depend solely on platforms; they own their markets, royalties, and communities. However, empowerment without guidance can be isolating. Many creators lack technical literacy, mentorship, or market understanding. The NFT space, once about collective creativity, now often rewards speculation and hype over artistry.

By designing holistic ecosystems from – discovery to distribution to post-sale support – we can shift NFTs from speculative assets to cultural assets. For example, an NFT mentorship program could use journey maps to connect artist onboarding, collector engagement, and community storytelling, ensuring every interaction builds value and belonging.

Service design allows us to imagine not just “how NFTs sell,” but “how creative economies sustain.” It reframes success around shared growth, learning, and purpose, not just profit.

Web3 challenges us to rethink how we design for trust, ownership, and value. It is as much a social experiment as a technological evolution. The designer’s role is not to simplify blockchain for the sake of usability alone, but to translate distributed systems into experiences of belonging, fairness, and meaning. Service design frameworks make this possible by mapping complexity, centring empathy, and creating participatory governance models that scale

ethically. UX bridges the gap between code and culture, helping people not just use Web3, but feel part of it. In this evolving space, design is not just about usability it is about reimagining how humans collaborate, create, and trust in a decentralised world. Web3 offers the tools. Service design gives it the soul.



Letter from the Chairman's Desk

By Sunil Bhatia PhD

My heartiest congratulations to our contributors (1000+), Guest Editors of special monthly issues (200+), and our esteemed readers (in millions) from every nook and corner of the world for making 'Design for All' (ISSN: 2589-8304) a success story. Together, we have achieved the milestone of publishing the October 2025, Vol. 20 No. 10 special issue—celebrating our '250th' consecutive monthly issue since 2006', without missing a single month. This is your celebration!

My role has been to facilitate the 'Design for All' platform with discipline and fairness—never being judgmental about the materials submitted by our contributors—and to ensure that every issue is published on time. Working continuously for over 20 years without feeling tired remains a mystery, especially without any revenue model, as all expenses were met through personal resources. It has truly been a divine wish to continue this publication, and I consider myself merely a humble instrument in its realization.

Once again, thank you all.

Dr. Sunil Bhatia

The Phenomenon of Fall and Its Prevention

Fall is a natural phenomenon, while vertical growth is a counterforce to the attraction of gravity. How does a plant of great height manage to transport water from its roots to the top leaves through osmosis? Nature constantly pulls everything toward the center of the earth due to gravity. This is the primary principle every designer should keep in mind. The secondary principle lies in identifying visible parameters or triggers that may cause a fall.

As children, we learn the art of standing—defying gravity. A child is first supported by a parent holding his hand or placed in a walker to prevent a fall. Gradually, balance and walking are learned. A tightrope walker uses a balancing stick to prevent falling. The rope itself was originally designed to avoid free fall from a height, and later, knots tied at intervals became the first form of a ladder. The elevator is simply an extension of the ladder, both designed to prevent falling to the ground.

Our inbuilt mechanism of balance lies in the inner ear. Any disturbance there creates imbalance. Age is another factor. As we grow old, our bones weaken and can no longer bear our weight, making us prone to falls. I recall an incident when my father fell while standing outside a shop. His hip bone fractured. The doctor explained it was not the fall that caused the fracture, but the weakness of the bone—it could not bear his weight. There are two ways for recovery age old is natural healing by using splinters or plaster of paris coated dressing for immobilization or operation for inserting stainless steel rod for support.

In old age, many accidents happen due to overuse of slippers with worn-out soles. Footwear is designed for a limited lifespan; once the

anti-slip surface wears away, the risk of slipping increases, especially on polished floors, in malls, or in toilets where water creates a thin film. Dirty toilets are another hidden hazard: microbial bites cause itching, and in the act of scratching or adjusting posture, one may lose balance and fall.

Our ancestors devised simple methods to prevent falls—walking sticks, or cloth tightly tied around the waist for extra support. Temporary blindness, at any age, can also cause falls. Experts advise: never resist what your body signals. If dizziness occurs, sit down immediately instead of trying to maintain balance and risking a dangerous fall. Clothes can be cleaned later; injuries may take weeks to heal. There is a hypothesis that a human fall may result in a femur fracture, which takes three to four weeks to heal if the person remains immobile. In ancient times, others would care for the injured person by sharing the meat of their prey during this recovery period — an early example that suggests the foundation of human society was built on mutual care and cooperation.

