

Abstracts from the 1st International
Conference on Design for Social Impact

D4Si

DESIGN
FOR
SOCIAL
IMPACT
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

UNIVERSIDADE
LUSÓFONA



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**DESIGN
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PROGRAM

29th MAY

2024

All the time is based on Lisbon,
Portugal Time (GMT+00:00)

9h30 **OPENING SESSION**

Carla Cadete

→ Chair: **Cláudia Lima**

10h00 **Impact of virtual reality over graphic design with accent on the poster.**

Laze Tripkov Plakart Organization, and Skopje Poster Festival President and Founder.

10h30 **Designing Integrity: Fostering Creative Solutions for Global Inclusion and Equity**

Renata Figueiredo Designer, expertise in collaborating with the United Nations system. Founder of Rec Design.

→ Chair: **Inês Aleixo**

11h00 **The Embodied Education perspective for a new alliances between exercise professionals and pedagogists in school in hospital**

Simona Ferrari Catholic University of Milan

Paolo Raviolo l'Università Telematica Ecampus di Novedrate, Italy

11h30 **COFFEE BREAK**

→ Chair: **Paloma García Vanrell**

Red Bull Challenge

Hugo Carvalho [Alumni] and **Pedro Herbstrith Saboya** [Student] Lusófona University – CUP, Portugal

12h00 **LUNCH**

→ Chair: **Alicja Szreder**

14h30 **DOIT4CHILDREN**

João Alves de Sousa, and **Joel Maia** [Alumni] Lusófona University – CUP, Portugal

15h00 **"Blind people hear art" – Cognitive translation / synergy of works, of art and music with the transfer of emotions evoked by the artwork**

Anna Wrzesień [art]; **Agata Górska-Kołodziejska** [music]; **Hubert Kołodziejski** [coding] Academy of Fine Arts in Łódź, Poland

→ Chair: **Marie Noyelle**

15h30 **PictoPharma**

Benedita Camacho Lusiada University, Porto, Portugal

16h00 **ActivaMente 50+**

Lucimére Bohn Lusófona University – CUP, Portugal

16h30 **CLOSING SESSION**

Andreia Pinto de Sousa

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Abstract. Good morning distinguished academic community members, researchers, professors, students, alumni, designers, and invited speakers from Portugal, Italy, and Macedonia. It is with great pleasure that we convene today for the inaugural International Conference on Design for Social Impact [D4Si]. This conference aims to be a space for reflection on design for society that will annually display some impactful works of researchers. This Conference focused on Design to promote an open, broad, and plural discussion, in different areas of knowledge and aims highlight interdisciplinary collaboration to advance scientific research and foster holistic development.

The changes that have taken place globally in recent years have brought about a new role for design, one that is rooted in ethical and moral principles. The design has faced emerging challenges and is now expected to act as an agent of change, focusing on contemporary concerns such as climate change, ecology, immigration, terrorism, poverty, aging populations, disabilities, and post-pandemic repercussions, among others.

In today's world, to be a designer and educator is imperative to be curious; to develop the ability to enter into specific realities and understand the values, the identity, and the spirit of each and single one; to have an interest in the cultural and social dimensions of our surroundings; and if we can, help those most in need for a better world. This means that the focus should be on the individuals and communities that live and shape these environments, who contribute to their identities, and transform them into meaningful places.

John Frascara recognizes three areas of design practice for improving our overall quality of life: "design that works to make life possible, design that works to make life easier, and design that works to make life better." (Resnick, 2019, p.186)

Higher education must equip the next generation of designers not only with technical skills but also with a profound sense of social responsibility. Our curriculum emphasizes interdisciplinary collaboration, real-world engagement, and a deep understanding of the cultural and social dimensions that shape our world.

In the spirit of collaboration and innovation, let us embrace the diversity of perspectives gathered here today. Let us engage in meaningful dialogue, challenge assumptions, and inspire one another to push the boundaries of what is possible.

In closing, I extend my gratitude to all participants for their invaluable contributions to this conference. Let's embark on a journey of discovery, empathy, and action, as we strive to design a better world for the new generations.

Thank you!

Laze Tripkov

KEYNOTE
SPEAKER



Influence of Virtual Reality on Graphic Design with the accent on Poster Design

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Poster Design In VR;
Immersive Experiences;
Virtual Reality Design;
Innovative Design;
Creative Journey.

