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DRS2020 Editorial: theme Impacts

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https://doi.org/10.21606/drs.2020.102

PUBLISHER

Design Research Society

VERSION

VoR (Version of Record)

PUBLISHER STATEMENT

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REPOSITORY RECORD

Cain, Rebecca, and Stella Boess. 2020. “DRS2020 Editorial: Theme Impacts”. Loughborough University. https://hdl.handle.net/2134/13072892.v1.



Editorial: theme Impacts

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doi: https://doi.org/10.21606/drs.2020.102

Ultimately, design research has the power to have a positive impact on people and the world. At the more applied end of design research, there are explorations into the value, significance and dimensions of design research as well as the discussion on how to assess and measure these impacts. The Impacts theme for DRS2020 called for papers which related to the responsibility among stakeholders and users of design research, and examples of types of impact such as sustainability or economic impact.

When submitting papers, authors were able to pick appropriate keywords for their papers which allowed the emergence of four sub-themes within the Impacts theme – **Reaching-in, Graphics and People, Translations, and Health and Wellbeing**. This is in addition to three **DRS SIGs** which also have themed Impacts sessions on **Objects and Practices**, **Sustainability** and **Design Management**. The SIG Impact sessions are discussed within the SIGs editorials within these proceedings.

The exploration of the Impact theme starts with the **Reaching-in** sub-theme, which is concerned with the ways designers come to engage and influence domains of concern. Paper 198 explores how a new type of 'designer-academic' comes to communicate in different ways depending on the domain in which they are engaged. Paper 313 describes how design can address sexism and gender stereotyping through the creation of a card game. Paper 178 presents a reverse process: it studies how novice designers come to incorporate concerns from another domain, behavioural theory, in their design process.

Impact in design research is considered further through the **Graphics and People** sub-theme, which explores design research into the graphic and visual aspects of design. Paper 135 investigates the key processes that cause gendered inequity in graphic design, including the representation and understanding of the name 'graphic design', the biases in historical narratives, and the disparate understandings of 'success' and 'significant contributions'. There are two further papers exploring graphic design for children. Paper 192 reinterprets the design of childrens' books by taking the book and the interaction with it as a holistic design task to promote greater interaction and engagement from parent and child. Paper 365 explores how attitudes to sexuality education, including birthing, are changing to become



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more cognisant of the role of women, and how the complexities involved are reflected in the design of books on this topic aimed at younger children.

Continuing in a related vein, the **Translations** sub-theme speaks to the information design, instructional design and graphic design aspects of design research. Paper 167 reports on research to optimise a process supporting designers continually switching between gathering user experiences and industry contexts when generating automotive design proposals. Paper 363 investigates the effectiveness of instructional design for non-specialist beginners to learn Chinese characters, to inform future instructional design for teaching Chinese characters to beginners. Then taking a broader view of the field, Paper 372 looks at graphic design and proposes graphic design studies as a new field to differentiate between practice in graphic design from reflection on that practice, to inform future interdisciplinary research agendas.

Health and wellbeing applications continue to be a field of design research with strong impact. In particular, the technology aspects of health and wellbeing and the effect of these technologies on users' emotions, and the support of ageing are drawn together in the **Technology for Wellbeing** theme. Paper 208 investigates the social context of older users interacting with emergent smart products, paper 266 considers how mixed reality technologies could support people with dementia and paper 351 looks at the design of detection systems for cardiac disease. Further papers relating to health and wellbeing are also presented within the **SIGWELL** and **Global Health SIG** themes.

Overall, the papers within the **Impacts** theme point towards the wide-reaching scope of the theme, both in terms of impacting on particular domain areas, as diverse as health and wellbeing, automotive design and graphic design aimed at children, while also describing the tools with which to support and reflect upon the creation of impact. Central to the theme of impact is the idea of collaboration. Many of the papers in this theme involve real users and wider stakeholders in the research, reinforcing the conference theme of **Synergy**.