

ServDes.2018 - Service Design Proof of Concept

Call for Papers

Politecnico di Milano, Milano
18th-20th, June 2018
<http://www.servdes.org>

We are pleased to announce that the call for papers for the conference 'ServDes2018 - Service Design Proof of Concept', is open.

ServDes, the Conference on Service Design and Service Innovation, is the premier international research conference exploring service design and service innovation. Submitted contributions are subject to double-blind peer review. Accepted contributions will be published electronically in open access in the conference proceedings.

Key dates:

6th November 2017: Deadline for all contributions
31st January 2018: Notification of acceptance with suggestions for revision
1st February 2018: Opening of conference registration
28th February 2018: Deadline for early bird registration
30th April 2018: Final submissions uploaded to website
18th - 20th June 2018: Conference in Milan

Theme: Service Design Proof of Concept

Service Design can no longer be considered an 'emerging discipline'. Though recent and in continuous evolution, it is now consolidated enough to be assessed and reviewed in terms of effectiveness and impact on economy and society: how far has the logic of services (and of Service Design culture) influenced the different domains of innovation and value creation? How much has this been truly integrated into the innovation process of private and public sectors? How effectively has this been understood, evaluated and discussed? How far have digital technologies and media been influencing service design and delivery?

Initially, Service Design mainly concentrated on the paradigm shift from designing the materiality of objects to focusing on immaterial experiences, interfaces, interactions, and strategies. Thus, for some decades attention has been paid to the changing role and competencies of the designer, and to the establishment of Service Design as a discipline in its own right, despite its multi-disciplinary approach which includes management, ethnography, sociology, and organizational studies, to mention but a few.

Now it is time to validate and review the models, processes and practices developed and used in the service design ecosystem, from its academic community to practitioners, companies and organizations at large.

The overarching scope of the conference is to reflect on the evolution and impact that this discipline and practice has made in different fields and sectors. To do this, ServDes2018 will create an opportunity firstly for sharing thoughts and experiences among scholars, practitioners and organisations, and secondly, to discuss service design in terms of proof of concept, and the extent to which public and private organizations are ready to embed service design into their processes.

The main areas of discussion for the conference will be the following, organised into tracks:

1. Learning and practicing
2. Sharing and collaborating
3. Measuring and evaluating
4. Governing and evidencing
5. Producing, distributing and organising
6. Experiencing and shaping
7. Community and relationship building
8. Envisioning and evolving

TRACK 1 - Learning and practicing

Today's organisations are increasingly taking advantage of approaches from the design field to nurture, re-frame and manage their innovation strategies. Design "thinking", in the broader sense, is adopted by public and private organizations with the aim of transforming both the processes and the outputs of a variety of human-centred activities, including the management of human resources. Service design, in particular, is increasingly used to build internal competencies and/or collaborate with service design agencies. This is largely due to its intrinsic focus on interaction and user experience, its transformative perspective on people's behaviours and its problem solving approach.

As a consequence, a number of business consultancies are expanding their skills into the service design field. In a situation where design competences are diffused and everybody can access the 'tools for designing', the need to redefine the role of service designers naturally emerges. Their professional value and competences require resetting as against other practitioners working within services and innovation.

This track aims to explore the evolution of the skills a service designer must acquire and which education is expected to provide. It will reflect on:

- The role of service designers in different sectors and organizations and the related challenges, in particular with regard to their relationship with other design experts and the broader ambit of application of design thinking.
- The new skills that need to be taught in order to tackle the challenges of the service design practitioner and expert.

Questions relating to the track may be:

- What is the role of the service designer in the current job market and inside organisations?
- What are the hard & soft skills and attributes a service designer needs to acquire?
- How does the practice of service design overlap with the approach of design thinking?
- How should educational programmes and service design practices be updated?

TRACK 2 - Sharing and collaborating

The discourse on co-created and/or co-produced collaborative services has today spread to all service-related organisations. Collaboration is a multifaceted construct that merits reflection on its actual effectiveness to generate relevant services (co-designed services), to produce implementable solutions (co-produced services) and to introduce more democratic yet effective methods of working (co-creation as a service).

This track aims to reflect on:

- collaboration as an approach to designing services: it refers to the capacity of a design process to engage stakeholders. This practice is claimed to be beneficial to the quality of the design output with regard to the user's needs and experience, the likelihood of a service being implemented, the ability of a group to work as a team.
- collaboration as a way of delivering services thanks to the participation of the beneficiary, whether user or provider. It is typical of p2p services, services in a collaborative & sharing economy and in a platform economy.
- collaboration as a way to foster a participatory mind-set in society and to raise awareness about issues of public interest. As such, collaborative services can be embedded in private and public entities to bring about more democratic processes.

Finally, all forms of collaboration can benefit from digital technologies that enable otherwise impossible interactions to become key channels for co-creating and collaborating.

