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São Paulo Design Visions: Strategic design as an agent of dialog and transformation¹

São Paulo Design Visions: design estratégico como um agente de diálogo e transformação

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Abstract

This essay aims at reporting the development of a research project for Senac São Paulo. From the valorization of the actions and projects already promoted by the Brazilian partner, the project promoted by Design System from Politecnico di Milano outlines a different role and positioning of design in social, cultural and economic contexts locally, based on experimental international experience. The whole project starts from the belief that nowadays, even in the countries characterized by strong industrial growth, design plays the role of both antenna and interpreter of emerging social and economic principles, as well as agent of cultural change of productive and consumption systems. Thus, besides being characterized as a generator of ideas and solutions, design is seen as promoting changes through activities of mediation between training and production system; between university, profession, company and society. The research project has started a strategic dialog between the Italian and Brazilian partners, targeting the generation of a different and original vision of design that leads the Brazilian institution to develop and propose a new educational and economic model in the design area, established in the territory and strongly distinguished. The project methodology is shaped in sharing the experiences of both partners and valorizing their reciprocal competence and sensitivity, which are strong due to their cultural Latin root in common linking both countries: Italy and Brazil.

Key words: strategic design, co-project, cultural dialog, change.

Resumo

Este ensaio visa relatar o desenvolvimento de um projeto de investigação do Senac São Paulo. A partir da valorização das ações e projetos já promovidos pelo parceiro brasileiro, o projeto promovido pelo Sistema de Design do Politécnico de Milão esboça um papel e posicionamento diferente do design na vida social, cultural e econômica de contextos locais, baseada na experiência internacional experimental. Todo o projeto começa a partir da convicção de que hoje em dia, mesmo em países caracterizados por um forte crescimento industrial, o design desempenha o papel de ambas as antenas e intérprete de princípios econômicos e sociais emergentes, bem como agente de mudança cultural dos sistemas produtivos e de consumo. Assim, além de ser caracterizado como um gerador de ideias e soluções, design é visto como promotor de mudanças através de atividades de mediação entre a formação e o sistema de produção, entre a universidade, profissão, empresa e sociedade. O projeto de investigação já se iniciou com um diálogo estratégico entre os parceiros italianos e brasileiros, visando a geração de uma visão diferente e original do projeto. Essa busca por inovação leva a instituição brasileira a desenvolver e propor um novo modelo educacional e econômico na área da concepção, estabelecida no território e fortemente diferenciada. O projeto metodologia é moldado para compartilhar as experiências de ambos os parceiros, valorizando as suas recíprocas competências e sensibilidades, que são fortes devido às suas raízes culturais latinas em comum ligando os dois países: Itália e Brasil.

Palavras-chave: concepção estratégica, co-projeto, diálogo cultural, mudanças.

¹ This research is the result of a collective work, but for the purpose of this publication, Alécio Rossi Filho was responsible for the 1st paragraph, Anna Meroni for the 2nd, 5th, 7th paragraph, Cely Monti for the 4th paragraph and Roberto Galisai was responsible for the 3rd, 6th, 8th paragraph.

Design education project of Senac São Paulo

Today it seems incredible, but in 1999, when we started the design education project in SENAC São Paulo, the word design had not been incorporated into the ordinary vocabulary in Brazil yet.

The text *Sobre a palavra design* (On the word design), by Vilém Flusser, an integral part of the book *O mundo codificado* (Encoded World) had not been translated and launched in Brazil. The word *Design* was not used in Brazil by that time. We had to explain to many parents of students who were interested in this new area, what would be the profession of their children and if they would be able to make a living and support their families with this activity. The official publications of Ministry of Education and Culture were not totally defined and ready. There were work groups organized by professors from several parts of the Country, who wrote educational guidelines that were only officially published in 2004. Even so, we started what became the first Bachelor Degree in Graphic Design, authorized to bear that name in Brazil. Professionals acting in this area were graduated in Architecture or Industrial Design by ESDI, Escola Superior de Desenho Industrial, in connection with the State University of Rio de Janeiro, which is benchmark in the teaching of design in Brazil until present.

