



COURSE GUIDE

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Fundamentals Academy BV + Research Group Co-Design
For HU Utrecht University of Applied Sciences

FUNDAMENTALS

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WELCOME - Co-Design Studio - The Engaging Program

Specialization program (Minor) - starting every September and February

First of all, welcome to our studio! Co-Design Studio is a design studio rather than a university course. We consider our students to be junior designer professionals. So from now on, you can call yourself a junior of Co-Design Studio.

Our group of this year will be international and multidisciplinary. This makes it very interesting to work together. However, you might need to get used to other perspectives. Appreciate the differences, as you will find out that together you can achieve so much more.

We work for real clients, who will be involved in the process. Cases we ask you to work on are brand new, relevant today, and have not been done before. We have no clue what the result will be, so let's create the best possible result together. We supply you with everything you need; clients, coaches, sparring partners, experts, workshops, (guest-) lectures, life coaching, development coaching, literature and real assignments. What will you need to do to answer complex cases? How will you involve your stakeholders? How to satisfy your client? How will you keep them involved during the process? We demand an entrepreneurial and open stance from all of you, to be able to answer these kind of questions.

We will ask you to be open to each other and to try to make sure that everyone feels comfortable in the group, even on the moments that the stress levels are high and the deadlines are coming closer. We expect you to work as a team.

We're looking forward working with you this semester, let's make it a time to remember!

Best regards,

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THE PROGRAM

ONBOARDING

Welcome to Co-Design Studio! The onboarding week is the first week of our program. We welcome you for a two-day program in our outdoor location to get to know each other and to set the culture. After these two days we will build our studio to make it ours to work in for a full semester. Many coaches will join us in this week, so you already know with who you are going to work the rest of the semester.

PROJECT ONE

This is the very first encounter with Co-Design for most of you. For this project, our team of coaches guide you through quite rigidly. They set the design process and support you throughout.

The focus for this project will mainly be on understanding the (co-)design process, whereby inclusive design will be the common thread of the project. You will learn to conduct design-driven research and user research, to make substantiated choices (design decisions), to get from insights to innovative concepts. To test the concepts, prototypes (low fidelity) will be made and presented to stakeholders and users. You do this in co-creation, so you learn to involve diverse stakeholders in the design process in an equal way.

WEEK OF THE BEDSIDE TABLE

The week of the bedside table is the week where you have the opportunity to create something that's already on your bedside table for years. This is the moment you have finally the time to work on this project. Our coaches will help you during the process and we have a workshop available with a lot of different tools. The only thing you have to provide yourself is your idea, motivation and your own materials. We close off this week with an exhibition where you can invite friends, family, teachers, old classmates etc.

PROJECT TWO - SYSTEMIC DESIGN

With a strong focus on design research and designing for complex systems, we will work on projects together with the team of research group Co-Design. The coaches will set parts of the project, but allow you to take charge in parts of it.

In this project, systemic design thinking is the dominant way of working. We welcome more complex problems and challenges to work on. You will also have to learn to deal with feeling comfortable in "not knowing", because systems are never fully understood, we merely understand the parts we can see and grasp. The result of this project will most likely be new understanding and fresh perspectives to a situation that seemed stuck.

WAR ROOM WEEK

Personal and professional development is an important part of our program. That's why we are focussing on this part for one week throughout the War Room week. We will reflect on the things you've learned and what this means to your personal and professional development. Also the translation of your learnings into defining your next steps as a junior design professional is an important part of this week.

INTERNATIONAL WEEK

This week, our studio will work in several countries simultaneously. As far as possible, we will send coaches to join the teams. Locations are different every year, but we travelled for example to: Warsaw (PL), Budapest (H), Oslo (NO), Manchester (UK), and Turku (FI). The contribution by the juniors is maximized at 350 euro each.

SIGNATURE PROJECT

For the final project of Co-Design Studio, we allow you to work with a dedicated coach and develop the entire process based on the needs of your project. Co-Design is the discipline where we take a systemic approach and work in co-creation with the involved stakeholders. You will get to choose the approach that best suits the project, in close collaboration with our professional team of designers and the client. You are also asked to think about the effect and impact of the design / intervention on the system or organisation in which it operates.

ASSESSMENTS

In total you will have 2 big assessments. The first assessment is an assessment for learning. This means that you don't get a grade for it, but it will help you with getting ready for your one and only final assessment of learning at the end of the program. This final assessment is about all the things you've learned and your development during the minor.

THE DIFFERENT ROLES

JUNIORS

You work most of the time in teams on projects for our clients, but your own personal and professional development is central during the program. This means that you will also get some time to work alone, to focus and to reflect on your own development. The project team will change every project so you will work with different juniors who all have their own background and motivation.

CLIENTS

In the projects we work with real clients who are really involved in the projects. They will brief you on the first day of the project and in every project there are two official delivery moments to share your learnings and results with your client. In between those moments your team also has to organize, together with a senior coach, two design sessions to make big steps in your project together with your client.

DESIGN COACHES

Every project we invite different design coaches from the work field to help you further in the projects. We will rely on them to give specific workshops, lectures and to discuss with you the progress of the projects. The coaches are encouraged to design together with the you. In the first projects you will get to know a lot of different coaches to learn from all the different flavors and perspectives and in the final project every team will get their own dedicated coach to work with.

LIFE COACHES

More and more we see that it is also really important to check in with everyone personally. Every junior will be connected to a life coach who will help tackle personal issues and challenges. Together with the life coach, you can work on topics that are holding you back, or enhance the strongpoints you have. Feel free to discuss any topic here.

DEVELOPMENT COACHES/ASSESSORS

Next to a personal life coach, we also have specific development coaches. The development coaches are there to help you working towards the assessments. During the program they will check in with you to see how your development is going and what the things are that still need some more attention. The development coach is also part of the assessment committee.

ALUMNI NETWORK

Throughout the years we built a strong network of alumni. Our alumni are now working in the field and we will invite them to our events (e.g. Opening Drinks, Final Presentations), to further increase your professional network. There are also alumni joining our coach team this year.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ORGANISATION

Fundamentals Academy is operating this program for HU Utrecht University of Applied Sciences. Together with HU's Research Group Co-Design (led by Professor Co-Design Remko van der Lugt) we connect our professional network to the juniors. That is how we can offer relevant cases, and have almost double the amount of available coaching compared to traditional programs. All the involved coaches are either Fundamentals Coaches or researchers from the Research Group Co-Design.

SCHEDULE

Our schedule is really easy, we work every day from *at least* 09.30-17.30h. We plan workshops, exploration days, lectures, moments to work with your team etc. all in these hours.

STRIKES

We believe that only with a lot of effort and attention from both you and us, we can do great things this semester. This means that we are expecting a lot from you. We work with a strike system to make sure that we are only working with really motivated juniors, who are willing to go for the extra mile and who can lean on each other. The format is quite simple, 3 strikes is out. The explanation of the exact strike system will be shared on our Notion page.

OUR STUDIO

We will host our program in the Co-Design Studio (currently, semesters in 2021-2022) at Studio Gans (Gansstraat 143, Utrecht). Studio Gans is a creative hotspot in Utrecht where creatives are running their own business. You have your own work space there.

COMMUNICATION

We will use Discord to communicate with all juniors and coaches. Notion is the place where you can find important documents, learning materials and the basic information, but you can also upload drafts here to get feedback. We have a Google Calendar where you also can see all current things happening in the Studio. And last but not least, an Instagram account will be operated by the juniors throughout the program. All links will be sent. Try to help each other if there are questions, otherwise you can always reach out to Kim van Veldhuijzen.