Architectural design has long recognized the need to prevent falls: parapets on roofs, handrails for stairs, anti-slip tiles, and dry floors. Interior designers use carpets and rugs to prevent slipping, while architects ensure floors remain even to prevent tripping. Designing skyscrapers requires accounting not only for natural calamities but also for soil strength and human safety.

I often advise elderly people: never rush when changing posture—whether getting out of bed, standing up, or bending. Pause a moment to let the body adjust. Many falls occur when one foot crosses the other, locking movement and causing imbalance.

Even clothing can become a cause of falls. Strings or knots in garments can get stuck, leading to hurried movements and accidents. Dresses longer than the ankles or loose sleeves can trip the wearer, especially on escalators. Overly tight clothing can also restrict balance.

I recall an incident where an old man strained himself while trying to open a bottle cap. His focus shifted from balance to strength, and he fell. Such small triggers remind us that design must account for human behavior, not just physical structures.

Falls are natural, but prevention requires thoughtful design. Walking sticks, wheelchairs, elevators, handrails—all are human responses to this universal risk. Diseases such as dementia, poor eyesight, or deafness further increase vulnerability. Poor lighting, potholes, or uneven surfaces heighten risks. Footwear should be properly fitted, with secure straps, avoiding oversized slippers or open-toed designs that can cause tripping.

Even daily objects can play a role. Drinking from a handle-less glass can lead to slips and imbalance. A simple design improvement—a handle—prevents this. Similarly, long unkempt hair obstructing vision can cause imbalance when shook head for clearing vision and in it loses balance. Women often manage this better by adopting shorter, more practical hairstyles as they age.

An incident from my family illustrates another point. My cousin once bought new sports shoes for father, after wore he felt youthful, and attempted to board a moving train like the younger boys. His foot slipped, and he nearly met with a fatal accident, but fellow passengers pulled him in. Sometimes, products create an illusion of strength or youth, leading to reckless actions and falls.

Subconscious reactions also matter. I once saw a man on a train travelling hanging out of the coach holding handle bar and feet were resting on footrest, lose his grip while trying to catch his flying hat in the wind. Only the quick reflexes of another passenger saved him. A woman unable to rise due to obesity once asked for my help; I lifted her under the arms, supporting her until she regained balance. These examples show how balance can be lost in small, momentary actions.

Modern designers focus on making everyday actions—like wearing shoes or clothes—easier for the elderly. Shoes without laces, elastic closures, and longer shoehorns are all innovations. However, slippers that hold by gripping between the toes are risky in old age and should be avoided. Clothing also needs redesign: trousers requiring balance on one leg can cause falls, while a lungi or dhoti provides comfort without risk.

Food habits too play a role. Constipation in the elderly can cause strain during bowel movements, leading to dizziness or even heart attacks. A proper diet can prevent such risks. Similarly, elderly people should avoid adventurous walks in unfamiliar areas without support, as potholes or uneven paths can easily trigger a fall.

Children fall too, but their low weight, short height, and flexible muscles make falls less harmful. For the elderly, higher weight, greater height, and stiff muscles make falls dangerous, often fatal.

The “fall” of Adam and Eve from paradise was a divine punishment. Yet in human society, helping each other prevent falls—literal or metaphorical—is what makes us truly human. By designing

thoughtfully and caring for one another, we can create not only safety but also a paradise on earth.

I trusted Dr. Dolly, France and requested her to celebrate special issue of October 2025 Vol-20 No-10 in her style Her past record as Guest Editor was admirable and our readers appreciated contributors of her choice. This celebration issue has another Guest Editor Eija Salmi FRSA Secretary General at Cumulus Association. Both have done a excellent job of Guest Editor. I salute for their dedication.

Enjoy reading.

With Regards

Dr. Sunil Bhatia

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Forthcoming Issues

**Year 2025 declared as Women's Designer
November 2025 Vol-20 No-11 (continuation of
250th issue)**



Dr Dolly Daou

Dr Dolly is an internationally recognised design researcher, educator, and leader. She founded the DRS Food Design Research Studio and the Cumulus Food Think Tank. With 25+ years of global experience, numerous high ranking academic publications, she has received multiple awards and serves on the Advisory Board of Cindrebay University, Dubai.