We started with fifty students, seven professors under my coordination and the cooperation at distance from Professor Guilherme Cunha Lima, who was one of the members of the group that wrote the curricular guidelines, and oriented us to organize the curricular structure of the course. We had some axis as starting points, such as Anthropology and Visualization, taught by Prof. Rose de Melo Rocha and Typography that counted on the experience and research of Prof. Priscila Lena Farias. We also counted on Prof. Denize Roma for technical subjects and Prof. Rogério Vicari for projects that stimulated creativity and problem solving, so the structure was getting shaped.

Little by little, other professionals started approaching and the implementation of the area was consolidated. The relation between different areas of knowledge and activities organized around a challenge has always been part of our methodology. We called it Integrated Project, and Anthropology organized the line of work. We did not call it ethnography yet, but nowadays we realize that ethnography was what we did when we selected residences of teachers and friends to structure the challenge: students we asked to visit houses previously selected and prepared. We removed what could be considered as the most personalized traces of an individual or what could cause students to recognize the house as being a teacher's or coordinator's residence. Thus, we removed the pictures that might identify the dwellers. The students, in groups, were taken to visit a residence and, through analyzing the objects and the way of organizing the house, they elaborated a character that would be the dweller of that environment. They discussed, for instance, the meanings of public and private spaces, qualified, domestic environment, that is, they discussed the meaning of the objects, the materials said objects were made of, and the industrial processes to

make them. After creating a character by analyzing clues, the students created a graphic piece that could represent the character. The result was submitted to every teacher of that semester and evaluated together with the students. The teacher of each subject analyzed the aspects related to his/her field of knowledge.

The relationship with the surroundings was also stimulated. We were located at Lapa, a deteriorated part of town that was a deactivated industrial park. SENAC Communication and Arts College certainly contributed to reorganize the region through a more intense inflow of people and a series of activities that started reorganizing the neighboring areas.

In 2004, the college was incorporated to the University Center in Santo Amaro district. We were transferred to a new campus with bigger structure. At that time, we already had the courses of Multimedia Design and Fashion Design, with majors in Style and Modeling.

The experience with integrated projects helped us structure new qualifications for the design course and, in 2005, we deactivated the graphic design course and launched three new qualifications: Visual Communication Design, Industrial Design and Digital Interface Design.

In said reformulation, the projects were organized as challenges represented by verbs in the infinitive tense. Thus, in Visual Communication, for instance, there are the projects Editing, Packaging, Identifying, Writing, among others. The challenges in the Industrial Design course are: Transporting and Carrying, Sitting and Being, Playing and Taking part in games. Submitted to the students like that, the projects created a scenario that helped understanding the issues and reorganizing the needs for solutions in a broader way. That way of organizing the semester and the challenges contributed for the integration among subjects and the cooperation of each area of knowledge became more evident to the students.

Projects are made of historical and theoretical researches, creation of alternatives, solutions and industrial production. We also stimulate the research of materials as a way of integrating the industry and the new processes into the educational process.

We also feel that the relationship with the productive marketplace has to be improved. We stimulate students to develop a portfolio, but we believe we can foster closer approach between students and marketplace with activities that might be developed along the course. The employability rate of our students is high, but we believe we can improve the performance of those professionals with a closer approach. We think this approach can enhance applied research in order to search for alternatives to preserve environment and that they can discuss production issues in order to comprise all aspects: planning, alternative power sources for production, optimization of human resources and materials, mechanisms for distribution and use that can improve the quality of life of everyone involved. That is the sort of relationship we wish for; one that can benefit everyone: students, industry, consumer market, university and society. We want people to be able to identify possibilities of social transformation in both education and design.

Elements of a discipline in changing phase

The very idea of design is changing fast or, better, evolving and moving towards a more holistic and systemic approach, where processes, territories, competences and people are all elements to be considered in the design action, and are part of both the problem and the possible solution.

Considering the current global financial and ecological crisis, the conceptual and operative shape that the discipline and the practice of design is taking today, it seems to be far more suitable to deal with this situation, by designing new production systems and new ideas of well-being. To understand such a change and support this statement, it is possible to move from the recent debate.

Josephine Green (Social Foresight & Innovation, Philips Design) at the international conference "Changing the Change," held in Turin in July 2008 (Cipolla and Peruccio, 2008), affirms that the industrial age is now over, it does not make sense anymore and many of the positive creations of the industrial era are now less and less relevant and no longer fit for purpose, such as schools and education system, hospitals and health system, production and consumption system and very lifestyles.

