

RESEARCH THEME

XLI Cycle – a.y. 2025/2026

Title of the doctoral research Rediscovering Craft for Situated Design Practices:
Indigenous Knowledge and Craft Material Culture for Regenerative Ecologies

Proponent professor Valentina Rognoli

Abstract

This research explores how indigenous knowledge and craft-based material cultures can inform situated design practices that contribute to regenerative ecologies - social, cultural and environmental. It proposes to rediscover craft not as a static or nostalgic heritage, but as a dynamic, living system of localised knowledge, creative adaptation and resilient making practices rooted in specific communities and ecosystems.

By investigating craft and situated materials, embodied techniques and traditional ecological knowledge through a design-led perspective, the project aims to reframe craft as a generative field of situated innovation. It will explore how designers can engage ethically and collaboratively with these systems to promote cultural continuity, biodiversity and alternative models of production and consumption.

The research will contribute to the development of material libraries and design methodologies that support plural, contextual and regenerative futures - valuing material intelligence, interdependence and the cultural relevance of making.

Keywords craft materials, indigenous knowledge, situated design