Converging Paths: Design in the Creative Economy (Ankara, 4-6 Sep 25)

Ankara Bilim University, Ankara, Turkey, Sep 4–06, 2025
Deadline: Mar 8, 2025

Dr Jessica Jenkins, Falmouth University

Design History Society Annual Conference: Converging Paths: Design in the Creative Economy.

The conference embraces historic, contemporary, and interdisciplinary perspectives on the subject and extends an invitation for contributions from design historians, scholars, and academics in related disciplines, alongside design practitioners, educators, museum professionals, and research students.

Although the phrase "creative industry" was first formalized in the 1990s, the interaction of creative disciplines with markets has long been woven into the fabric of the history. Artisans, designers and intellectuals historically have collaborated on projects that go beyond the confines of their disciplines. Regulatory bodies, artist unions, and syndicates have also had a crucial role in establishing networks of communication and legal frameworks which promoted the development of creative interactions within markets.

This conference will provide a comprehensive exploration into the intricate dynamics between design, the creative industry and users or consumers of design, shedding light on diverse actors and institutions that have contributed to its evolution. Our aim is to unravel the influences that have paved the way for the emergence of today's vibrant creative economy, examining both the interplay of business and economic factors, and the exchange of design metaphors that have transitioned from art to design and ultimately into marketable commodities.

Potential topics for submission, while not limited to, may include:

The Historical Evolution of Design Markets
- The transition from craft guilds to contemporary design markets.
- The rise and impact of design fairs and biennales on market visibility.
- The role of patronage systems in shaping early design economies.
- The evolution of gallery systems and their influence on design commodification.
- The emergence of design museums as cultural and economic intermediaries.
- Case studies of iconic design dealers and agents throughout history.

The Impact of Criticism and Curation
- Criticism as a driver of trends: from modernism to postmodernism.
- The influence of curatorial practices on the valuation of design.
- Critics and curators as gatekeepers: power dynamics in the design industry.

- The relationship between critical acclaim and commercial success.
- Digital curation and its impact on design visibility (e.g., Instagram curators).

Creative and Design Entrepreneurship
- Designer-entrepreneurs: balancing creativity with commercial strategy.
- The role of design incubators and accelerators in fostering entrepreneurship.
- Case studies of successful design startups and their trajectories.
- Crowdfunding as a tool for design entrepreneurship.
- The institutional support for entrepreneurial design in developing countries.

Legal Frameworks, Employment, and Labour
- The evolution of copyright and intellectual property laws in design.
- Employment models: freelance vs. agency work in design.
- Labour practices in the global design economy: ethics and exploitation.
- The role of collective bargaining and unions in design professions.
- Regional disparities in legal protections for designers.

Globalization and the Design Business
- Cultural appropriation vs. inspiration in global design markets.
- The role of international trade fairs in promoting design across borders.
- Transnational collaborations and their impact on design innovation.
- The adaptation of design to local economies in a globalized world.
- The role of emerging economies in reshaping global design practices.

The Digital Era
- NFTs and their influence on the valuation of design artifacts.
- Virtual galleries and the redefinition of physical design spaces.
- Social media and the democratization of design promotion.
- The rise of AI in the design process and its implications for markets.
- E-commerce platforms as new intermediaries in the design business.

Collaborative Networks and Creative Communities
- Co-working spaces and their influence on design collaboration.
- Online creative communities and their impact on design trends.
- Collaborative design practices in tackling global challenges (e.g., climate change).
- Crowdsourcing in design: benefits and challenges.
- Case studies of influential design collectives and networks.

The Politics of the Creative Economy
- Government subsidies and their role in nurturing the design economy.
- Trade policies and their influence on international design markets.
- The impact of sustainability policies on design practices and products.
- Mobility restrictions and their effect on international design collaboration.
- Political ideologies shaping the narrative of the creative economy.

Creativity and the Creative Economy in Design Education
- The commodification of creativity in design curricula.

- The role of industry partnerships in shaping design education.
- Internships: exploitation or essential training for young designers?
- The myth of the “star designer” in educational discourse.
- The influence of rankings and accreditation systems on design education models.

Details

We welcome proposals for individual papers (20 minutes) as well as for panels of three thematically related papers. Panel submissions must include abstracts for all three papers, along with a concise description of the panel’s theme. We also welcome submissions in innovative formats, such as video essays, that break away from conventional academic presentations.

The deadline for submitting abstracts is 8 March 2025. Proposals should be submitted through ‘abstract submission’ online: https://dhs2025.ankarabilim.edu.tr/login
- title
- abstract of up to 300 words
- short academic biography of each author (up to 200 words)
- authors’ names in the corresponding author section
- description of the format of the contribution (paper / panel / alternative format)
- up to five keywords

For any other queries please visit the website / online form
https://dhs2025.ankarabilim.edu.tr/index
https://www.designhistorysociety.org/conferences

Reference:

CFP: Converging Paths: Design in the Creative Economy (Ankara, 4-6 Sep 25). In: ArtHist.net, Feb 7, 2025 (accessed Nov 25, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/43893>.