DESIGN 2026

19TH INTERNATIONAL DESIGN CONFERENCE, 18 – 21 MAY 2026, CAVTAT – DUBROVNIK – CROATIA

INVITATION

By tradition, the DESIGN Conference serves as a forum for discussing and advancing engineering design knowledge—spanning engineering design science, computer science, cognitive science, philosophy, methodological innovation, and the practical application of engineering design research.

The previous event showcased 305 papers and hosted over 450 participants from more than 30 countries.

The shift from the familiar and comfortable to the unknown and challenging is ever-present, testing every facet of our being. How can engineering design research and practice adapt to changes, promote wellness, secure sustainable development, envision the future, and reinvent product design and development in emerging contexts?

How might design methodologies, tools, projects, and processes be enhanced? In what ways can products, systems and services be developed to create a healthier world? Which competencies, information, and communication technologies are essential, and what role does AI play? What impact does this have on everyday design work and human behaviour? How should sustainability be addressed in engineering design, and which social and legal issues warrant attention? How will we educate future engineering designers, share ideas, and disseminate knowledge?

Applied, theoretical, and results-focused papers from academia and industry—based on thorough analysis or argumentation—will be considered for the conference programme. Submitted papers should align with one of the proposed conference topics, which are intended to be extensive yet nonexhaustive.

A set of example key phrases is provided to highlight the core topics. All contributors must clearly demonstrate how their work contributes to the broader research in these areas. For a detailed description of topics and submission instructions, please visit www.designconference.org.

The programme chairs invite high-quality submissions presenting substantial, original, and previously unpublished research. Rigorous academic research is expected to equip engineering design practitioners with the next generation of methods and tools to meet current demands.

PROGRAMME

The DESIGN Conference provides an interactive environment where participants proactively create opportunities to share design knowledge and new cross-disciplinary research that leads to innovation.

PLENARY SESSIONS

New ideas and visions will be presented by the keynote speakers.

TOPIC-ORIENTED SESSIONS

Will host papers selected around common research questions in order to foster discussion.

WORKSHOPS

DESIGN 2026 workshops will promote integration of different views, approaches and methods. Workshop coordinators could invite selected presentations and demonstrations in order to stimulate the debate as well as to propose any format of delivery that inspires interaction. The workshops will be organised on the 18 May.

PHD STUDENTS' FORUM

The forum will be a unique opportunity for younger researchers and PhD students to discuss their research questions and ideas with experienced researchers, practitioners and R&D managers in order to facilitate their research efforts.

THE DESIGN DEBATE

The purpose of the design debate is to investigate in a forensic manner some key topics that affect the engineering design research community. Two opponents and the debate moderator will be distinguished key players in the community presenting evidence for or against a particular topic.

REVIEWING POLICY

Papers will undergo a double-blind review process conducted by the members of the Scientific Advisory Board.

The review criteria will be the novelty and level of contribution, validity of conclusions, industrial or application perspective and formal qualities of the contribution.

DESIGN Conference papers are published online as open access. All papers are indexed in SCOPUS and WOS - CPCI and referenced in CrossRef with DOI identifier.

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T O P I C S

DESIGN THEORY AND RESEARCH METHODS
- New directions in design theories, models and frameworks
- Experimental design research methodology
- Multidisciplinary and cross-domain research methods
- Design research typology

DESIGN ORGANISATION, COLLABORATION, AND MANAGEMENT
- Organisational transformation by design for Industry 4.0
- Agile design workflows
- Co-creation, co-design, and participatory design strategies
- Team collaboration and communication
- Innovation strategies (open, social, frugal, digital)

DESIGN INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE
- Design representations and information structuring
- Decision-making rationale and support
- Standardisation and design knowledge automation
- Knowledge-based engineering

DESIGN METHODS AND TOOLS
- Modularisation, platform-based design, and product families
- Requirements, uncertainty, and change management
- Prototyping methods, tools, and modalities
- CAx/PDM/PLM and digital thread integration
- Usage of supportive methods and tools

HUMAN BEHAVIOUR AND DESIGN CREATIVITY
- Design thinking and problem-solving
- Neuro(cognitive) approaches in design
- Behavioural factors in design
- Supporting design creativity
- Measuring creativity and its impact in design

DESIGN FOR SUSTAINABILITY
- Sustainability-driven product and system design
- Circular economy strategies in design
- Eco-design and sufficiency-based innovation
- Technology integration for sustainable design
- Design for social sustainability

DESIGN FOR HEALTHCARE
- Strategies for managing healthcare ecosystems
- Digital health systems and telemedicine
- User experience in medical service design
- Ethical and safety considerations in medical technology
- Life sciences and design

DESIGN FOR ADDITIVE MANUFACTURING
- Design approaches for AM
- Digitalisation and optimisation of AM workflows
- Topological optimisation frameworks
- Multi-material AM design
- Performance benchmarks and certification in AM

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND DATA-DRIVEN DESIGN
- AI-driven generative design
- Machine learning for product development
- Large Language Models (LLMs) assisted design
- Data-driven and data-informed design processes
- AI for smart product-service systems

INDUSTRIAL DESIGN
- User-centred and inclusive design
- Aesthetics and visual impression
- Social relationships and emotional design
- Ergonomics and human-centred usability

SYSTEMS ENGINEERING AND DESIGN
- Architecting cyber-physical and IoT systems
- Simulation and virtual testing of complex systems
- Model-based systems engineering (MBSE)
- System-of-systems integration and validation
- Safety, resilience, and robustness in engineering systems

DESIGN EDUCATION
- Competency and skills development
- Digital and remote learning
- Project- and problem-based learning
- Emerging tools in design education
- Adaptive learning frameworks

ENGINEERING DESIGN PRACTICE
- Geometrical modelling and advanced CAx applications
- Advanced visualisation and virtualisation cases
- Case studies of design methods application
- Best design practices from industry

IMPORTANT DATES

1. Full paper submission deadline
   15 November 2025
2. Final acceptance of papers
   2 February 2026
3. Publish-ready papers
   16 February 2026
4. Final conference programme
   April 2026
5. DESIGN 2026
   18-21 May 2026

PROGRAMME CHAIRS

P. John Clarkson
University of Cambridge, United Kingdom

Tim McAloone
Technical University of Denmark, Denmark

Julie Stal-Le Cardinal
CentraleSupélec, France

Sandro Wartzack
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CONFERENCE VENUE

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ORGANISING SECRETARIAT

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