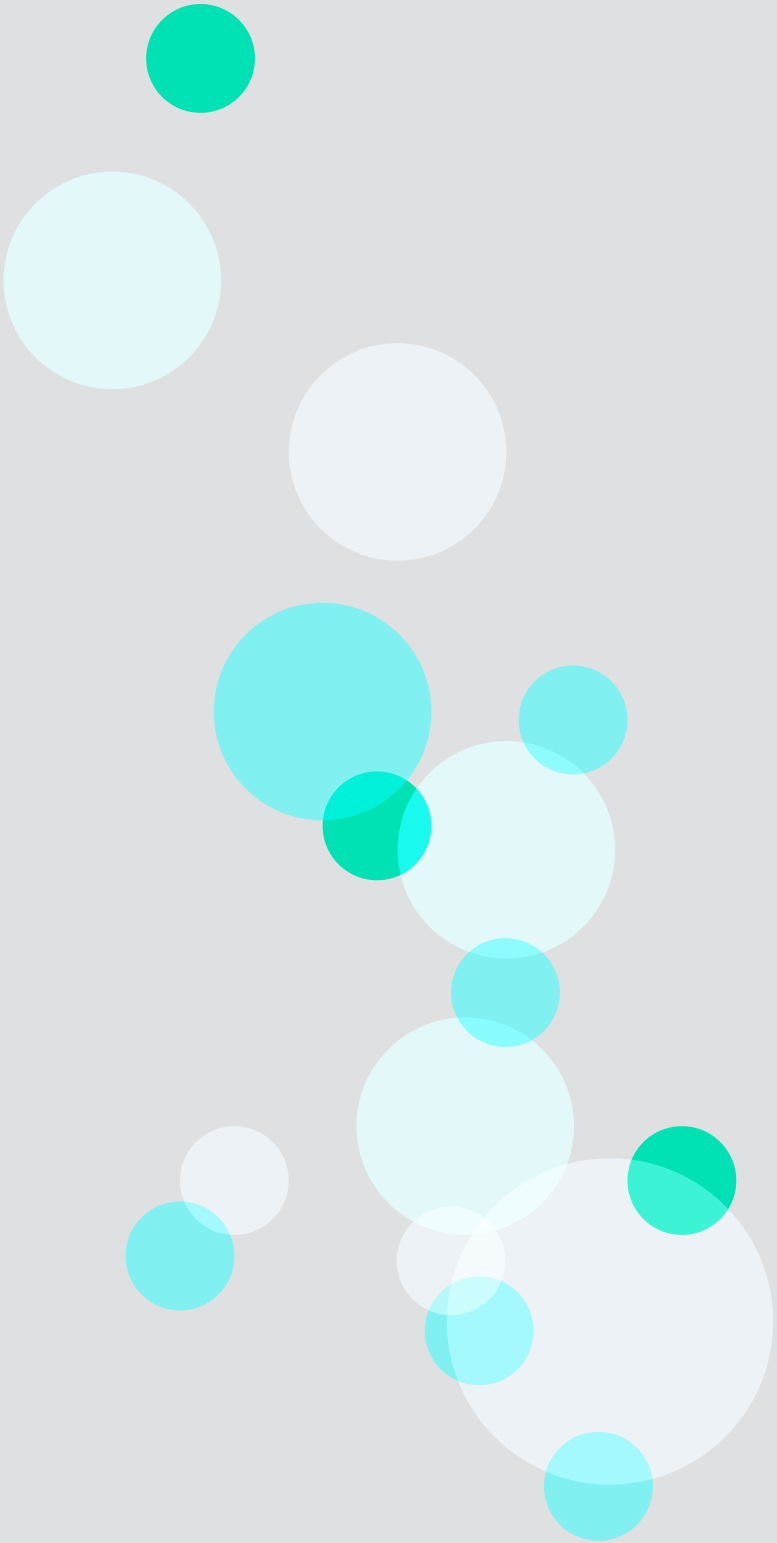


Mapping and developing Service Design Research in the UK

DANIELA SANGIORGI | ALISON PRENDIVILLE | AMY RICKETTS

SDR SERVICE DESIGN RESEARCH UK NETWORK

1 — SDR UK Network
Work undertaken

Service Design Research UK (SDR UK) is a funded Arts and Humanities Research Council Network aiming to review and consolidate the emergence of Service Design within the established field of Design.

As a recent and growing field of design activity, the Service Design research community is still small, dispersed and in greater need of visibility. To mature as a research field it is necessary to reflect on the current state of Service Design knowledge, in order to identify gaps and propose future directions.

Services make a significant contribution to the UK economy and are increasingly recognized for their transformational role in society as they affect the way in which we organize, move, interact and manage our lives and that of our family. Design delivers a more human centred approach to service innovation that is essential for the delivery of more effective and novel solutions that have the capacity to tackle contemporary challenges.

The Service Design Research Network was established to:

- Identify, compare and map current research work into Service Design in the UK and its intersections with other disciplines;
- Increase understanding of and demand for Service Design as a practice and research field in the UK;
- Identify research and knowledge gaps in the field to inform PhD studies and future research projects, collaborations and ideas;
- Increase visibility and connectivity of SDR UK nationally and internationally.

