

RESEARCH THEME

XLI Cycle – a.y. 2025/2026

Title of the doctoral research Collaborative Storytelling Practices. Re-Shaping Co-Designing Content and Experiences in Marginal Contexts

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Abstract

Grounded in in-field research experiences, storytelling is intended as a practice that supports design processes and participation (Piredda and Ciancia 2022; Bertolotti et al. 2016; Anzoise et al. 2014). The overall aim is to develop reflections on Narrative Change (Hansen 2020), exploring the role of designers in crafting experiences that foster agency for those on the margins (hooks 1984). This entails focusing on situated knowledge (Haraway 2016) and the design of more agonistic (Mouffe 2013; DiSalvo 2015), inclusive communicative environments that foster alternative counter-narratives to hegemonic ones, while supporting both individual and collective identity (re)construction processes.

Engaging in participatory storytelling practices brings the challenge of addressing relational and power dynamics. Creating the right environment for relationships is critical in (re)shaping the narrative agency of participants. In this context, the narrative itself becomes the framework within which these relationships are enacted. Designing with a narrative approach elicits the aesthetics of relationships.

The proposed research theme aims to open-up theoretical reflections on co-design practices in marginalized contexts, while creating tools and formats that stimulate collaborative innovation processes within local communities. The research will focus on promoting ecosystem-based social innovation in particularly polarized contexts. Special attention will be given to the inclusion of marginalized communities, empowering them to express their perspectives and engage in dialogue with others living and/or working in the same situated context.

Keywords

Narrative Change, Ethics of Storytelling, Co-design Practices