

# RESEARCH THEME

XXVII cycle - a.y. 2021/2022

**Title of the doctoral research** Design thinking to nurture workplace diversity. How *creative confidence* can foster inclusion and overcome resistance to change in organizational culture

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**Abstract**

The integration of Design in corporate culture is relevant and consolidated phenomena. In this scope, Design researchers and practitioners are interpreting Design Thinking as a means to merge the design culture into the organizational one.

Previous research confirm how Design Thinking adoption can permeate the organizations and activating changes at different levels: organization's performances, processes, core competencies but also values and individual behaviours.

This research proposal relies on the hypothesis that training employees' **creative confidence** and nurturing a design mindset generate new virtuous organizational behaviours. In this scope, nurturing **diversity** in the workplace represents an urgent cultural change for businesses; maximizing employee potential by **including** a broad range of individuals represents a timely challenge.

Design Thinking integration can foster a cultural approach where individuals with different life experiences, cultural backgrounds and learning styles fully and effectively contribute within an organization.

Thus, this research aims to build a robust analysis of the connection between Design Thinking and Diversity and Inclusion management, building a framework that explores how design culture can permeate the *meso-level* of the organizational behaviour. The intent is to define a path of action-research that can effectively identify, test and validate Design specific approaches that activate a process of cultural change in organizations.

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**Keywords** Design thinking, Behavioral change, Diversity management