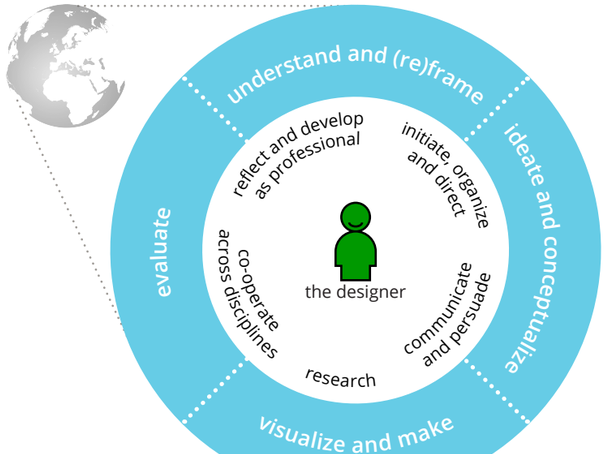
Designing > an iterative process to fulfil human needs

Designing is **a collaborative activity or process** that results in implemented solutions to real-world problems. Complexity is inherent to design problems and this means that designers must make decisions without perfect understanding. To handle this designers use a solution-focused, iterative approach.

We have based our four core competencies on this iterative design process. These are combined with five general competencies to ensure that our graduates can work in the collaborative environment needed to design and realize solutions.



adapted from INCMD profile (2016)

Designing

- Designing involves moving from the general to the concrete; **from problem to idea to product in the world**;
- Designing is about understanding and **fulfilling the needs of stakeholders** to solve ill-defined or wicked design problems;
- The nature of design problems means that designing is about **dealing with complexity**;
- Such complexity requires that designing is **a collaborative, iterative process** (with users and other stakeholders) involving exploration, validation, learning and conscious decision making;
- We ensure this by making **research an integral part** of designing;
- Designing in an iterative designprocess calls upon **high-level thinking, analytical and reasoning skills**.
- **Design projects triggers** can be needs, technical possibilities and the designers' own itch.

The designer

We believe that the designer:

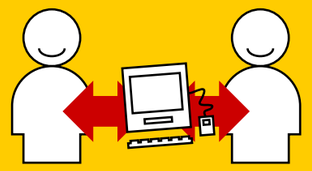
- Is **open**, **creative** and **optimistic**;
- Has the ability to **empathize and learn constantly from others** by observing and listening;
- Makes their thinking **tangible and concrete** through models, sketches and prototypes;
- **Does not** simply **accept the status quo**;
- Pays **attention to details** and takes pride in their craft (ambacht);
- Is **collaborative** and has sufficient knowledge to work effectively in multi-disciplinary teams;
- Has the **perseverance and tenacity** to work on their design until its completion.
- Is aware of **developments in society, technology and industry** and is able to integrate trends in their design work.
- **Balances** the **humility** to understand others **with** the **self-confidence** to realize solutions;
- **Supports design decisions** with facts, arguments and reasoning;
- **Reflects** on their work and their professional practice.

what we do

CMD Amsterdam

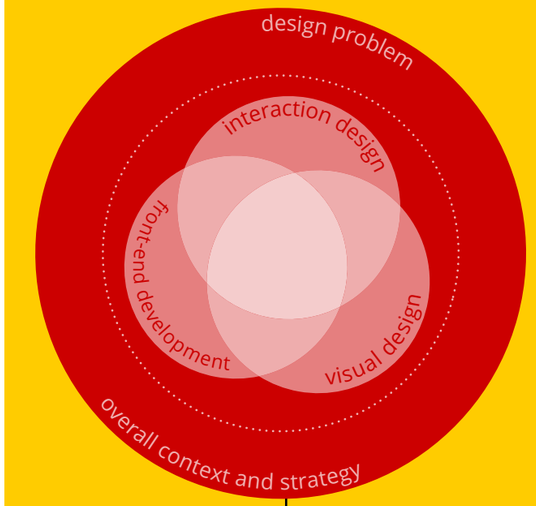
Helping our students design a better (digital) world.