"Where does this leave Design? [...] society needs a different design, not industrial but social, a design that is part of the solution and not part of the problem. [...] what pushes us forward? In short, the desire to grow, to explore, to create and need. In a change of age we face many social challenges in which society needs to invent or re-invent just about everything for an ecological age. Such a re-invention and re-design of systems, however, is about social innovation rather than market innovation. It places the emphasis away from the consumer and his/her needs towards the society and its needs. It gives attention less to the individual and more to the collective, less to a need and more to the activity and the context, less to the product and more to an ecosystem of information, service and experience. If this is what society needs and where society is going, then companies will surely follow. And this is both a necessity and an opportunity for Design to free itself from becoming a commodity to becoming a strategic differentiator" (Green, 2008).

And more, in the words of Ezio Manzini:

"(Designers) should accept that today design is not only executed in design studios, but everywhere. And, yet, designers can continue playing their specific role. It is precisely because contemporary society is the way that it is that the role of 'design professionals' acquires even greater importance. Designers can come to the fore in the great 'diffuse' design arena, becoming 'solution providers', contributing their specificities, such as to produce visions of what is possible and set in motion strategies to help them materialize" (Manzini in Meroni, 2007, p. 15).

The designer, Manzini continues, becomes a sort of facilitator in the learning process towards sustainability; a professional supporting diffuse design skills. The field of action of the designer moves further and further away from the figure of a traditional designer, towards that of an actor operating creatively to make orientated events happen and make sure interested subjects participate. Designers become part of the community they are collaborating with, to professionally help this community in taking strategic decisions and designing its future.

The way we call this emerging profile and identity of design (and designer) is Strategic Design: a discipline that, even if very recent, has already evolved during the process of its definition. The contribution of the Italian Scientific Community in conceptualizing Strategic Design has been, so far, quite notable: recently, thanks to and through an international Master in Strategic Design organized by POLI.design (running since 1999) and several international research projects, there has been the opportunity to develop theory, tools and practices of this discipline. This experience has deeply changed and shaped the way how part of the Milanese scientific and academic community has been dealing with design for a decade. And it changing the way how design is perceived and Strategic Design has a clear focus on the Product Service System (PSS) dimension, an orientation toward different kinds of social and market actors, a clear intention to produce innovation, and an accent on a systemic interpretation of sustainable development.

Strategic design shifts the innovation focus from mainly product or mainly service design to an integrated product-service design strategy, oriented to produce solutions. Products and services have always been connected, but this connection has often been ephemeral, casual, and left to the individual initiative of whoever sells or purchases a product. The novelty is that this connection is now conceived and designed from the beginning, according to a strategy of optimization and integration (Mont, 2000). In one word this change goes under the umbrella of what is defined as "complexity," which, for contemporary enterprise, means segmentation, just in time, personalization, unpredictability, globalization and demand turbulence. These issues call for strategies which involve the whole organization (Zurlo, 1999), and the service aspect is beginning to prevail over the product dimension in the majority of offers (Pacenti, 1998; Sangiorgi, 2004) as added value is increasingly generated by intangible service elements. Hence the emergence of the discipline of Service Design.

From a historical perspective, as far as the Italian scientific community is concerned, it can be stated that the initial strong accentuation (Zurlo, 1999) on the "company" as main subject of the Strategic Design culture is now over: it is becoming more and more evident that such an approach is not only welcome but needed by a broader spectrum of social bodies and enterprises, from companies to consultancy firms, from institutions to governments, from territories to associations. Ultimately, it is needed by all those who

have to deal with design decisions in a turbulent and uncertain context (Landry, 2000; Manzini, 2007). Hence, not only the industrial system, but even more social bodies and institutions can benefit from a strategic design approach able to link people and places, local resources and people's creativity so to create a distinctive and sustainable idea of development and a broader context of social well-being.

Strategic Design is about conferring to social and market bodies a system of rules, beliefs, values and tools to deal with the external environment, being able to evolve (and so to survive successfully) maintaining and developing one's own identity. And in doing so, influencing and changing the environment too (Meroni, 2008). The distinctive value created by a strategic design approach increasingly comes from the "values" that a product-service-system can carry through its constituent factors, productive processes, history and service dimension. It lies as much in the process and in the experience as in the final outcome, or maybe even more; in the story rather than in its performance and meaning. As mentioned before, the emphasis is more on the social, ethics and communal issues and needs, than on individual ones (Green, 2008). This perspective leads to focus Strategic Design on values, so as to orient a project in a direction that makes these values tangible.