Abstract. The lecture is based on my four years of research into the impact of Virtual Reality (VR) on graphic design, particularly in the area of poster design. It mainly reflects the progression of my PhD thesis and practical research. The study highlights the changes in design processes, presentation styles, and user interactions brought about by VR technologies. By focusing on enhancing immersive experiences, the paper shows how VR can revolutionize traditional design frameworks, encouraging a more engaging and creative approach to design. Additionally, it will explain and demonstrate how VR redefines the graphic design landscape, especially through the innovative role of poster design using immersive technology. This is illustrated through my own experiments with two different methods of transforming poster design using the Glagolitic Alphabet.

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Renata Figueiredo

**KEYNOTE
SPEAKER**



Designing Integrity: Fostering Creative Solutions for Global Inclusion and Equity

Renata Figueredo¹

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¹ Designer, expertise in collaborating with the United Nations system. Founder of Rec Design.

Abstract. This paper explores the role of design in addressing global challenges through creative and inclusive solutions, with a focus on projects developed for UN organizations. It highlights how design can foster dignity, equality, and behavior change in relation to societal issues such as gender-based violence, racism, LGBTQ+ rights, climate crises, and the struggles of displaced populations. With over 25 years of experience in the third sector, Rec Design shares insights from various campaigns, including those for UNAIDS, UN Women, and UNHCR. These projects demonstrate the importance of cultural sensitivity and collaboration, challenging traditional Eurocentric perspectives on aesthetics and effectiveness. The paper concludes by advocating for a new design framework that is ethical and responsive to today's social, cultural, and environmental needs.

Design has the profound ability to change perceptions and influence behaviors, particularly in relation to social and political issues. Milton Glaser famously said, "The most profound impact that design can have is to change perception and behavior, particularly in relation to social and political issues." This insight sets the stage for understanding the critical role that design plays in addressing societal challenges, such as inequality, discrimination, and violence. Drawing from over 25 years of experience at Rec Design, this paper will explore how creative design can promote dignity, equality, and meaningful societal change.

Global Challenges in Design

The world faces numerous pressing issues that disproportionately affect marginalized communities. As highlighted in global reports, nearly 1 in 3 women globally have experienced physical and/or sexual violence (World Bank, 2023). Meanwhile, 3.8 billion people still lack access to basic healthcare (WHO, 2023), and in 2023, there were 35.3 million refugees worldwide (UNHCR, 2023). The economic gap is alarming, with the richest 1% of the global population holding 45.8% of the world's wealth, while the poorest 50% own just 2% (World Inequality Database, 2023). Additionally, systemic racism and ethnic discrimination continue to plague societies worldwide, and 64% of LGBTQ+ individuals have experienced violence or abuse (Human Rights Watch, 2023). These figures provide the context in which design must operate, illustrating the urgency of addressing inequality through inclusive and thoughtful design solutions.

Designing for Change: Case Studies

Rec Design's collaboration with the UN has produced numerous impactful projects that demonstrate how design can foster social change. For example, the documentary *Resistência* for UNHCR portrays the journey of refugees in Brazil and their participation in the 2022 Rio de Janeiro Carnival. This film, which won Best Documentary at the São Paulo Film Festival, showcases the power of storytelling in humanizing the refugee experience and challenging stereotypes (UNHCR, 2023).

Another significant project is the Young Key Populations campaign for UNAIDS, which highlights the evolution of HIV/AIDS activism. "A lot has evolved in the field: great scientific discoveries, and the activism in the fight against AIDS has undergone significant evolution marked by increasing awareness, advocacy, and global collaboration." This campaign uses design to promote HIV prevention and raise awareness among young people, showing how design can evolve alongside the social issues it addresses (UNAIDS, 2023).


References:
Inclusive design
Global challenges
Cultural sensitivity
Social impact
Decolonizing design

Working on sensitive topics such as gender-based violence (GBV), racism, and LGBTQ+ rights requires a deep understanding of cultural contexts. Rec Design's projects for UN Women and UNHCR on migration and gender equality emphasize the importance of working closely with organizations to create culturally relevant designs. "In regions where discussing GBV is taboo, we may use indirect storytelling methods through familiar symbols and narratives that can be more effective than direct approaches. We usually employ inclusive visuals that represent the diversity within the target community." This approach demonstrates the power of culturally sensitive design in addressing global issues.

