

# *California Management Review*

## **Open Call for Papers:**

Designing the future: The strategic role and impact of design thinking in creating the future of human-technology interaction

## **Guest co-editors**

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## **Setting the scene**

Since its origins in the ideas of Stanford's John E. Arnold over 60 years ago,<sup>1</sup> *design thinking (DT)* has evolved to be one of the fastest growing approaches to innovation across the globe.<sup>2</sup> Through its emphasis on rapid prototyping and testing, its empathy (EQ) and user-centered design, and its focus on people and our needs, DT privileges the human and creative practices in the pursuit of innovation.<sup>3,4</sup> Thus it can 'release' the 'creativity confidence' necessary for innovation.<sup>5</sup> It has emerged as a core capability and mindset for both scholarly and pragmatic pursuit of innovation across industries, government, the public sector, not-for-profits, and NGOs with regard to service and product innovation,<sup>6,7,8</sup> in policy making,<sup>9</sup> and social innovation.<sup>10</sup>

DT has been loosely conceptualized depending on the orientation of those defining it. There are differences between DT and organizational design or strategic design for example, but in some cases, these concepts are used interchangeably with 'design thinking.' We characterize DT in line with Beckman and Barry's (2007) four elements of: observe and notice, frame and reframe, imagine and design, and make and experiment.<sup>11</sup> These amplify the importance of creativity, imagination, ideation, rapid prototyping, empathy and human-centered ethos, and abduction. We expect papers submitted to be aligned with one or more of these core elements of DT.

Scholars have attempted to interrogate the foundations of DT in order to give it some concrete structure;<sup>12</sup> to identify the cognitive styles of DT;<sup>13,14</sup> or to provide DT with a social learning theory foundation.<sup>15</sup> Still there remains a dearth of literature that investigates the social impact of DT in innovation outcomes.

Having entered into the business lexicon, there has been a greater emphasis on more strategic thinking around DT in order to promote competitive advantage for organizations.<sup>16</sup> If organizations cannot integrate and embed DT into their organization, they cannot hope to see a sustainable advantage and benefit from it.<sup>17</sup> We argue that DT is a strategic imperative in innovation, particularly as the world becomes less certain and problems more wicked. While organizations increasingly have to deal with wicked problems, DT can be seen as the most robust way in which to tackle these wicked problems<sup>18,19</sup> and tap innovation with impact.<sup>20</sup>

Logically the ideas of strategy, DT, and wicked problems lead us to the underlying motivation of this special issue: One of the most important ways to make an impact on wicked problems is through technology. From automation to robotics,

artificial intelligence to intelligence augmentation, smart materials, bio-nanotechnology, quantum computing and so on, we have seen how the 4<sup>th</sup> Industrial Revolution (the so-called revolution that comes from technology through AI, and 5G connectivity), and its related Internet of Things, are presented to us as both the savior and destruction of humanity. This revolution impacts all corners of the earth and all aspects of human interactions, yet several challenges lie ahead for organizations and for managers' ability to diffuse or commercialize these frontier technologies. To this end, we call on papers exploring intersections between **strategy, design thinking, people** and **technology**, with a particular focus on if and how DT can enhance the social impact of technology.

All articles in this special issue must focus on some or all of these intersections in their exploration and analysis with a clearly stated scholarly and practice contribution. Given the scholar/practitioner orientation of the journal, this topic, and the editorial team, co-created papers (between scholars and practitioners) are welcome, as are sole or co-authored scholarly papers with a clear practitioner focused impact. We encourage papers from a variety of disciplinary fields, as well as multidisciplinary work: from anthropology to technology and innovation management and everything in between. We do not privilege any philosophical or methodological tradition. We will welcome rational positivist, socio-cognitivist, and constructionist pieces. We will also welcome quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods, as well as more innovative methodological approaches to studying the strategic role of DT in creating impactful technological innovation.

We are seeking articles that deal with one or more of the following (if you have an idea not listed here feel free to contact us for advice):

- What are the relationships between the core elements of DT (i.e. rapid, prototyping, etc.) and strategy making? How do these dynamics influence the ability to address social impact of disruptive technologies?
- Who are the beneficiaries of various technologies, how are they determined, and how does DT enhance benefits realization?
- How does unleashing 'creative confidence' improve outcomes?
- Does DT offer a competitive sustainable advantage for the diffusion and/or commercialization of technology, and how so?
- What are the core and dynamic capabilities needed for DT to take hold and make an impact on innovation?
- How might we develop a core set of defining elements of DT to answer the question "what DT is (is not)" and "where can (can't) we use it"?
- What are the inhibitors and enablers of DT (including the resource constraints and economic barriers), within an organization?
- How do we go beyond the rhetoric of technological impact on society to make sense of and measure the 'real' impact DT is having on society?
- How is DT different to other approaches to innovation?
- How do design thinkers interact with their internal and/or external ecosystems?
- What are the ideal conditions (culture, technology, governance, structures and agency) that can produce impactful technology through DT?
- How do we measure the performance and impacts of DT on innovation?

