

Call for Papers

NERD Take Five – New Experimental Research in Design (Berlin, 4-5 May 2023)

Berlin University of the Arts
Berlin Open Lab
4-5 May, 2023

Deadline: 01. November, 2022

The particular epistemic and innovative potentials of Design Research are well recognised within the wider academic sphere and are in constantly growing demand by industries, societies and politics alike. Especially in unraveling times of crisis like these, new perspectives, ways of thinking and forms of action are indispensable in order to negotiate possible pathways and futures.

Yet, design research is also a field and practice that, due to its in-between nature, lacks the clear boundaries and formal dogmatisms of more traditional research disciplines, as well as their implicit notions of secured knowledge and linear progress. Recognising this inherent openness as one of its key qualities, the New Experimental Research in Design (in short: NERD) conference aims at providing a genuinely diverse and open platform for discussing, reflecting on and exposing to a wider public the manifold ways in which design's unique perspective and proficiencies can insightfully be applied as a research competence. It does so by inviting presentations of empirical research projects by in particular younger researchers from around the world and from all areas of design research with a focus on methodologically and thematically original approaches. This explicitly includes experimental theoretical work as well as critical and evocative contributions.

The emphasis on the experimental is based on the conviction that the discussion about the merits and possibilities of design research is one that has to be led by example: What constitutes a fruitful method or approach only becomes apparent by it actually being conceptualised, operationalised and eventually materialised, be it as empirical inquiry, field study, laboratory experiment, theory design or even piece of literature. For the same reason, NERD is decidedly not narrowed to a certain topic or school of thought, since the qualitatively new often exceeds such preconceived categories.

Developed and realised by BIRD, the Board of International Research in Design for the eponymous design research book series published by Birkhäuser, as an annual event with changing venues, this conference format has already proven its productivity four times.

5th NERD Conference

NERD, held at [Berlin University of the Arts](#) on [4-5 May 2023](#), will feature a careful selection of 30-minute presentations of research projects, each followed by half an hour for questions and intense discussion with the audience.

For this, we invite speakers at an advanced graduate, doctoral or postdoctoral level to present their ongoing research or completed theses. Contributions should employ an original and well-conceived design-based and empirical/experimental approach and may deal with all kinds of inciting, engaging and socially, culturally and intellectually relevant questions. Contributions by NERDs from other fields who share a similar commitment to new experimental approaches in design research are welcome.

How to apply

If you would like to apply, we kindly ask for submission of an extended abstract (1000-1500 words, accompanied by visuals if applicable) of your research project or the part of it that you wish to present at the conference to be sent to bird@bird-international-research-in-design.org until [01.11.2022](#). All submissions will be blind reviewed and authors will receive a notification about the admission of their contributions to the conference by the 01.02.2023.

If you have further question, please get in touch with: Michelle Christensen (m.christensen@udk-berlin.de) and Florian Conradi (f.conradi@udk-berlin.de)

The conference will be held in English.