Decolonizing Design: Rethinking Aesthetics

A critical aspect of Rec Design's work has been the process of decolonizing design, a concept emphasized by Natasha Jen: "Decolonizing design is not a single object or dimension. It's a messy and complex process that requires us to challenge and rethink traditional power structures and celebrate diverse cultural narratives." Many traditional beliefs about what constitutes "good design" are rooted in European design principles, which often overlook the richness of design traditions from around the world. Rec Design's experience working with clients from diverse cultural backgrounds has led the studio to redefine its own perceptions of effective design. "Nothing to do with clean or minimalist or any other European conception of good design," the team has learned that embracing diverse design traditions fosters inclusivity and leads to more innovative and impactful solutions.

Ethics and Inclusivity in Design

Victor Papanek, in his influential work *Design for the Real World*, wrote: "Design must be an integral part of society, responsive to social, cultural, and environmental needs. Designers must be both coherent in their approach and ethical in their decisions, creating work that not only communicates effectively but also respects and benefits the community" (Papanek, 1984). Rec Design's ethos is deeply aligned with this perspective. The studio has established affirmative actions to create a diverse team composed of women, transgender individuals, and racialized people from various socio-economic backgrounds. "We believe that this approach addresses historical injustices and, above all, enhances creativity and cultural relevance in our work." This diversity provides a multitude of perspectives, which are crucial for creating design solutions that resonate with a broader audience and meet the needs of different communities.

Conclusion

In conclusion, design is a powerful tool for addressing global challenges such as violence, inequality, and exclusion. By promoting diversity and inclusivity, designers can create solutions that not only communicate effectively but also resonate with different cultural contexts. As Rec Design has shown through its projects for UN organizations, design can challenge traditional perspectives and foster social change. "To close this note, I want to reinforce that design must be a tool to fight against violence of all sorts and increase diversity." Design, when used wisely, can be a catalyst for equity and dignity on a global scale.

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The Embodied Education perspective for a new alliances between exercise professionals and pedagogists in school in hospital.

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Abstract. The contribution deal with the development and validation of a theoretical and practical teaching and learning framework of the Embodied Education in non-standard educational contexts, such as schools in hospitals. This framework was designed to help teachers to deal with embodied cognition and to link together sport therapy and school programming and represents a communication and co-planning framework among different professionals, useful to introduce motor activities and wellbeing into teaching practices and to assess its impact. We will present and discuss the results of the three-year research work of the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart and of the eCampus University, in collaboration with the hospital school "IC Salvo d'Acquisto" and the Maria Letizia Verga Center in Monza (Ferrari et al, 2022).

After a systematic literature review on sport therapy and physical education in schools in hospital, the first phase of the study took place during 2022/2023 school year with the following research questions:

D1: What kind of spaces dedicated to physical education can be found in the 36 hospital school sections in Lombardy (IT)?

D2: How much is the body activated in educational practices? Are these practices individual or small group-based?

The research tools used in this phase were a teacher's questionnaire (n=41); a grid to analyze images of spaces (n=17) and a grid to analyze motor activity (n=16) proposed by teachers.

Results showed that a) the body is predominantly considered as sick and not to be activated; b) Sport therapy is perceived as healthcare, not connected to Education; c) Motor activities are frequently carried on by third parties and are outside of the school curriculum.

These results lead us to the second phase in which research group develop an educational kit with:

1) a valid and reliable rubric for the assessment of student learning outcomes, based on (i) the Jurbala Physical Literacy model (2015), (ii) the Italian ministerial guidelines for the first school cycle (Miur, 2012) and (iii) the International Classification of Functionality (ICF-CY);

2) a practical example of an educational laboratory in which the learning activities are designed together by sports therapists, sports scientists and education experts to allow to reflect on learning and to design learning paths in the perspective of: (a) embodied cognition (Borghi & Cimatti, 2010): close connection between mental functions and interactions between body and environment; (b) neuroconstructivism (Karmiloff-Smith, 2009; Tomasello, 2018): influence of the quality of the interactions with the physical and social environment on the individual's ability to understand and to develop adaptive strategies; (c) strategic role of motor activity in the activity of information processing; (d) activation of self-regulation processes and development of empathy (Hughes & Ensor, 2007).

