

SPECIAL ISSUE:

GUEST EDITORS

# CO-DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM

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## SCOPE

Co-design's engagement with the public realm is rooted in an activist tradition aspiring to increase democratic participation of diverse societal groups in design activities related to public space, services, systems or policy. This is partly due to its historical relationship with the tradition of Scandinavian Participatory Design (PD) that developed in the 1970s and shared concerns and values with labour unions in emancipating workers at the workplace (Bannon & Ehn, 2012, p. 39; Lenskjold, Olander, Halse, 2015). However, since the rise of the Post-Fordist era, the engagement of co-design with the public realm has changed: it has been influenced by increasing globalisation, flexibility, rapid technological developments, a highly diverse and competitive market and accordingly changing social conditions (Boudry et al, 2003, 43). Many aspects that were traditionally part of the public domain - such as mobility or communication infrastructure - shifted to the private domain, resulting in progressively more complex relations with governance and regulation (Graham & Marvin, 1994; Davis, 1990; Harvey 1994, Christopherson 1994). In short, in a Post-Fordist context, designing takes place across previously delineated contrasting pillars (or economic sectors, socio-political families, and discourses), such as public/private, work/leisure, local/global, the boundaries between which become increasingly blurred.

In *Design for The Real World* (1971), Papanek saw engaging with activism and the market as antithetical. Post-fordism has eradicated prior distinctions, whereby today co-design is being simultaneously applied to improving labour relations, consumption and political activism, by bringing a wide range of actors together to identify and develop that which is to come. In this context, it is not unusual that participation and co-design act as a conduit for market forces and other forms of private interest. This has again - but in different ways than in the 1970s - intensified the discourse in co-design on the political and public sphere. This prompts some questions that we would like to address in the framework of this special issue.

- What are the consequences, tensions and challenges of co-design engaging with the public realm when that realm is increasingly entangled with private forces?
- What concepts, frameworks, tools, methods are used and what values are pursued to answer these challenges?
- In an era of growing social, ecological and economic injustice, is the answer found in the mobilisation of all possible forces, including design, in order to challenge the marketisation of the political?
- Or, on the contrary, is the answer to pull back and rethink co-design in this era of blurred boundaries?
- Additionally, are divisions between public and private productive; or are there other alternatives?

We invite authors to submit research papers in relation to one or more of the above questions. Fieldwork can be used to enrich the discussion on the above questions and to allow us to revisit co-design addressing the public realm in a Post-Fordist era.

## TIMELINE

March 2016	Launch of the call
30th of September 2016	Submission of full papers
30th of December 2016	Post-review notification of decisions
30th of March 2016	Deadline for submission of revised papers
30th of May	Final selected papers to production
30th of September 2017	Publication of the Special Issue

## REFERENCES

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Harvey, D. (1994) *Flexible Accumulation through Urbanization: Reflections on 'Post-modernism' in the American City*. In Amin, A. (Ed.). (2011). *Post-Fordism: a reader*. John Wiley & Sons.

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## INSTRUCTIONS FOR AUTHORS

We invite full manuscripts by 30th of September 2016, which will be subjected to the normal review procedure of the journal. Papers submitted in response to this call are expected to address the questions it raises. The guest editors will reject papers judged to be outside the scope of the call without further review.

Manuscripts should be prepared according to guidelines which can be found on the journal website ([www.tandf.co.uk/journals/ncdn](http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/ncdn) - link "Instructions for Authors"). All submissions should be made online at the CoDesign Manuscript Central site at: <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/ncdn>. Authors submitting to CoDesign for the first time will need to create an account. Instructions on how to do this can be found on the same website.

All published articles will undergo rigorous peer review, based on the guest editors' initial screening and anonymous refereeing by independent expert referees.

(Potential) authors should contact [liesbeth.huybrechts@uhasselt.be](mailto:liesbeth.huybrechts@uhasselt.be) with any questions about his special issue.

Find this call at: <http://explore.tandfonline.com/cfp/est/co-design-public-realm-call>