13th International Social Innovation Research Conference

"Enabling the change! Social innovation and enterprises for a better future"
ALTIS-Graduate School Business & Society, E4Impact Foundation
Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore (Milan)
September 8-10th, 2021

Conference stream: Call for Papers & panels

New approaches to social innovation: design thinking theory, practice and critique

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Description:

Over the last ten years, design thinking has exploded into the social impact space and within social innovation research and higher education. There are calls to diffuse design thinking for social innovation (Brown and Wyatt, 2010) (Mulgan, 2006), and we are seeing calls to decolonialize it—to liberate design thinking from its European, capitalist, and modernist associations and assumptions (PIVOT, Taylor Center and Pluriversal SIG, DRS, 2020). This stream invites papers across a breadth of scholarship on or about design thinking for social innovation.

What arose as a methodology for product and service innovation (mostly in design firms and social enterprises in the global north) (Brown and Wyatt, 2010) has evolved in different contexts across the globe as ways of addressing social, political, and environmental challenges. Design thinking models and frameworks from IDEO.org ("HCD"), Stanford d.school, the design squiggle; DT language of empathy, ideation, rapid prototyping,; DT mindsets of "Yes, And!" , "bias to action", and "fail fast" ubiquitous in our social innovation vernacular and teaching. As its popularity has grown, organizations, educators, and designers are reworking models, training methodologies, and theories, such as Diffuse Design, (Manzini, 2015) and building a body of empirical evidence of what works for social sector (Ku and Lupton, 2020).

Meanwhile, new language is spreading to communicate the value of design, what design means, and who gets to design. In particular, critical design scholars, especially from the global south, call for "decolonizing" design among other dominant practices of capitalism and European thought (Mignolo, 2018)(Escobar, 2018) Scholars are challenging the popular approaches to DT as embodying white privilege, capitalist and corporate values, as alienating and oppressive in its assumptions of what

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entails design, and problems are identified, with critical design, emancipatory design (Noel, 2016) and others.

In this stream, we invite papers that investigate and explore the practices, discourses, directions, and dynamics of design thinking in relation to the field of social innovation, as well as empirical and conceptual contributions across the epistemological spectrum that investigate and share a range of practical experiences, theoretical stances, and/or critical perspectives. We also aim to offer space for sharing lessons from applications of DT for social innovation and for presenting new visions, formulations and theories of design.

Examples of types of papers/topics we seek:

- Rigorous empirical research on an application, or specific case of design thinking for social innovation across organizations of various sizes, sectors, structure, and profit orientations (i.e., DT for more effective and sustainable social enterprises).

- Tools and cases of co-creation and participatory design for social innovation in community settings (i.e., cooperatives, community development).

- Synthesis of "Best practices" in applications/adaptations in DT processes and approaches to meet a variety of conditions and contexts.

- Pedagogical methods and tools that foster valuable design mindsets and practices for social entrepreneurs, changemakers, and social innovation training (esp. in higher education).

- Reflections on experiences in translating design processes into other socio-cultural contexts, the limits/blind spots of design thinking, and situations where design thinking should be avoided.

- New theories, frameworks, and models for (and comparisons of) design thinking methodologies and approaches.

- Expositions and examples of bringing decolonial thinking into social impact-oriented design education, research, and practice.

- And others.

References

Brown, T., Wyatt, J., 2010. Design Thinking for Social Innovation. Stanf. Soc. Innov. Rev.

Escobar, A., 1951- author, 2018. Designs for the pluriverse : radical interdependence, autonomy, and the making of worlds. Durham : Duke University Press, Durham.

Ku, B., Lupton, E., 2020. Health Design Thinking: Creating Products and Services for Better Health. MIT Press.

Manzini, E., 2015. Design, when everybody designs: an introduction to design for social innovation, Design thinking, design theory. The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Mignolo, W., 2018. On Pluriversality and Multipolar World Order: Decoloniality after Decolonization: Dewesternization after the Cold War, in: Constructing the Pluriverse: The Geopolitics of Knowledge. Duke University Press.

Mulgan, G., 2006. The Process of Social Innovation. Innov. Technol. Gov. Glob. 1.

Noel, L.-A., 2016. Promoting an emancipator research paradigm in Design Education and Practice. https://doi.org/DOI: 10.21606/drs.2016.355

Taylor Center, Pluriversal SIG, DRS, 2020. https://taylor.tulane.edu/pivot/, in: Proceeedings of PIVOT 2020 Conference on Designing a World of Many Centers. Presented at the PIVOT 2020, DRS, New Orleans, LA.

Guidelines for submission

To contribute to the conference, it is possible to submit both paper abstracts or proposals for panel sessions. Following details about the submission:

A. Paper abstracts

Must be maximum 400 words, excluding references (Font: Times New Roman 12-pt, double spaced, 2.5 cm margin all around).

They should articulate: (1) the research objectives or questions being addressed; (2) the conceptual or theoretical perspectives informing the work; (3) where appropriate, the methodology utilised; and (4) the contribution of the paper to knowledge in light of the conference themes.

A maximum of two abstracts may be submitted per presenter (joint papers to be presented by co-authors will also be considered).

To enable anonymity, the authors' names should not appear. Instead, a cover page giving the title of the paper and full identifying information of the author(s) (name, address, telephone and e-mail address) should be included as a separate Word or PDF document.

On abstract submission please ensure you advise the conference stream.

B. Panel session proposals

Must be maximum 400 words, excluding references.

They should include: (1) the panel purpose and its relationship to the nominated conference stream; (2) details of (minimum) three and (maximum) four papers and paper presenters to be included in the panel; and the expected contribution to the panel.

On panel submission please ensure you advise the conference stream.

Process and deadlines

All paper abstracts and panel proposals must be submitted by email to: www.isirc2021milano.com

Abstract and panel proposals submission due: 28th February 2021

Notification of decision on submissions: 31st March 2021

Optional full paper submission for consideration in best paper awards: 15th July 2021

Enquiries about conference administration and technical issues related to online submission should be directed to the conference administration team at isirc2021@unicatt.it

Guidelines for full paper submissions:

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Papers must be written in English and should be sent in Microsoft Word or PDF format.

Papers should be between 5,000 and 8,000 words in length including tables, figures and references.

Tables and figures should be incorporated into the paper. Each table and figure should be given a title.

Please include an abstract and four to six key words.

To enable anonymity, the authors' names should not appear. Instead, a cover page giving the title of the paper and full identifying information of the author(s) (name, address, telephone and e-mail address) should be included as a separate Word or PDF document.

Harvard is the preferred referencing style.