3) some tools for the planning and implementation of PL activities in schools in hospital and beyond.

This kit was tested by 40 teachers in hospital that realized 25 projects in the 2023-24 school's year showing new form of collaboration among teachers and hospital's professions.

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Red Bull Reply Local Activation Challenge

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Abstract. The Red Bull Reply Local Activation challenge was a demanding 24-hour competition designed to foster creativity and innovation within the marketing industry. The challenge tasked participants with developing impactful campaigns for industry-leading brands, and the brief for Red Bull centered on integrating their brand into the vibrant city of Naples before, during, and after their 64Bars live event.

Our proposed solution aimed to challenge the negative perceptions associated with graffiti in Naples, transforming it into a positive force for community engagement. By developing a comprehensive campaign, we sought to create a lasting impact on the city's culture and elevate Red Bull's brand image. Our strategy included the design of interactive posters, a unique can collection, and a dynamic social media campaign featuring engaging content and visually striking visuals.

Additionally, we proposed innovative building designs that would seamlessly incorporate graffiti elements, creating visually stunning and thought-provoking public art installations. Our goal was to not only promote the event but also to foster a sense of pride and ownership among local residents. Despite facing fierce competition from talented teams worldwide, our project was recognized for its originality, creativity, and potential for positive social impact, earning a well-deserved 5th place finish in the competition.

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<https://www.redbullmediahouse.com/en>

<https://www.reply.com/en>



Keywords:
Local Activation
Red Bull
Naples
Design

DOIT4 CHILDREN

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Abstract. Design as a means of preventing childhood obesity – DOI-T4CHILDREN is a multidisciplinary initiative aimed at preventing childhood obesity and promoting healthy eating and physical activity through innovative design practices. This project creates an interconnected ecosystem of resources, including a comic, animations, a mobile app, and games, with engaging fictional characters featured across various media platforms.

Reflecting on the design process for the project's initial phase, the research team focused on creating a story and illustrations for a comic magazine titled Yes! "A Healthy Life, a Better Life!". This publication specifically tailored for children aged 8 to 12 was also adapted into a motion comic format, more suitable for public presentations to groups of children. The primary goal was to engage the target audience effectively by selecting illustrations and animations that resonate with the right age gap (Craik FI, Bialystok E.). For its effectiveness to be maximized, it was necessary to understand what captivates the target children sensorially and aesthetically, as well as their specific needs and how the message would be better communicated to them (Chun-Chun Wei & Min-Yuan Ma).

The project received the "Fazer+2022 Award for Good Research Practices in Teaching" and was presented at the IAFOR The 13th Asian Conference on Media, Communication & Film in Kyoto in 2022, where it was also published in the official conference proceedings. Each year, the project continues to evolve, producing new stories to engage and educate children about the importance of healthy lifestyles. By harnessing the power of design, DOI-T4CHILDREN seeks to inspire a generation to embrace healthier habits and combat the rising trend of childhood obesity.

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Keywords:
Childhood
Obesity
Design
Illustration
Multidisciplinary

Blind People Heart Art

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Abstract. The analysis of cultural phenomena over the centuries reveals a tendency to combine various fields of art to create new quality. The aim of the project is to demonstrate the existence of a multifaceted relationship that can occur between visual and musical works. The combination of arts, their mutual permeation, and synergy enhances the perception of the works and intensifies the emotions of the audience—resulting from the perception of the artwork. This, in turn, can provide new possibilities for creating inclusive, truly universal solutions—accessible to everyone.

When creating visual or design works, we consider the emotional message, the communication and the statement that the viewer should feel. It does not matter whether it is a single word or complex statements. It is a "bridge" between the creator and the recipient. However, can we emphasize a specific message in sounds and fragments of the image? Can we saturate it even more with emotions so that other senses can participate in the reception? We can. In the search for correspondence between music and image, the presented project "Balance-Haptic Variations" was created. The entire visual piece consists of five tactile compositions characterized by haptic abstractions enriched with a musical layer. The innovation in the project lies in its multi-perceptiveness and inclusiveness. Touch activates music, chosen for a specific composition, which, with its help, enhances the emotions from the image.

