

Designing for the 21st Century, 2-volume set

Volume 1: Interdisciplinary Questions and Insights and Volume 2: Interdisciplinary Methods and Findings

Edited by Tom Inns, University of Dundee, UK



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As we become familiar with the 21st century we can see that what we are designing is changing, new technologies support the creation of new forms of product and service, and new pressures on business and society demand the design of solutions to increasingly complex problems, sometimes local, often global in nature. Customers, users and stakeholders are no longer passive recipients of design, expectations are higher, and increased participation is often essential.

Volume 1 explores these issues through the work of 21 research teams. Over a twelve-month period each of these groups held a series of workshops and events to examine different facets of future design activity as part of the UK's research council supported Designing for the 21st Century Research Initiative. Each of these 21 contributions describes the context of enquiry, the journey taken by the research team and key insights generated through discourse. Editor and Initiative Director, Tom Inns, provides an introductory chapter that suggests ways that the reader might navigate these different viewpoints.

Volume 2 from the Designing for the 21st Century team is to capture a sense of the many ways design thinking has been applied to a broad range of issues. Each chapter describes the context for project work and the main research questions, which framed each project. A great opportunity exists to communicate the actual research methods that have been used, many of these involve an interdisciplinary approach and clear descriptions provide a great repository of knowledge for future design researchers. Each chapter concludes with a review of the new knowledge and understanding generated through project work and a description of potential beneficiaries.

Whereas the phase-one projects focused on in the original volume covered interdisciplinary discussion and network building, phase-two projects have engaged in interdisciplinary research experimenting with a variety of methods and techniques to develop new knowledge and understanding for different stakeholders.

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About the Editor

Professor Tom Inns is Director of the AHRC/EPSRC Designing for the 21st Century Research Initiative. He is Chair of Design at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art & Design, University of Dundee. He was formerly Director of the Design Research Centre, Brunel University, UK.

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