

Call for Participation

DESIS Workshop – Enterprise and Employability

Lincoln University, Thursday the 26th and Friday 27th September 2013

This event will explore what lies beyond Higher Education DESIS projects. We will seek to map the potential applications of the learning DESIS projects produce for students and understand the roles for and requirements of designers trained in design for social innovation and sustainability when entering the job market across the sectors involved in social innovation.

Accordingly, presentations will explore the opportunities for graduating students to earn their living applying their design skills, competencies and thinking working within organisations that are active in the field of social innovation for sustainability. We will also ask what universities could be doing to better prepare their students for these roles.

Social innovation happens across and between sectors. Within the current job market we have identified three areas where we think design for social innovation and sustainability is being readily applied, these are; **public service innovation** (the transition from public service provision to 'public and collaborative' service provision), **social enterprise** creation, and **social augmentation** of existing enterprise/industry. Through the workshop we hope to interrogate this analysis and explore what, if any, unique contribution design can offer these areas beyond the ill defined and contested notion of 'design thinking'.

Structure

The workshop will run over two days. The first will provide a forum for design agencies and others working in the field of social innovation and sustainability, and those commissioning this work, to share their experiences and insights with designers and academics in the HE sector. The forum will be an opportunity for reflective discussion about social innovation practice and the role of design within it (collaborative and participatory approaches, user insight research, prototyping and iterative practice and the application of 'traditional' design skills), and a chance to consider how HE institutions might use their resources to better support/partner with those working in this field, either through student skills development or other forms of collaboration.

The second day will provide an opportunity for further reflection on the insights provided by those working on DESIS projects outside the academy. This discussion may involve thinking about how the realities of working in this space fit with the pedagogic and theoretical underpinnings of DESIS work, and consider how HE design courses might learn and adopt ways of working from DESIS focused agencies.

Call for participation

As a design service provider / design led social enterprise we are writing to ask for your participation in the workshop on enterprise and employability. We are inviting those who have experience of delivering public service innovation or social enterprise projects (particularly those who deliver a design-led approach or explicitly draw on design within their work), and those who have experience commissioning innovation or design-led work in this area, to respond to a short series of questions about their experiences. The purpose of this research is to better understand the opportunities, challenges and requirements of working in this field, and to build a picture of common experiences across the sectors, particularly in relation to the current and potential contribution of design and designers to this work.

Action required

To present to the DESIS-UK Forum please register your interest by email to participate@desis-uk.org before Friday 23rd August 2013.

If you are interested in participating and presenting at the event we ask you to consider the following questions in the design and presentation of a 20 min maximum case study:

- Who you are and how you engage in design led social Innovation and sustainability
- Presentation of a project you've delivered, considering:
 - What is the project and its context (i.e. the challenge addressed)?
 - How did the project come about?
 - Who commissioned/funded the work?
 - Which partners were involved?
- Describe the project and the role of design
 - What is the story of the project?
 - What were the key challenges and opportunities, barriers and enablers?
 - Did design play a significant role? If so, how?
 - What design methods and tools were used within the project?
- Describe the legacy of the project
 - How did you evaluate impact and what metrics did you use?
 - What were the key outcomes of the project?
 - Was the project or its benefits sustained? If so, how?
 - Was the project or its benefits scalable and/or transferable? If so, how?

If you would like to contribute but are unable to present a case study, you can do so by completing a short survey:

For designers: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/QP5YPKK>

For commissioners: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/QXV59RX>

To attend the workshop please register at <http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/event/7485536441>

More about Design for Social Innovation and Sustainability

“In the complexity of contemporary society, social innovation is spreading and its potential, as a driver of sustainable change, is increasing. To facilitate this process, the design community, in general, and design schools, in particular, can play a pivotal role.”

Ezio Manzini, Founder, DESIS International

“Social innovation is a new idea that works in meeting social goals” (Mulgan, 2006). “Today, social innovation is generating a constellation of small initiatives. Nevertheless, if favourable conditions are created, these small, local social inventions and their working prototypes can spread. They can be scaled-up, consolidated, replicated and integrated with larger programs to generate large-scale sustainable changes. To do that, new design competences are needed. Indeed, social innovation processes require visions, strategies and co-design tools to move from ideas to mature solutions and viable programs. That is, they ask for new design capabilities that, as a whole, can be defined as design for social innovation.” (Manzini, 2011)

Design for Social Innovation and Sustainability (DESIS) International Network partners in the UK, including the 6 colleges of the University of the Arts London, the Royal College of Art, Lancaster University, Northumbria University, Lincoln University and Kingston University, have been awarded network funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) to deliver a series of DESIS networking events across the UK during 2013.

The project aims to extend and establish a ‘DESIS-UK Network’, as a national multidisciplinary network of individuals and organisations exploring design-led social innovation and sustainability in collaboration with UK HE. It aims to strengthen connections between design academics and academics, design practitioners, and end users of design from public, private and third sector organisations and the communities they serve, to explore how best to employ design thinking and skills to deliver sustainable social and environmental benefits to communities.

The Network aims to help the Universities in promoting and supporting Design for Social Innovation and Sustainability (DESIS) across their institutions. It provides an opportunity to help shape the pedagogic focus of DESIS in UK HE in a spirit of peer-to-peer collaboration within a network of institutional partners.

DESIS networking events bring together design academics, design practitioners, and community end users of design to build UK capacity for design-led social innovation by creating connections, sharing knowledge/experience and exchanging and reviewing existing practices and projects. Visit www.desis-network.org to learn more.

DESIS-UK Network connects with the International DESIS network of design 'labs', comprised of teams of professors, researchers and design students active in the promotion and delivery of design led social innovation for sustainability, creating further opportunities for exchange and collaboration. Visit our website at www.desis-uk.org.