Although the synergy of the works is still an unfinished formula, without guidelines and recipes, still experimental and empirical, we—the artists—instinctively feel that, based on associations, emotional similarities and sensitivity to color, structure, and form, it is possible to achieve a close symbiosis of visual and musical works.



Keywords:
Inclusive design
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Haptic
Structural
Synergy

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Abstract. PictoPharma®, a research project at CITAD, focuses on enhancing the accessibility, usability, and inclusivity of pharmaceutical information through design. Rooted in the belief that design can significantly improve public health, the project has emerged from extensive international academic collaborations and has received substantial financial and academic support, including grants and awards.

The project emphasizes six key areas: accessibility, usability, universal design, design for health, sustainability, and multidisciplinary collaboration. Accessibility aims to eliminate barriers to medication usage with technological solutions like pharmaceutical software and electronic prescriptions. Usability focuses on improving user experience with clear, efficient, and satisfying medication instructions, using readable media and packaging. Universal design ensures products are usable by all, regardless of age or ability. Design for health centres on effective communication and product design, addressing aspects like medication handling and dosing. Sustainability aligns with WHO guidelines to minimise environmental impact. The multidisciplinary nature of the project involves collaboration with over 300 pharmacists, linguists, and 500 patients. PictoPharma®, a system of pictograms for medication-related information, was created through collaboration between pharmacists and designers, meeting ISO standards. It has evolved from 32 to 75 pictograms and undergone extensive usability testing. The project aims to expand globally, conducting intercultural usability tests and implementing the system in national and international pharmaceutical industries. Future goals include publishing a comprehensive book on pharmaceutical pictograms and further developing the system for broader application.

In summary, PictoPharma® is a pioneering initiative that merges design and pharmacy to enhance medication adherence, reduce errors and improve patient outcomes globally.

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Keywords:
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ActivaMente Bonfim 50+

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Abstract. Portugal ranks among the top oldest countries globally¹, highlighting the urgent need for effective national and local strategies to promote healthy aging ². The AtivaMente - Bonfim and 50+ Physical Exercise programs are exemplary models of integrating research and university outreach with local authorities, specifically University Lusófona-Centro Universitário do Porto and the Bonfim and União de Freguesias do Centro Histórico Parishes. These programs aim to enhance the well-being of individuals aged 50 and older through physical exercise, cultural activities, and social prescribing. The Master's in Exercise and Health is responsible for designing and implementing practical activities, while the Degree in Design supports branding and design. Outcomes of this collaboration include a manuscript published in an international peer-reviewed journal ³, a book illustration featuring a program participant, the development of program logos, and ongoing research by two master's theses and two PhD students. Currently, the project serves over 120 older adults and is financially supported by the Collaborative Budget of Porto municipality.

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Keywords:
Social
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Health
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Design

— CLOSING

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We have reached the end of this first edition of the conference on Design for Social Impact. From this moment of sharing that we are so grateful to our speakers, we become more aware of designers' fundamental role in defining our collective present and future. According to Bruce Sterling, designers are people who solve problems flexibly; they have the unique ability to create objects, products, processes, and symbols that anticipate and shape the future world.

Yet, we must also acknowledge that our main cultural export for the future is often trash. This reality underscores designers' profound responsibility as the present and future custodians. Every decision made in the design process – from materials to functionality to aesthetics – resonates, leaving a lasting impact on future generations.

Design, as a discipline, is not static but evolves with history. It is a phenomenon that both reflects and drives cultural and technological changes.

As Victor Papanek said, "All men are designers. Everything we do, almost all the time, is design." (Papanek, 1985) This statement powerfully reminds us that design is not just about creating objects but about crafting experiences and solutions that resonate and transform our environment.

We must remember that design is a specific type of action – action that changes the world. No matter how small, every design decision contributes to a more extensive set of social changes. It is this cumulative impact that defines our legacy as designers.

The organisation of this conference deeply desires to create a space for reflection so that we can embrace our role with a renewed sense of purpose. Let us design with intention, aware that our work today becomes tomorrow's heritage. In doing so, we can ensure that our contributions are not just about solving today's problems but about creating a sustainable, equitable, and inspiring future for all.

Thank you for your participation and dedication to using design as a force for social good, and we look forward to seeing you next year.

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