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Inclusive Design: Perspectives, Guidance, and Reflections

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Editorial: Inclusive design:
Perspectives, guidance, and reflections

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Abstract: This is the introduction to the papers of the Inclusive Design Practice track, DRS2022. The 11 papers were selected from 22 initial submissions for the 'Inclusive design practice' and 'design research for healthy ageing' tracks. They covered a range of topics relating to inclusive design, so we combined them into one track to give the audience a broad overview. The papers were classified into three groups: perspectives, guidance, and reflections. They demonstrated scholars' and practitioners' interpretation of inclusive design in different contexts, knowledge about design principles and good practice, and critical reflection on history, methodology and practice.

Keywords: inclusive design; perspectives; guidance; complexity

1. Introduction to the Track

For the InclusiveSIG track in DRS2022, we selected papers from the submissions to the tracks of 'inclusive design practice' and 'design research for healthy ageing'. These papers can be broadly classified into three groups:

- Perspectives: looking at inclusive design from different angles

- Guidance: providing practical guidance for inclusive design practice

- Reflections: proposing improvements based on the review of existing practices

2. Perspectives

Alison Place (2022) proposed feminist perspectives on preventing harm and promoting healing through design. She argued that recent discourses had increasingly raised questions around design's social and environmental impact, typically addressing themes of inclusion,

sustainability and ethics, and the potential for care to play a role in the design process. Issues such as climate change, social inequality, global pandemics and aging populations require designers to negotiate relational values in order to address systemic problems; care needed to be made an integral part of design.

Cara Shaw and Farnaz Nickpour (2022) outlined a conceptual framework, aiming to advance the role of design beyond simply an embodiment agent for dominant narratives - to an agent for uncovering, interrogating, speculating, and scaling a diversity of narratives. They summarized three strategic narrative roles of design: (1) acknowledgement and capture, (2) negotiation and speculation, and (3) embedding and scaling and illustrated these through a case study of inclusive paediatric mobility design.

Haiou Zhu et al. (2022) explored the roles of inclusive design in fulfilling Corporate Social Responsibility. They found that the concepts of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and inclusive design shared the common objectives of creating sustainable value and generating social value simultaneously. They discussed different levels of integrating Inclusive Design into businesses through studying three mHealth service cases in China.

3. Guidance

Designing *for*, *with*, and *by* disadvantaged groups (e.g., disabled people, older people) had been the main focus of inclusive design research over the years, and again featured in DRS2022. Multiple sets of guidance and best practices were proposed, focusing on design for dementia (Rik Wesselink et al., 2022), Age-friendly co-design (Sidse Carroll and Kamilla Nørtoft, 2022), designing accessible apps for visually impaired people in Taiwan (Yi lee and Tang Hsien-Hui, 2022) and designing access to cultural information for visually impaired people in Venice (Luca Casarotto et al., 2022). Ageing and (dis)ability were the key foci of these papers, and the aim was in general to benefit a broader audience through addressing specific challenges of disadvantaged groups.

4. Reflections

On history: In an effort to draw a first timeline overview of narratives and milestones of design for disability, Luka Kille-Speckter and Farnaz Nickpour (2022) drew the conclusion that Inclusive Design as a field was in need of more critically reflective approaches - conceptually and in practice.

On methodology: Recognizing the limitations of samplings for user trials, Anya Petyaeva et al. (2022) proposed a methodology to improve the understanding of the sample's skew and to identify the characteristics of those who are missing.

On practice: Maxim Lamirande et al. (2022) probed present-day understandings of designing inclusively from the perspective of practitioners and outlined the notions reformed through practitioners' lived experiences: Proof of Logic, Governing Ways of Thinking, User Accessibil-

ity, Project Constraints, User Involvement, Design Stages, and Outcomes and Impact. "Complexity" was mentioned by Stella Boess who discussed taking care of both sustainability and inclusion in an energetic renovation process with multiple stakeholders.

5. Conclusions

The papers mainly came from the Europe and the East Asia, with several local case studies and observations. They demonstrated scholars' and practitioners' interpretation of inclusive design in different contexts, knowledge about design principles and good practice, and critical reflection on history, methodology and practice. The interpretations of inclusive design became diversified, the guidance aimed to achieve design for all, and the reflections helped identify some gaps and trends.

About the Authors:

Hua Dong is Professor in Design and Dean of Brunel Design School, Brunel University London. She is the convenor of Inclusive Design Special Interest Group (InclusiveSIG) of the Design Research Society (DRS) and Fellow of DRS.

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