Eija Salmi FRSA

Secretary General at Cumulus Association

A global citizen and advocate since 1990 for international education and research in art, design and media. Responsible to empower the next generation of youth by encouraging their alma maters to collaborate and play an impactful role to place the needs of the earth first and to create the right balance between people, planet and any profit.

Background in finance, art history and languages, jumped from finance to university internationalization. Happy to join as speaker, provocateur, participant to inspire and support. Eija has been leading the Secretariat General of Cumulus since 1990, and playing a key role in connecting design education and innovation. Cumulus secretariat is a hub, a centre of the network suggesting connections with satellite activity. Ready to navigate and carry responsibilities to process things in uncontrolled and unlimited situations and environments. To create credibility with thought leadership, able to align and leverage as keys. Optimism and tomorrow are burned in her DNA.

December 2025 Vol-20 No-12



Josyane FRANC

JF- International Design Networks Expert, independent consultant,

Knight of French National Order of Merit / Chevalier de l'Ordre National du Mérite de France

Ms. Josyane Franc is an international expert with over 35 years of experience in the field of international cultural relations, art and design project conception, management and coordination, co-curating exhibitions, jury design competitions, mentor etc. She is a Design networks Expert and independent consultant since 2019 involved in European and international projects. In 2021, for her career and commitment to culture with outstanding contributions, she was awarded Chevalier de l'Ordre National du Mérite /Knight of the National Order of Merit, one the highest French National civilian awards.

Her career includes the roles of Director of international affairs for the Cité du Design and Saint-Etienne School of Art and Design (ESADSE)- France 1989-2019, member of the founding committee of the Biennale Internationale Design Saint-Étienne in 1998 till 2019, Human Cities Challenging the city scale leader 2014-2018 and focal point for Saint-Etienne UNESCO creative city of design 2010-2019.

January 2026 Vol-21 No-1



Jani Nayar

She found it in the Society for Accessible Travel & Hospitality (SATH), an organization dedicated to making the world more welcoming for travelers with disabilities. Since 2024, the name was changed to Society for Accessible Tourism& Hospitality, keeping the acronym SATH.

What began as a role in tour operations quickly grew into a deep, lifelong commitment. Jani served as SATH's Executive Coordinator before becoming its Executive Director, a role in which she now serves as the organization's voice, advocate, and bridge between communities, governments, and industry leaders. Her mission: to ensure that travel is a right, not a privilege, for people of all abilities.

Her work has taken her to some of the world's most significant platforms for accessible travel. She has spoken and led workshops at events including the World Summit Destinations for All in Montreal, the Adventure Travel World Summit, the Africa Travel Association, the New York Travel Show, the Caribbean Tourism Conference, the Abilities Expo, the World Congress on Disabilities, the International Institute on Peace through Tourism, the Adventure Tour Operators' Association of India, SATTE in India, ReaTech and the World Tourism Forum in Brazil, and the First Symposium on Accessible Tourism in Ecuador—among many others.

New Books



Sunil Bhatia

Design for All. Volume-II

Drivers of Design



<https://www.morebooks.shop/shop-ui/shop/book-launch-offer/74414a1df61c3d2ea8bf46ae7e3c0cf31769f261>



Sunil Bhatia

Design for All

Drivers of Design

Expression of gratitude to unknown, unsung, unacknowledged, unnamed and selfless millions of heroes who have contributed immensely in making our society worth living, their design of comb, kite, fireworks, glass, mirror even thread concept have revolutionized the thought process of human minds and prepared blueprint of future. Modern people may take for granted but its beyond imagination the hardships and how these innovative ideas could strike their minds. Discovery of fire was possible because of its presence in nature but management of fire through manmade designs was a significant attempt of thinking beyond survival and no

doubt this contributed in establishing our supremacy over other living beings. Somewhere in journey of progress we lost the legacy of ancestors in shaping minds of future generations and completely ignored their philosophy and established a society that was beyond their imagination. I picked up such drivers that have contributed in our progress and continue guiding but we failed to recognize its role and functions. Even tears, confusion in designing products was marvelous attempt and design of ladder and many more helped in sustainable, inclusive growth.