Given this framework, the designer works more and more at the level of scenario: his role is to produce powerful visions and make them desirable, sharable and possible so as to generate frameworks of sense for innovation. And, by doing so, stimulate companies or social systems to new ways of thinking and designing their future, taking into account new criteria and values. Such a role is the one requested by the project for the SENAC of São Paulo, aiming at finding a new and differential identity and positioning in the context of design research and training.

Internationalization of POLI.Design and design system of Politecnico di Milano

In 2003, POLI.Design started a strategic program of division and integration of contents, methodology and design-driven innovation processes, elaborated and tested by Design System of Politecnico di Milano, through training, research, consultancy and continuous interchange with the world of professions that operate in Italy and, especially, in Milan and in Lombardy.

In the international network of research centers, universities, associations and companies, POLI.design and Design System of Politecnico di Milano have identified as major interlocutors for international programs, the realities occurring in newly industrialized countries, characterized by a strong and fast economic and social growth, capable of changing the configurations of the global, social and productive structure for the next decades.

The People's Republic of China, India, Brazil, Chile, Mexico and Argentina are among these countries. At present, they constitute an asset acquired from experiences and contacts that POLI.design managed to connect in a network to stimulate the development of national and

international projects articulated according to co-projected and co-developed innovation processes.

As part of an Italian university system, POLI.Design is interested in studying, knowing and prizing the industrial innovation processes and the dynamics of services system, especially through design planning culture which, more and more, contributes to the development and growth of qualitative competitive factors, not impoverishing emerging countries territory and communities.

In this valorization process, the System Design of Politecnico di Milano, makes available their own experience, consisting of intense knowledge of the Italian industrial system, design, fashion and creativity in a broader sense, which, if properly adapted and integrated to the main productive systems of the newly industrialized countries, could represent an efficient model of growth and cultural exchange, both concrete and transferable.

Among the several countries defined as newly industrialized, Brazil soon became priority in the strategic program for internationalization of System Design of Politecnico di Milano, for several reasons.

(i) It is a social lab of amazing cultural wealth, a container opened to the outside, made of communicating vessels in which cultures, races, colors and flavors circulate and melt. It is a very fertile and creative terrain for the study and development of processes and projects of social innovation, which are both sustainable and real.

(ii) There is a strong cultural link connecting Europe to Brazil, especially with the Latin countries, among which, Italy, due to historic reasons, not only related to immigration, has had huge contribution to the growth of Brazil as an economic and cultural model.

(iii) Brazil is a continental country that has huge amounts of resources and raw materials. It has a population of 190 million inhabitants with an average of 28.6 years-old and a domestic market in ongoing expansion and evolution. Brazil, always with greater importance, takes part in the system of global industrial exchange, having an export rate that has grown a lot since 2002 until these days.

(iv) Some years ago, Brazil has implemented an industrial policy based on the availability of raw materials and autonomy of energy, producing huge quantities of unsorted products without brand identity, performance or formal recognition (commodities).

This approach, typical in newly industrialized Countries, has currently afflicted Brazil in face of international competition with Countries like China and India that have internal basins of demand that are also important and expanding at much smaller production costs.

However, for some years, it has been noticed in Brazil the awareness on the need of qualifying the domestic production, identifying and rendering services recognizable, communicating and distributing their own products by using innovative processes.

It is on said Latin awareness that the approach of Design System of Politecnico di Milano is engaged, identifying in design a role of cultural mediation between creativity, art, quality, sensitivity on one side and industry,

technological awareness, organizational capacity, post-industrial process culture on the other side.

Since 2006, POLI.design has opened a local agency in São Paulo, which is an advanced arm of Design System of Politecnico di Milano. In touch with the research department of the Italian university, it has a relationship with Brazilian institutional players, universities, companies and the local professional world. It identifies local opportunities and needs to which responds through a strategic vision articulated by the Italian head office, following up developments, adapting Italian models and their applications.

From the analysis of the projects developed in the last few years, of projects unfinished or never started, it is possible to identify some recurrent interests/themes that render evident common needs, whose fulfilling enables an interesting comparison with POLI.design and Design System of Politecnico di Milano.

