

DESIGN *for* NORMATIVE EXTREME

International Design Week, HIT Holon Institute of Technology
18–22 April, 2021

Call for proposal submissions

In his book, *Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow*, published in 2015, Yuval Noah Harari claims that we are on the precipice of an age in which pandemics, hunger, and mega-wars cease to be an existential threat for humankind. In light of that, the human race must put the enhancement of mankind's abilities and quality of life, alongside emergency actions for confronting the climate crisis, at the top of its priority list. Now, five years after Harari's book was published, we find ourselves in a situation where an invisible virus has upended our lives and left us dumbfounded with no regard for religion, race, or gender.

With no one towards whom we can turn a blaming eye, we find ourselves having to cover our faces, distancing ourselves from our loved ones, disconnecting from our surroundings, and watching the bridges that we've built along the years crumble and fall under our gaze. We adopt a new lifestyle that colors our yesterday with nostalgia, while our passion for advancement and innovation is replaced by the simple hope for a familiar anchor we can hold on to. In the current reality, social distancing and isolation have become collective challenges we all must face. Spaces that were teeming with life have turned into white elephants, the home has become the workplace and the classroom, and the public sphere has been channeled narrowly through fiber optic cables that are not visible to us. The "new normal" that we are currently experiencing sways violently from one extreme to another, and processes over which existential uncertainty reigns are accelerated, magnified, becoming a twisted type of norm.

The Faculty of Design at HIT will host an international workshop week, 18–22 of April (Sunday to Thursday), that will focus on the challenges designers have to face in the current situation. Guest lecturers from academic institutions abroad will be invited to lead workshops (via video conference) aimed at exploring and bringing together different points of view on contemporary reality, a reality that is redefining the connections between local and global, near and far.

By referring to designing for an "extreme norm", we intend to explore, within the boundaries of the workshops, the viability of some of the systems we have become accustomed to so far. We seek to offer strategies to safeguard the resilience of the systems that make up our current living environment, as well as to view the current situation as an opportunity to develop new design practices. We propose that our ability to cope with a reality of extreme situations will grow stronger as long as we have the wisdom to view our daily lives through a multi-layered prism rather than a one-dimensional lens; that we design multi-purpose spaces and objects; combine different use-cases, explore new formats of communication; and produce multi-purpose tools and multi-disciplinary modes of thought that will allow us to adapt to new situation at a faster pace, or alternatively, to speculate about possible future realities that we are yet to experience.

We warmly welcome suggestions regarding the following topics, although we are open to other suggestions as well:

- Design for extreme conditions
- Distancing and reconnecting
- Replacing the physical presence
- Designing for an unpredictable reality
- Living on the edge
- Designing flexible / adaptive systems
- Design for multi functionality
- Real-time data based design / reaction-time based design
- Private and public in the age of social distancing
- Autonomous systems for normative extremes
- Filtering as the new state of conduct
- Design for the Anthropocene
- Coexistence — collaborating dissimilarities
- Design for responsibility and solidarity
- Resilience and recovery systems
- Design for optimism

The workshops will take place on April 18–22, (Sunday to Thursday) between 09:00–17:00 (UTC+2).

The workshops are intended for 3rd year students in the three bachelor's degrees of the Design Faculty: Visual Communication, Industrial Design, and Interior Design.

Every guest lecturer will collaborate with a staff member of the HIT faculty who will accompany the students throughout the whole workshop. The nature of the cooperation between the local faculty member and guest lecturer, as well as the workshop's schedule, will be decided in advance in accordance with the workshop requirements. Guest lecturers are not expected to be present in all the hours of the workshops.

Lecturers interested in applying for the program are requested to submit a proposal for a workshop (up to 300 words + short CV) until 31.01.2021, using [this online form](#), or to designweekhit@gmail.com.

The selected lecturers will be paid €1200 for their work.

The workshops will be held in English.

For any questions please contact Dr. Yael Eylat Van Essen at: design.hit.ir@gmail.com

Schedule:

31.01.2020 — Proposal submissions deadline

15.02.2021 — Notification of acceptance

16–22.04.2021 – Workshop week

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