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it is available on www.morebooks.de one of the largest online bookstores. Here's the link to it:

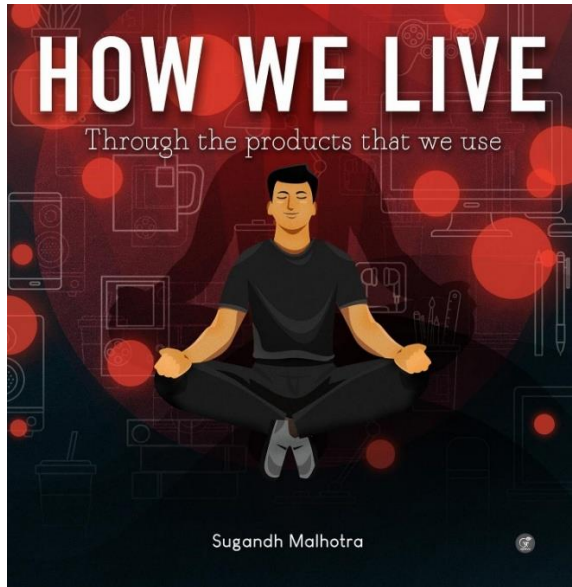
<https://www.morebooks.de/store/gb/book/design-for-all/isbn/978-613-9-83306-1>

HOW WE LIVE: Through the Products that We Use

Authored by : Sugandh Malhotra,

Professor, IDC School of Design, IIT Bombay (INDIA)

Sugandh(at)iitb.ac.in



Products tell stories about their users, their likes, tastes and journeys. 'How We Live' book aims to outlay, document and study the used products and create a persona of the users through a brief narrative. This visual documentation book is an excellent resource to observe and acknowledge the subtle differences in choices that are driven by nuances other than personal preferences.



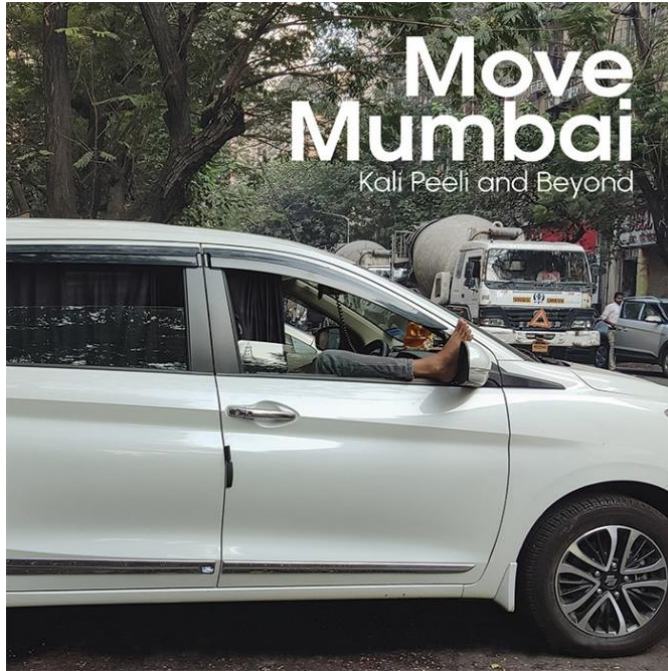
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MOVE MUMBAI: Kaali Peeli and Beyond