From the relationship with the academic world and Brazilian universities, the most common themes have been:

- interest in building a prospective dialog between university and company, approaching the two languages and distinct sensitivity. Therefore, overcoming the historic difficulty of the universities to interface with the production world has a special meaning in Brazil, where the posture of some university centers and colleges is taking positions traditionally academic and not applied, including the field of design;
- interest in starting to be part of a network of universities, research centers, and institutions related to design and innovation, and engaged in international projects and exchange;
- interest in getting to know, also through immersion experiences, the Italian model of creative industry related to design and fashion, both involving universities and companies, professions and territories, aiming at understanding how the university can actuate as a cultural mediator.

From the exchange with Brazilian productive reality (medium and big size companies), among the themes that raised more interest, we point out the ones related to:

- the need of formalizing and organizing the internal creative process of the company, systemizing the offer according to a strategic vision of design capable of articulating the complexity of system-product-service dimension;
- the curiosity and possibility of getting access to the Italian knowledge in terms of design and creativity, for which the Italian excellence is recognized;
- the themes of internationalization, communication and positioning of company brands, valorization of national identity, etc.

Finally, the Italian national model of productivity disseminated in the territory that valorizes the micro and small companies, organized in consortiums or in other cooperative ways, the local craftwork production, interests

the associations of categories that represent specific productive sectors.

Senac São Paulo new positioning in design

For Senac São Paulo, the area of Design is understood as a set of educational activities addressing planning, creation, production and management of products and services having sustainable development as its principle, that is, the design that considers not only economic aspects, but also the responsibility with environment and society.

In 2007, Senac São Paulo product development area (GD1) started the process in search for a new positioning for the Design area. It started from structuring the Business Plan aiming at studying opportunities and deficiencies, positioning and promoting its recognition and growth.

Currently, besides short-term courses and technical courses in the areas of Landscaping, Interior Design, Graphic Design, Product Design and Digital Interfaces, the portfolio of products and services in Design at Senac São Paulo also include three Bachelor Degrees – Industrial Design, Digital Interface and Visual Communication, Multimedia Production Technology course and 5 post-graduation *lato sensu* courses – Graphic Design, Interior Design, Furniture Design, Interactive Medias and Landscaping.

The new strategic positioning defined was: “to be recognized as the educational institution that offers excellent educational products, with pragmatic vision in career development and that best prepares students for the work market”.

In order to do so, two major strategic goals were set:

- (i) portfolio expansion and consolidation through recognition of higher education, for its excellence in teaching and mechanisms of approaching marketplace in search for programs that qualify the best professionals;
- (ii) development of either commercial partnerships – with hiring marketplace, trade associations, agencies, among others – or educational partnerships – with other national and international universities.

Regarding educational partnerships focused hereto, an initial study has been developed to map, together with opinion leaders, either internal or external to the institution, what would be the major international educational institutions that would help us meet the goals intended, comprising, among them:

- improve quality of teaching – exchange experiences with other realities;
- interchange of students and faculty;
- partnership in research – university extension;
- development of joint educational programs – double degree;
- being close in terms of searching for credibility and tradition, among others.

Instituto Politecnico di Milano indicated for several factors, due to its credibility and recognition, history and

tradition in Design, was among the teaching institutions selected.

In November 2007, the first visit to the Italian institution was paid.

We believe that the expertise of said institution, its tradition and the integrity of their professionals, allied to their undeniable history and worldwide recognition of Italian design quality, can contribute to get us closer to Istituto Politecnico di Milano.

New references for design at Senac São Paulo

Due to its nature and mission in the social context, Senac faces more the world of Strategic Design and Service Design than the world of product design.

Thus, the initial hypothesis of the work led the project group to evaluate the possibility of using, for the project with Senac, an approach of Strategic Design guided to create an identity positioned around it in the field of Strategic and Service Design.