Questions relating to the track may be:

- Is co-creation effective and what outputs/outcomes are being developed?
- How does co-creation foster inclusiveness and democratisation?
- How is service co-production achieved and with what benefits for the stakeholders?
- What is the social and environmental impact of p2p, collaborative & sharing services?
- Under which conditions do ICTs enable the collaborative creation/delivery of services as well as productivity?

TRACK 3 - Measuring and evaluating

Although service design is considered to be a consolidated discipline both in theory and practice, evidence that proves its beneficial impact can seldom be retrieved: theoretical frameworks for service evaluation are scarce and mainly refer to other disciplinary fields (service quality measurement, program evaluation, social impact assessment, and more), while service design practices rarely include any element of evaluation. In this context, measuring the value of service design and its impact on organizations, as well as evaluating services, becomes a crucial issue to push the boundaries of the discipline and reinforce its legitimacy as a driver of innovation.

The track seeks to explore the role of evaluation in service design theory and practice as a vehicle to explore and sustain the validity and efficacy of SD interventions in socio-economical transformations. In particular, the track welcomes contributions that investigate:

- how evaluation is embedded, or can be embedded, in service design and innovation processes, and for which purposes;
- theoretical frameworks and approaches (also from other disciplines) that can support the measurement of service design projects and existing services (both in public and private sectors);
- how current service design approaches can be adapted/adopted to support the evaluation practice.

Questions relating to the track may be:

- How can the value of service design be measured in order to prove its validity to investors, clients and decision-makers?
- How can evaluation support the design of better public and private services in response to contemporary challenges?
- What theories, evidences and practices (also from other disciplines) currently exist that (successfully or unsuccessfully) support this area of investigation?
- What skills are required by service designers to conduct meaningful service evaluation and to increase awareness among investors, clients and decision-makers of its importance?

TRACK 4 - Governing and evidencing

Current challenges in the ideation, decision-making and implementation of public policy have recently highlighted the gap between the traditional roles and processes adopted by public decision makers and their ability to solve large and undefined issues, pushing policy makers to examine whether/how to incorporate new sets of pragmatic tools and approaches. In particular, service design is becoming increasingly involved in public sector innovation: for example, helping to translate strategic governmental plans into concrete actions for public governance and new systems of public services; establishing a new connection with civil society to allow bottom-up initiatives and service opportunities to emerge; making public services more transparent and accessible to citizens and stakeholders. Moreover, a service design approach is being tried out in the development of policies.

In view of this evolution, the track aims to illustrate how the introduction of service design is helping policy making to become more experimental, project-based and citizen-centric. More in detail, this means investigating:

- Resources and complexity, exploring the way service design is influencing the transformation of the public sector (i.e. the use and origin of resources, exploration of public problems, etc.);
- Evidence and visualization, understanding how data can be used effectively in policy making and what role/skills can be provided by service design;
- Competences and skills, looking at a different role for the public officer that incorporates a service design approach.
- Awareness and participation, understanding the effectiveness and limits of citizens' involvement and contribution in designing services and making decisions.

Questions relating to the track may be:

- Which service design methods and processes can be valuable for public administrations and government and why?
- What are the different levels of readiness associated with introducing/using service design for policy making?
- How do governance models change with the introduction of service design?
- How can the contribution of service design in this area be evaluated, and what evidence can be used to demonstrate its effectiveness?

TRACK 5 – Producing, distributing and organising

The convergence between digital technologies and fabrication is increasingly supporting the transformation of systems for the production and distribution of products and services, as well as the emergence of distributed forms of fabrication enabled by laboratories, digital platforms and peer-to-peer communities. This convergence also influences the nature of artifacts themselves, which are increasingly characterized by the diffusion and integration of the so-called Internet of Things and Artificial Intelligence.

This scenario is endowed with opportunities and critical aspects that are already affecting the current socio-economical context, while opening up a reflection that involves the service design discipline. In particular, explorations in service design research and practice are looking at:

- services that embody the democratization of processes for designing products and systems;
- services emerging from the way production and distribution systems characterized by growing robotics and automation (i.e. factories of the future) are organized;
- complex systems linked to urban policies and their services, working for example on reintroducing production and distribution in urban areas;
- products acting as service-platforms thanks to the integration of technologies such as Internet of Things, machine learning and AI.

Questions relating to the track may be:

- how can service design enable innovation processes characterized by exponential technological development?
- what are the theoretical frameworks and practical approaches (also from other disciplines) that can help us interpret and apply the evolving relationship between users and smart artifacts?
- how can service design frameworks influence the organisation of emerging systems of production and distribution characterized by an increasing level of intelligent automation?

TRACK 6 - Experiencing and shaping

The spatial experience of human beings is rooted in architecture and urban planning and finds its exploratory focus in the spatial design discipline, where the transformation and manipulation of a given space deals not only with its perception and transit, but also with the system of actions and interactions that take place in it. Spatial design frequently encounters the redefinition of contemporary life parameters and discloses the new configurations of a changing society: the physical realm enables interactions among people and enhances a sense of shared ownership and the engagement of people with contexts. That is why the design of public and private spaces meets the relational nature of services, in a mutual influence that affects the creation of meaningful social environments.