Authored by : Vivek Kant, Sugandh Malhotra, Angshuman Das, Tekhenutso Theriah

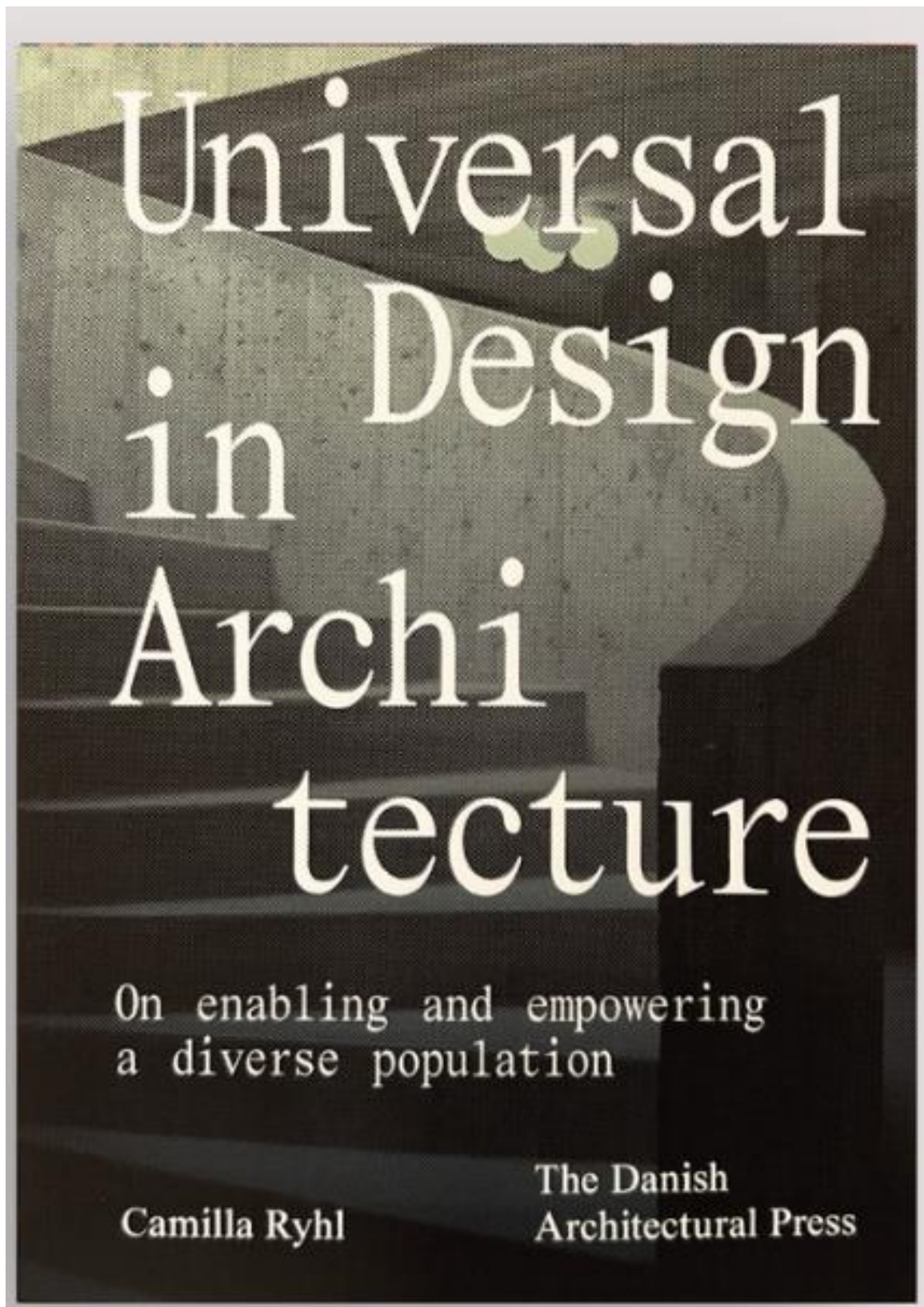
