

Design for All



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Design Research by Under 40 Researchers

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GUEST EDITORIAL: DESIGN RESEARCH BY UNDER 40 RESEARCHERS

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Design Research has no age!

As we know, doing effective researches in Design and Design-related fields is strategic for our complex society; it can be surely defined as a collective, multidisciplinary and collaborative work of hundreds of people ranging from – approximately – 25 years old up to 65, and in some cases even more. Compared to past, researchers today can work together using a large number of tools and research-oriented infrastructures, they can compare their results and share insights very quickly for the enhancement of Design Culture. Designers and Design Researchers work both on theoretical aspects and on market-oriented issues, even envisioning or anticipating next generations of solutions, applications, large-scale effects and, finally, future training curricula.

As someone properly said, the only limit of human capability to reach new frontiers is people's imagination; we know indeed how imagination is important for Design...

In principle, we can say that the novelty, and in some cases the originality, of the researches in Design fields are mainly due to two factors: from one hand there is the capability of experienced researchers to constantly refine their knowledge and ideas

through iterative processes; this in fact generates a solid structural research that, in many cases, is used by community of experts to update their work, including professional one. On the other hand, the novelty of some ideas, which sometimes are really proactive compared their times, come up from young and less experienced researchers, which develop original and innovative frameworks and concepts to work with.

The history of Design is full of episodes where smart intuitions have generated radical innovations and new disciplines, changing the ways of thinking for generations. As a sort of naïve work – at that age is really appreciated – they sometimes can really contribute to draw some new lines for the societal innovation.

When I received the invitation to edit this special issue of Design for All, published by the Design for All Institute of India, I was both honoured and concerned. I obviously was honoured to contribute in the debate promoted by the Design for All Institute of India, which has a reputable editorial project internationally acclaimed, but at the same time I felt the moral oblige to honour all my young colleagues that worldwide work on exceptional ideas proactive scenarios for future development of the Design Discipline.

Therefore, this editorial Design Research by Under 40 Researchers' is conceived as a homage to all young brave, ambitious, and sometimes wild design researchers that have – or have had – the chance and the determination to focus their sights beyond the ordinary, exploring extraordinary concepts, visions, ideas using design-based and design-oriented approaches. As said, my work as Guest Editor for this special issue is to exalt the young talent in the achievement of original results.

This issue collects four essays developed by young Italian researchers that have completed their Ph.D. in Design and in Design-related areas. All essays sustain the idea of a human-centric value of people in the (inter-)disciplinary innovation, as a confirmation that while the continuous technological improvement generates technology-pushed innovations, the meaning-driven ones linked to the social and human spheres remain the most important to be faced in the future times.

This issue is also an indirect homage to all mentors, advisors and experts that have helped and encouraged the authors presented in the next pages to explore and develop very original ideas and personal concepts of the Discipline. With the wish that in the near future, next generations of designers would benefit from the insights produced by this new generation of free design thinkers.

Emilio Rossi