Particularly, through preliminary articulated work of analysis observing case studies of good practices in several fields (research and innovation centers, design schools and strategies of territorial branding), joined together to define some promising elements to characterize the identity of Senac research center in the context of design:

- the dimension of "socialization" as a characteristics of the greater part of communication strategies, which correspond to the use of new media;
- building relationship networks capable of giving place to physical space for meeting and participation;
- presence of informal meeting places that render easy the relations and exchange not only professional nature among participants;
- division of infrastructure, such as service and confrontation moment;
- steadiness and residence of the participants as an opportunity of immersion in a stimulating context, therefore, stimulating creativity;
- mixture of activities (formation, consultation, research) as a situation in which several initiatives are enhanced and self-fed;
- multidisciplinary as condition of complement and enlargement of abilities and points-of-view;
- strong and vital connection with the territory as sensitivity to social innovation and capacity of being distinguished valorizing the main characteristics of the system;
- contiguity and permeability with cultural, economical and social context tissue as a condition of system vitality, inclusion, evolution and survival;
- flexibility and dynamism in activities accomplished, and in human and professional associations as a capability of adaptation and renewal;
- presence of platforms that enable facilitation of internal and external networking.

In the whole, the cases analyzed show the importance of stimulating the project development capabilities of getting people involved, in other words, the design-thinking, providing physical, digital and acknowledgement

infrastructure in condition to support the translation into real initiatives, conceived according to product-service system logics.

Put together to elaborate a first series of visions, useful to stimulate, in a participative design process, the shared generation of a scenario of innovations for Senac design system, intending with that expression, both the constitution of a research center and the creation of a distinguished institutional identity in the field of research, formation and design consultancy.

Brief

The project proposes to start a new and distinctive vision of design to characterize, above all, the activity of Francisco Matarazzo Unit and, in a more general sense, Senac of the State of São Paulo.

The need of exploring a new vision and identity in the field of design is expressed both regarding courses, as well as companies. In fact, the objective is elaborating a portfolio of innovative and characteristic courses both in Brazilian and international context, capable of configuring Senac identity in an avant-garde way, attentive to the changes in society and marketplace. The idea of Senac as a creative institution should emerge reinforced.

Besides, it was proposed to identify ways and contents of Senac activities in the field of research and consultancy, defining an innovative model of relationship between courses, research and companies unseen in Brazil, where the relationship between the academy and the entrepreneur world is scarcely explored and profitable. Thus, it was also inserted the objective of feeding, in the entrepreneurial system, a new culture of design and its relationship with formation. Finally, required the implementation of new commercial strategies to favor the self-sustainability of the new structure.

The objective has been giving place to a scenario that initially takes shape, and in an experimental way, in the renewal of FCO unit and thus give place to a vision and work program that provides support and stimulus to the functional, conceptual and architectonic renewal of Francisco Matarazzo Unit.

In the project of FCO it was required to pay particular attention to the relationship with the other units on the territory and with Santo Amaro campus, regarding what is required to trigger strategies of mutual valorization.

Methodology of work

The project has been conducted through a methodology that, by alternating exploiting and divergence to phases of progressive convergence, has been conceived to create a participative context to share choices and results, both inside workgroups, as well as with Senac community. It has also allowed the structured and efficient involvement of several people in the group from POLI.design, from Senac and from the outside in several phases.

The work has been developed as in the schematics shown in Figure 1.