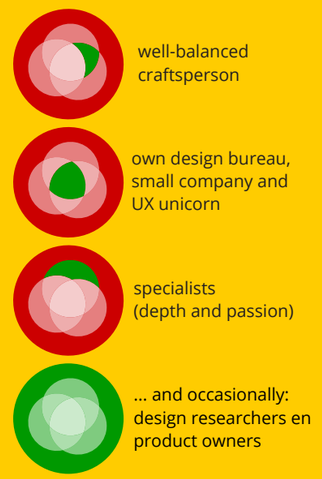
Digital Interactive Design > fulfilment of human needs



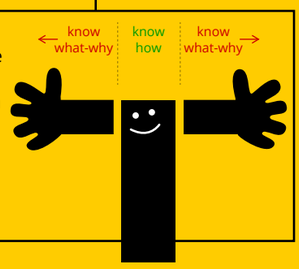
We are a **human-centred and context-sensitive** bachelor-level design education in the field of **interactive digital products and services**. Our aim is to help our students both design and realize digital interactive solutions to real-world problems, optimized to the needs of users and other stakeholders.

The nature of digital interactive design requires a focus on three core areas: **interaction design, visual design and technology (particularly front-end development)**. However, these activities occur in a context that shapes what is possible, acceptable and optimal. CMD Amsterdam graduates are capable of combining these core activities to design solutions that are appealing, applicable and realizable in a real-world context circumscribed by factors such as: organizational strategy and content; human-needs and psychology; and the social, cultural, technological and physical environment.





T-shaped designers
Our graduates are T-shaped designers, who combine a deep set of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values (know-how) that allow them to design solutions, with a broad understanding of the factors that shape their work and allows them to realize these designs (know-what-why) in co-operation with others. The balance of know-how / know-what-why varies based on students' abilities, interests and ambitions.



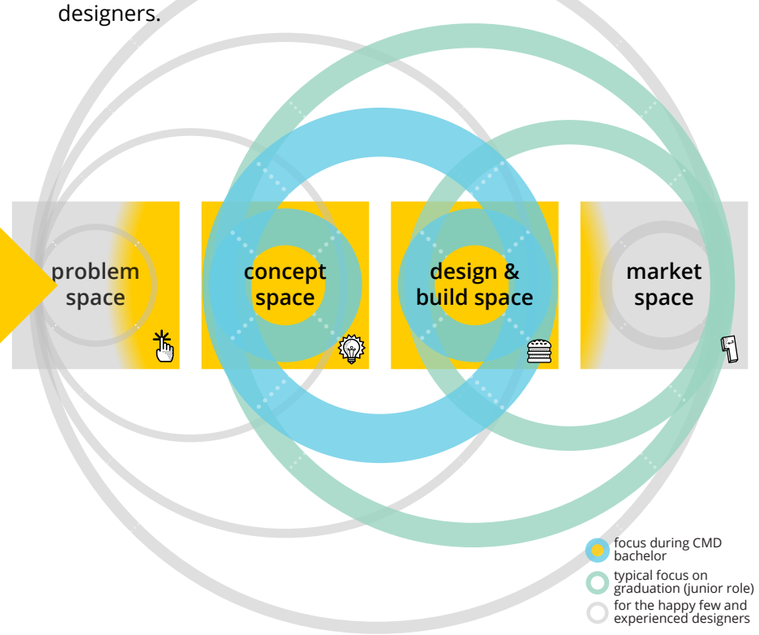
version 24 May 2016

Project-spaces > because one size doesn't fit all

Like experienced designers, students strengthen and expand their learning via real-world project work. Design projects are complex and we manage this through a project spaces model that breaks design work into **four areas of focus**.

Note that these project spaces are neither design iterations or project phases. A project spans one or more spaces. A designer will go through a number of design iterations in each space and most of the time across all spaces in the project.

Bachelor-level designers typically start their careers in projects that span design & build and/or market spaces, e.g. redesigning an existing product or detailed design as part of an overall concept. Projects that include the problem space or span all four spaces are most frequently carried out by experienced designers.



Problem space

The starting point for some design projects. This is the space of high-level or strategic understanding and definition. The designer seeks to frame a challenge at a strategic level to give the project direction. Despite the focus on understanding and definition, the designer needs to exercise the full range of their competence to define a design challenge that is clear and inspiring.

Concept space

In this space the strategic challenge is the starting point for generating and validating solutions. This means creating a number of tangible options and evaluating them for effectiveness and fit. The goal is to select a product vision and concept that a team can refine, build and release into the world.

Design & build space

The space of detailed design, building, and trade-offs. It is also the space where many begin their careers (in combination with the market space). Designers in this space may or may not have defined the challenge or concept, but they do work through many design iterations, usually in multi-disciplinary teams, to turn a concept into somthing ready for release.

Market space

Another space where careers begin, the market space is where live, often mission critical, products are augmented or redesigned to optimise performance/metrics, improve user experience, take advantage of new opportunities, and deal with competitive pressure. Here the designer will work through design iterations while dealing with the complexity of a live system.