As part of the submission process authors will be invited to attend CMR paper development sessions in our host institutions in the UK, USA, and Norway. Participation in the session is not mandatory for submitting to this call.

## Review Process & Timelines

Please read the submission process carefully. The initial **full papers must be submitted no later than July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018**. Please submit to the attention of **Tyrone Pitsis** ([designthinkingcalifornia@gmail.com](mailto:designthinkingcalifornia@gmail.com)) according to the following guidelines.

The draft must run between five to nine thousand words, double-spaced, font-size 12. In your email please clearly state (i) the author(s)' details; (ii) purpose of your study; (iii) the research question(s) being addressed; (iv) how your piece addresses the core thrust of the special issue; (v) the relevance of your study for practitioners, scholars, and CMR readership; and (vi) what impact you hope to make with your paper.

In this initial round, the Guest Editors will select those papers (approximately 12) that are most likely to result in first-rate, high-impact submission, and authors of these manuscripts will receive an official invitation to submit **their paper through the CMR online portal by 15<sup>th</sup> September 2018**.

### NOTES:

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- <sup>1</sup> Thienen, J.V., W.C., C., Corazza, G.E. and Meinel, C. 2017. Theoretical Foundations of Design Thinking Part I: John E. Arnold's Creative Thinking Theories. [thisdesignthinking.net](http://thisdesignthinking.net). [Online]. Available from: <http://thisdesignthinking.net/2017/05/theoretical-foundations-of-design-thinking-john-arnold-creative-thinking-theories/> [Accessed 5th Oct 2017].
  - <sup>2</sup> Kolko, J. 2015. Design Thinking Comes of Age. *Harvard Business Review*. 93(9), pp.66-69.
  - <sup>3</sup> Brown, T. 2008. Design Thinking. *Harvard Business Review*. 86(6), pp.84-92.
  - <sup>4</sup> Brown, T. 2009. *Change by Design: How Design Thinking Transforms Organizations and Inspires Innovation*. New York: HarperCollins.
  - <sup>5</sup> Kelley, T., & Kelley D., (2013) *Creative Confidence: Unleashing the Creative Potential Within Us All*. Crown Business: NY.
  - <sup>6</sup> Amatullo, M.V. 2015. Innovation by Design at Unicef: An Ethnographic Case Study. Management: Designing Sustainable Systems thesis, Case Western Reserve University.
  - <sup>7</sup> Bason, C. 2010. *Leading public sector innovation: co-creating for a better society*. Bristol, U.K; Portland, Ore: Policy Press
  - <sup>8</sup> Jahnke, M. 2009. *Innovation through design thinking*. University of Gothenberg: Business Design Lab.
  - <sup>9</sup> Mintrom, M. and Luetjens, J. 2016. Design Thinking in Policy Making Processes: Opportunities and Challenges. *Australian Journal of Public Administration*. 75(3), pp.391-402.
  - <sup>10</sup> Brown, T. and Wyatt, J. 2010. Design Thinking for Social Innovation. *Stanford Social Innovation Review*. [Online]. 8(1),
  - <sup>11</sup> Beckman, S. L. & Barry, M. (2007) Innovation as a Learning Process: Embedding Design Thinking. *California Management Review*, 50(1): pp.24-56.
  - <sup>12</sup> Rowe, P.G. 1987. *Design thinking*. Cambridge, Mass; London: MIT Press.
  - <sup>13</sup> Cross, N. 1982. Designerly Ways of Knowing. *Design Studies*. 4, pp.221-227.
  - <sup>14</sup> Brown, 2008 op. cit.
  - <sup>15</sup> Beckman & Barry, 2007 op. cit.
  - <sup>16</sup> Martin R. L., 2009. *The Design of Business: Why Design Thinking is the Next Competitive Advantage*. Harvard Business School Press: Mass.
  - <sup>17</sup> Brown, T. (2015). When Everyone Is Doing Design Thinking, Is It Still a Competitive Advantage? *Harvard Business Review*, August.
  - <sup>18</sup> Buchanan, R. 1992. Wicked Problems in Design Thinking. *Design Issues*. 8(2), pp.5-21.
  - <sup>19</sup> Brown, T. and Martin, R. 2015. Design for Action. *Harvard Business Review*. 93(9), pp.56-13.
  - <sup>20</sup> Meinel, C. and Leifer, L. 2011. *Design Thinking: Understand, Improve, Apply*. New York: Springer.