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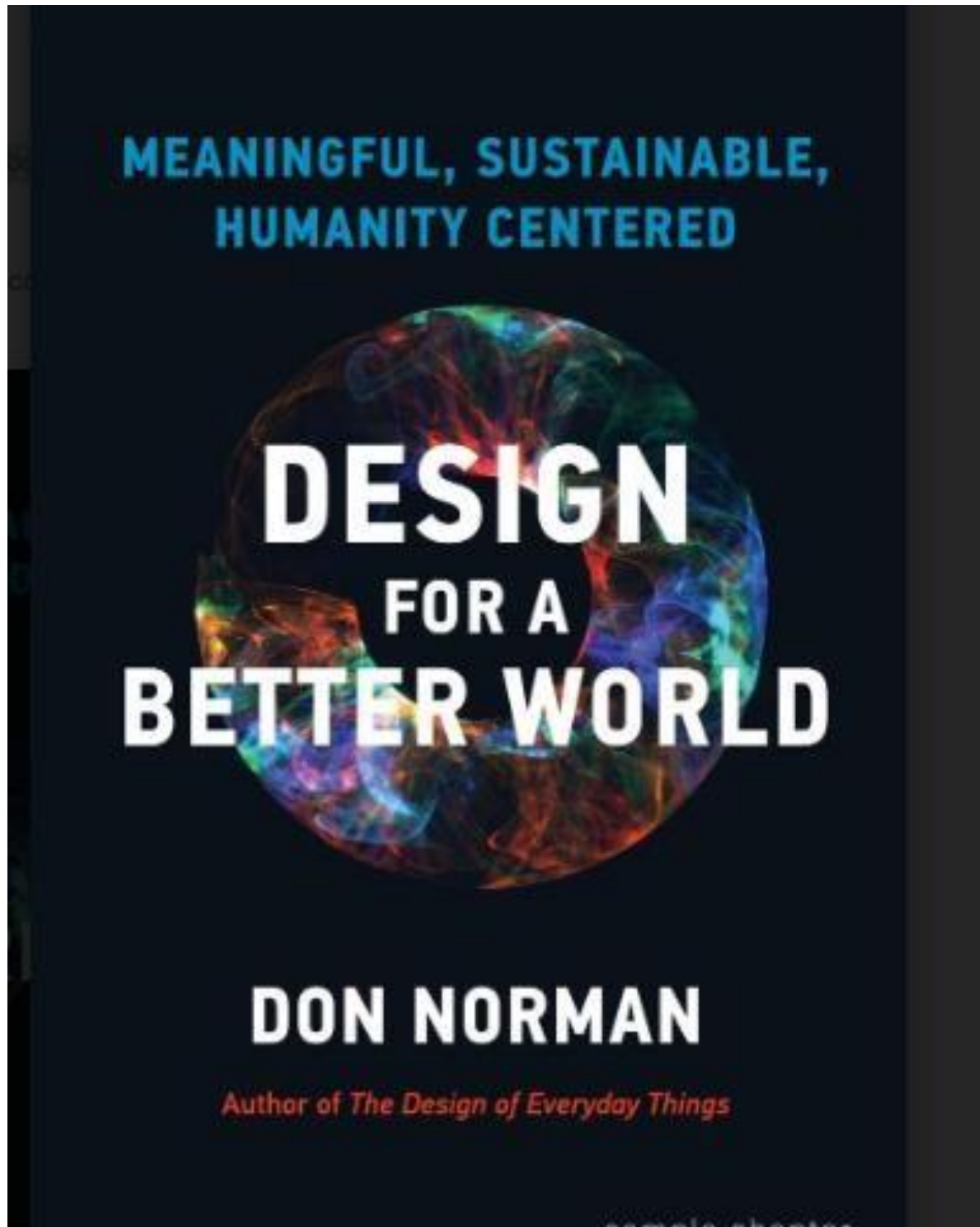
Sugandh(at)iitb.ac.in