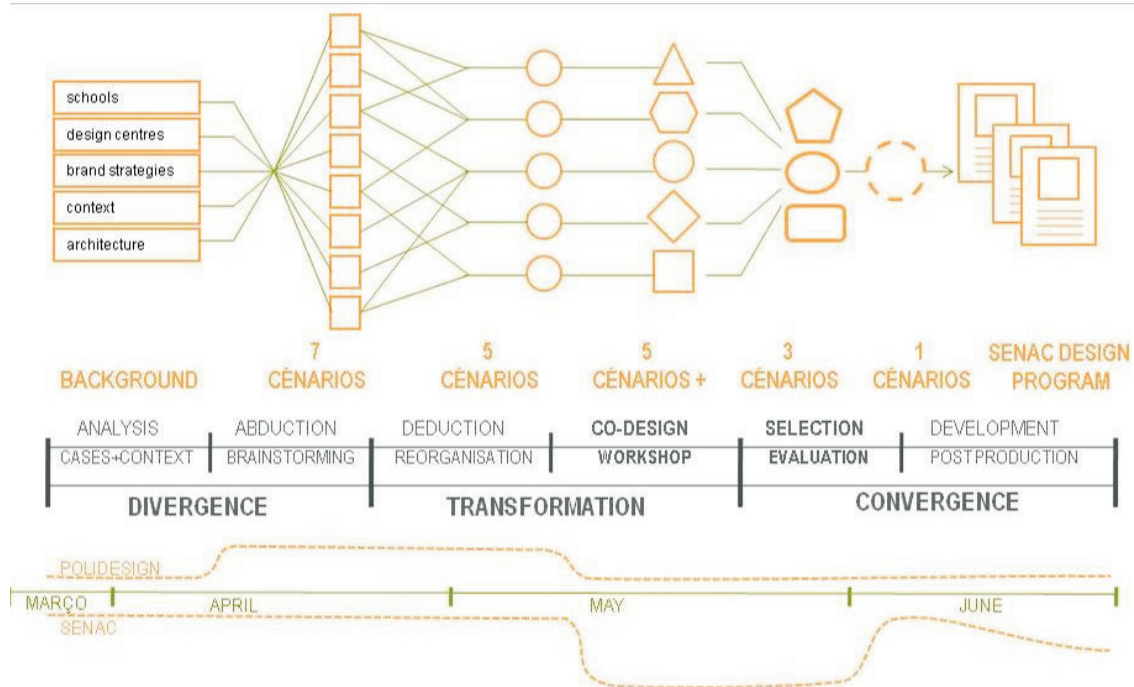


Figure 1. Schematic workflow of the project developed with Senac.

Divergence: Exploitation

Background: a phase of analysis addressed to know the context, identify the scopes of knowledge and case studies useful to get to know the state-of-art and stimulate the production of ideas for the project.

7 scenarios: a phase of production of numerous ideas for possible scenarios, oriented to create alternative and creative visions. The work has been developed inside POLI.design research group.

Transformation: Co-design

5 scenarios: an internal phase to the POLI.design group of first selection and in depth of some scenarios considered as the most interesting and promising in view of an expanded participative discussion.

5 scenarios +: a phase of elaboration and discussion of scenarios developed as a workshop extended to Senac community. The work has been developed in a mixed group of POLI.design and Senac.

Convergence: assessment and development

3 scenarios: a phase of collective assessment and convergence of scenarios from 5 to 3, using the logics of selection and refinement. The work has been developed in a mixed group of POLI.design and Senac. The work has led to the selection and calibration of shared scenario.

SENAC DESIGN PROGRAM: a final phase of development and articulation of selected scenario in a structured vision and work program useful to define FCO characteristics.

Scenarios to guide Senac São Paulo positioning in the design area

Among the several possibilities of valorizing the current formative proposal in terms of design it is possible to identify some major ways of innovation to be confirmed and linked to university, entrepreneurial, professional contexts and the marketplace of São Paulo City.

Entrepreneurial incubation space

A center that, with design instruments and competences, can encourage and support the formation and development of services, consultancy and trade activities linked to design, offering logistics, infrastructure, technical and cultural support to the development of companies, creating a strong and vital connection with the territory. It is a classical example of start-ups support, reserved to the initiatives of young professionals.

Design school

A center that listens to and observes the society in search for stimuli to innovate formation, research and consultancy. Elaborates problem setting and solving strategies, regarding emerging problematic (thematic approach instead of subject approach), through the creation of teams and multidisciplinary approach (design thinking). It promotes the transversal knowledge and formations through systematization of competences scattered in the territory.

Design center in order to valorize and communicate

A center that valorizes the best national activities internal to the school/university, proposing a transversal reading, creating connections and surfacing opportunities under the design thinking optics. It is a center that, making knowledge and competences available to the territory, and experiencing prototypes of activities at the same time, could be transformed into a "showcase" of excellence of the products and events produced.

Networked design center

A center that creates articulation between knowledge flows, arising from the territory, and the ones arising from research and graduation in design from the university. It values the results of university activities and related companies, thanks to the creation of creative and generative connections with the territory, creating opportunities for territorial development. It creates an urban reference point for design and creativity, through the transformation of industrial production economy into cultural production economy.

Design center as cultural and professional mediator

A center that generates symbiosis and exchange between design formation and company, through facilitation of meeting occasions, held under the optics of mutual benefit. A center that actuates in transferring knowledge in the one-to-one direction between formation and company, developing action research and applied research activities.

Companies that take part in the formation and vice-versa: encounters of points-of-view, approaches and priorities: assets of ideas developed in the formation and made available to the companies.

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