

## **Design for the Built Environment. Issues, methods, practices**

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This book highlights the most significant educational experiences gained throughout the International Master of Science Design for the Built Environment (DBE) programme, fully taught in English. The DBE course (LM-12 class), began in the in the 2016-17 academic year, is actually one of the most creative educational programs given by the Department of Architecture at the University of Naples Federico II.

The DBE trains a new profile of designer, capable of reading the changes of contemporary life at the individual and collective levels, in the public and private dimensions, by placing them at the center of the transformation processes of the built environment, it viewed as a place of relationship and interaction between spaces, uses, and behaviors, as well as material and immaterial products. Such professionals will be able to satisfy the demand for ever-changing abilities as well as operate in many disciplines of design from product design to interior design, visual graphics to communication, temporary events to digital design, systemic design to design for social innovation.

The DBE's learning methodology is based on a collaborative, multidisciplinary design approach that draws on multiple knowledges – socio-cultural, technical-scientific, visual-communicative, historical-critical – while taking anthropological, ethical, aesthetic, and environmental implications into account.

The first year of the M.Sc. course is organized around a training core that weaves together the fields of knowledge required for the master's degree in design, while the second year is divided into two different curricula, Exhibit Design and Digital Design, which are oriented to specialized training in order to respond to different employment opportunities.

Specific professional profiles are outlined in two curricula: Exhibit Design in the field of temporary spaces for museum, cultural, artistic, and commercial events, including design of communication of the contents and values expressed; Digital Design in the field of system design, user-centered services, and digital device design, based on interaction and accessibility criteria.

During its first five years, DBE was established as a place of critical processing

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and design experimentation, promoting a design concept centered on a distinctly methodological and process-oriented approach that sought to stimulate students to an open, free, passionate, and flexible point of view while adhering to the reality to be transformed.

In a historical and cultural context in which production appears to become increasingly immaterial or to acquire a different materiality, the course follows students through a process of growth and understanding of the role of the designer in society, a role that is increasingly similar to that of knowledge researchers operating in other scientific fields, and which necessitates the development of a critical, dialogical, and conceptual attitude toward the reality to be transformed.

As a result, students are encouraged to develop a preliminary set of knowledge, abilities, and expertises on every part of reality and the settings studied, which are then critically translated in practice through exercises and simulations. Students are asked to imagine not only products, but also processes and various application contexts in which design can interface with emerging topics such as environment, health, mobility, education, circular economy, communication, interaction, and rediscovering an ethical and social commitment that is enriched by an anthropological and ecological dimension.

In the vividness of this learning environment, the designer-in-training can truly understand how to act as a connective element to facilitate knowledge transmigration, acting as an expert and coordinator within social innovation processes characterized by collaborative projects among communities of practitioners and experts, as well as non-expert stakeholders.

The DBE teaching methodology seeks to bring students closer to the labor market without replicating its most regimented and dangerous dynamics, but rather encouraging continuous speculation on current issues and research, as well as a more conceptual, systemic, and process-oriented way of design, attentive to societal changes, and viewing design as a sort of “active substance” that spreads strategically in various social, productive, and business sectors, manifesting at the individual level.

Along with projects and educational experiments described in their formative and methodological processes through drawings, schemes, diagrams, and images, the book presents theoretical and critical texts, elaborated by the teachers who have worked in these years to consolidate the M.Sc. course, in order to trace the cultural lines and methodological processes of a shared formative experience in its objectives and content aspects since its foundation. As a result, the book provides for a preliminary, if restricted, comparison between the theoretical and cultural premises and the project outputs contained in the products of the curricular workshops and the finest Theses developed throughout these years.