Move Mumbai” is an incredulous yet everyday traffic story from the streets of Mumbai captured through a series of photographs. We closely observe how Mumbaikars use their vehicles, and live with and around them. From cab drivers to bus passengers, from goods carriers to bikers, to children, and pedestrians, Mumbaikars encounter hundreds of vehicles daily while commuting between any two places whether they may or may not be in one themselves. While a two-wheeler motorbike is designed to carry two people. Mumbaikars still manage to fit multiple, especially younger children, in ways that a designer would typically not envision. This reflects in certain ways the economic constraints faced by many Indian families, the cultural value placed on integrated family living, and their resourcefulness. This is one of the many ways in which the city dwellers have appropriated vehicles. We hope that the readers relook at these everyday images with a new pair of eyes to understand the seemingly mundane yet incredulous images of the mobility of Mumbaikars.

Available at: [Amazon.in](https://www.amazon.in), [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com), [Astitva Prakashan](https://www.astitva.com)





Emilio Rossi (Editor)

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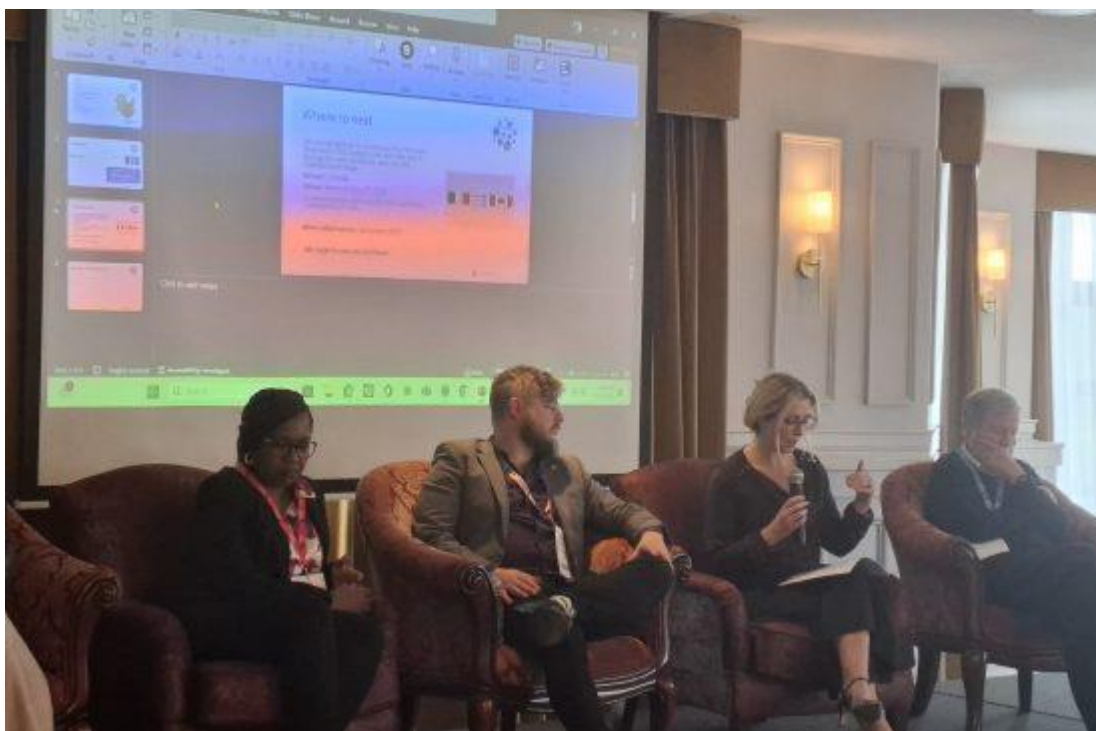


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News

1 Education Department at Maynooth University leading the way in Universal Design for Learning (UDL). 3rd UDL international Symposium, 2025



Panellists. From left to right. Kelli Suding, Dr Lilian Nwanze Akobo, Dr Ian Marder, Dr Catriona O'Toole and Dr David Rose.

Dr Margaret Flood, a respected leader in inclusion and UDL founded the UDL International Symposium in 2023 and hosted her 3rd UDL International Symposium in the Westgrove Hotel, Clane, in September 2025. The purpose of this UDL International event is to create an opportunity for those at all stages of their inclusion journey to come together and share their learning. The theme of

this year's symposium of 'Changing mindsets. Changing practice' with attendees and presenters alike bringing a focus on joy and belonging in education to the conversations.

This year sessions were at full capacity both days and hosted presenters and participants from Ireland, Northern Ireland, England, Scotland, U.S.A., Canada, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Germany and Sweden. Participants enjoyed sessions in Lego play, research, practice, physical education, AI, bingo, Simon Says, Visual Thinking Strategies, practical changes for inclusion, storytelling, drama and so much more. Two days of modelling multiple means, choice and flexibility.

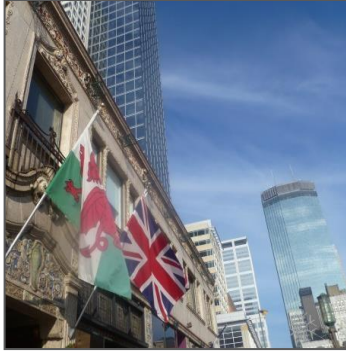
Dr David Rose, best known for his central role in developing the field of and is the co-author of the foundational book in UDL, "UDL. Theory and Practice", was of course the highlight of the event. From his keynote to contributions on the panel and been accessible to everyone throughout the two days- everything about his presence was authentic, generous, and in the spirit of shared learning.