Research process and timeline

2013					2014		
March	**June**	**July**	**October**	**November**	**January**	**February**	**April**
	Workshop 01 – Building the landscape Lancaster University		Workshop 02 – Building up the knowledge University of the Arts		Workshop 03 – Exploring adjacent spaces of Social Innovation and the Digital Loughborough University		SDR UK presenting at ServDes 2014 Lancaster University
Advisory Board Lancaster University		Advisory Board Lancaster University		Advisory Board University of the Arts		Advisory Board Lancaster University	

Work undertaken

SDR UK has delivered three thematic workshops with an average of 30 participants each (academics, designers, relevant institutions and organisations) predominantly from the UK but with some international guests and participants; an Advisory Board was also established to guide the development of each workshop and discuss the outcomes. Finally a website (www.servicedesignresearch.com) was set up with a database of academics, educational courses, research and PhD projects related to Service Design and Service Innovation in the UK. Data and insights produced via these activities have then been used to create interpretative maps of the field and to identify emerging research areas and recommendations for the development of future research.

Workshop 01

Workshop 01

SDR UK workshops

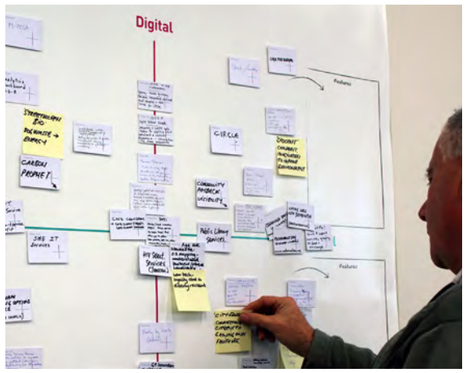
Apart from workshop 01, which aimed at building an initial map of the field, the themes of SDR workshops were not decided in advance, but emerged as a result of network activities and discussions. For each workshop, representative case studies were discussed to situate the theme of the workshop activities.

Workshop 01 held at Lancaster University, focused on collectively building the Service Design Research Landscape by exploring what Service Design does and does not do for Service Innovation. Exemplars of Service Design research projects were presented and an initial map was discussed, exposing emerging issues and intersections within the field.

Workshop 02 held at the University of the Arts London, explored how Service Design processes and outcomes could be better implemented, embedded, measured or scaled up. Three case study presentations illustrated the key differences of design practice when working within existing systems (service re-design), within communities for social change and when working outside the system to establish a new venture.

Workshop 03 held at Loughborough University, considered the role of Service Design within the adjacent spaces of Social Innovation and the Digital. Through an interdisciplinary lens, the workshop looked at how Service Design is conceptualized within Social Innovation and where and how the digital is touching these areas and expanding the borders of this growing field.

Workshop 02



Workshop 03

What is this report about

This report presents the material from the network as an overview of Service Design Research in the UK. With its key research themes and sectors, it discusses the nature and challenges of Service Design practice in the UK.

In the last section the report offers twelve short pieces by a range of academics, experts and practitioners who have participated in the network, to reflect on possible future directions and challenges for Service Design research. In our conclusion we bring together all these considerations to offer key recommendations for academics, practitioners, innovation and design bodies, funding agencies as well as design commissioners.

We hope this work represents an effective platform to consolidate and develop further the SDR UK community and its links with the international scene.

Edited by

Daniela Sangiorgi, Alison Prendiville and Amy Ricketts

With contributions from

Stuart Bailey, Tracy Bhamra, Jeanette Blomberg, Camilla Buchanan, Katie Collins, Chris Downs, Ian Gwilt, Sabine Junginger, Lucy Kimbell, Eva-Maria Kirchberger, Alastair Macdonald, Val Mitchell, James Moultrie, Lia Patricio, Alison Prendiville, Glenn Robert, Mary Rose Cook, Daniela Sangiorgi, Bruce Tether, Paul Thurston, Hazel White and Bob Young

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Amy Ricketts

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The Service Design Research UK (SDR UK) Network is funded by an AHRC (Arts and Humanities Research Council) Network grant. The aim of the Network is to review and consolidate the current state of Service Design knowledge within the field of Design. SDR UK has delivered three thematic workshops and a website (www.servicedesignresearch.com) with a database of academics, educational courses, research and PhD projects related to Service Design and Service Innovation. Data and insights produced via these activities have then been used to create interpretative maps of the field and to identify emerging research areas and recommendations for future development.

www.servicedesignresearch.com/uk

This report organises the Network's materials to give an overview of Service Design Research in the UK, with its key research themes and sectors, and discusses the nature and challenges of Service Design practice.

In the last section the report offers twelve short pieces by a range of academics, experts and practitioners who have participated in the Network, reflecting on possible future directions and challenges for Service Design research. In our conclusions we bring together all these considerations to offer key recommendations for academics, practitioners, funding agencies, innovation and design bodies as well as design commissioners. We hope this work represents an effective platform to consolidate and develop further the SDR UK community and its links with the international scene.

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