The track seeks to explore the relationship between service design and the design of physical environments. The main aim is to examine how the systemic logic of service design and its peculiar focus on interactions influence the shaping of spaces, in private as well as in public contexts. Specific issues regard:

- the contribution of service design to the theoretical and operational toolkit of spatial design;
- the respective positioning of service design and spatial design in education and practice, and collaboration between the different practitioners;
- the potential of service design to facilitate the direct involvement of stakeholders (including citizens) in the design of the spaces, and how this can contribute to strengthening long-term relationships between people and places;
- the quality of the experience in the space.

Questions relating to the track may be:

- What is the connection between spaces and services in the design discipline?
- How is the design of spaces and places influenced by the use of service tools?
- How can UX design contribute to spatial design?
- Can service design increase the engagement of stakeholders in the design of spaces and their sense of agency?

TRACK 7 – Community and relationship building

The design of a service requires the definition of a paradigm of social organization and of models for human-to-human interaction. This, together with tools and policies for internal communication, decision-making and information sharing, characterizes the quality of the experience and reflects an interpretation of needs, roles and values. It is acknowledged that services can originate out of a peer community or, conversely, create a community with shared values and interests. Both cases imply a deliberate effort to build relationships and manage the community over time. In fact, the quality of the experience within a service is closely related to the suitability and meaning of the human interaction, while the continuity of engagement depends on intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. As a consequence, service design also deals with the sense of belonging and the definition of an identity.

This track focuses on service design as an opportunity for community building and on services as physical/digital environments of social aggregation and dialogue. It aims to reflect on cases, practices and relevant methods and tools. Specific issues regard:

- approaches to the creation and management of communities;
- experiences reflecting specific cultural perspectives and expressing the point of view of specific groups;
- the role of digital platforms and virtual spaces in social networks;
- forms of decision making, power management, knowledge production and organization in community-based services.

Questions relating to the track may be:

- How can service design foster community building and the creation of a sense of identity?
- How are gender, ethnic, cultural, context-specific or other particular issues manifested in community-based services?
- How does service design contribute to the management of a community over time?
- What is the role of digital platforms, social media and multimodal interaction in community and relationship building or management?

TRACK 8 - Envisioning and evolving

As the title of this conference implies, Service Design is entering a more mature stage and needs a 'proof of concept' of its value and relevance for a variety of contexts and within multidisciplinary settings. This track aims to bring together ongoing reflections touching on the future of this field and its diverse geographies and interpretations.

Other tracks are exploring fundamental questions related to education, practice, environment, measurement and collaboration, and address developing areas such as design for policy, social innovation and engagement, distributed forms of fabrication. This track takes these reflections a step further, exploring the possible future evolution of the concept and practice of service design.

Possible areas of interest relate to: the developing forms of service design practice; the multidisciplinary nature of designing for services; the relationships and contamination with close and collaborating disciplines; the positioning of service design and its role within the wider fields of service science and service research; the way the transformation of objects of service design may impact on the practice and identity of service design itself.

Questions relating to the track may be:

- How is the constant evolution of the object of service design affecting service design practice and identity?
- How can the evolution of service design be envisioned within a multidisciplinary innovation practice?
- What are the developing forms and working models of service design practices like? e.g. consulting agencies, labs, units, organisations, employees and start-ups?
- Where are the important contaminations and collaborations within the wider area of service science or service research?

Submissions:

Paper submission deadline: **6th November 2017**

Authors are invited to submit a full paper up to 5000 words (excluding title, authors' names, tables and the reference list). References in Normal style following APA.

Use the EasyChair platform link to submit the paper at

<https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=servdes2018>

Upload a Word file (doc. or docx) using the template provided here:

[link ServDes_2018_paper_template.doc](#)

Save the file with the initials of the title of your contribution. Example – 'My Paper Submission' – MPS.doc, MPS.docx

The contributions should be anonymous and should not contain the name(s) of the author(s). Documents that do not comply with this rule will be excluded from the evaluation process.

The official language of the conference is English. Submissions which do not comply with this rule will be excluded from the evaluation process.

Revised version deadline: **30th April 2018**

Authors are invited to send a revised version of the accepted paper, with the Scientific Committee suggestions or comments included, by 30 April 2018:

Use again the EasyChair platform link to submit the new version of the paper at

<https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=servdes2018>

Upload a Word file (doc. or docx) – save the file with the same name as the previous one.

Final paper text up to 4000 words (excluding title, authors' names, tables and the reference list). References in Normal style following APA guidelines

The core discipline of this conference is Design, but it is open to interdisciplinary and non-design specific contributions if they address the general aim of the conference.

Paper template:

[link ServDes_2018_paper_template.doc](#)

Contacts:

If you need further clarification, please write to info@servdes.org.