Eight Education Department Professional Masters in Education students made their professional debut at the symposium. Not only did they share their inclusion journey on an international stage, they split their time between assisting behind the scenes, chairing sessions and attending sessions as participants.

This year's event also introduced the theme of 'UDL and...'. This theme gave participants the opportunity to look beyond UDL and see how other inclusive approaches are all interconnected with the same aim-belonging. Thank you to Catriona O'Toole who presented on Trauma-informed practices, Lilian Nwanze Akobo who presented on Cultural responsive pedagogies, Ian Marder who presented on Restorative practices, and Kelli Suding, M.Ed., CPACC who brought our focus back to accessibility for every learner. They also gave their time for our 'UDL and...' panel discussion where, with David Rose, they explored this interconnectivity between these approaches and the common values behind them. Their message was so powerful.

The 4th UDL International Symposium will be held in June 2027. Dr Margaret Flood will be collaborating with Dr Frederic Fovet, founder of the Pan-Canadian Conference on UDL, to combine these two events bringing together two international audiences for a global event.

(Courtesy: Maynooth University)



Programme and Events



Spark Student Design Awards: Any current University-level (or above) student, in any design category. (All entries in this competition must be student work, not professional work. Entries may be submitted from any time period of the student's study –could be a piece from last year).

Meet the changemakers driving the future of Humanity-Centred Design

19 – 21 Nov 2025

Singapore Polytechnic Convention Centre

 Don Norman Father of UX, Co-founder and Principal of the Nielsen Norman Group	 Siddharth Chatterjee The UN Resident Coordinator in China, United Nations	 Dr Wong Sweet Fun Chief Transformation Officer, Khoo Teck Puat Hospital
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Best of KBIS Awards Now Open for 2026 Entries



Best of KBIS Awards Now Open for 2026 Entries.jpg

The Kitchen and Bath Industry Show (KBIS) has opened applications for the premier awards program, Best of KBIS, that will spotlight industry excellence in 2026.



Purpose:
To conceptualize and prototype digital/tech solutions that make accessibility audits faster, richer, and easier to implement across campuses, public buildings, and heritage sites.



Who can apply:
Open to all current students (UG/PG) of SPA Bhopal. Individual or team entries (up to 5 members) are permitted. Interdisciplinary teams are encouraged. If the students are making teams with students of other institutions, then 50% of the team should be from SPA Bhopal.

अंकेक्षण – 2025 STUDENT COMPETITION

UNIVERSAL DESIGN INNOVATION

“TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION TO FACILITATE ACCESS AUDIT IN THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT”

Sponsored by: Universal Design Innovation theme, Design Innovation Centre (DIC), Ministry of Education (MoE)

PROBLEM FOCUS

- Mobile or web apps for access audits (checklists, photo/GPS tagging, barrier scoring)
- GIS dashboards/heat maps of environmental barriers
- Sensor/IoT based hazard detection
- Voice command-based audit tools and report generators
- Data pipelines for audit compliance against standards (RPwD Act, Harmonised Guidelines 2021, NBC etc.)
- Plug-ins for quick BoQ/costing of retrofit options
- Any other innovation

EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

- 2-page concept note (problem, user, method, impact)
- Working prototype or interactive mock-up (APK/URL/video demo 2-3 min)
- Sample audit dataset and auto-generated report page/screen
- One-page implementation plan (pilot site, stakeholders, risks)

AWARDS & RECOGNITION:

1st Prize
₹15,000

2nd Prize
₹10,000

Certificates for winners and shortlisted teams

REGISTRATION LINK:

<https://forms.gle/EcFZHR5DKcePfKbY8>

KEY DATES:

- Call launch: **3rd October**
- Registration deadline: **15th October** (by 5:00 PM IST)
- Final submission: **10th November** (by 5:00 PM IST)
- Jury presentations & results: **15th November** (by 5:00 PM IST)

Coordinator: Prof. Rachna Khare,
Professor, Department of Architecture

Co-Coordinator: Ar. Aditi Dwivedi,
Assistant Professor, Department of Architecture



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