



International
Gender for Excellence
Research Conference
Proceedings

**Selected Papers
and Abstracts**



Edited by

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Part 1

**International Gender for Excellence in
Research Conference Proceedings**

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Using a Gender Lens to Examine the Field of Design: Design, Education, Methods, Sustainable Production

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Abstract

The field of design, from research to practice, through the production of different kinds of artifacts, both tangible and intangible, is responsible for the perpetuation and materialisation of stereotypes and oppressions. It conveys cultural models that are closely linked to the subjectivity of those who create the designs, and thus embraces social constructs based on pre-established models with perennial immobility.

The role of designers therefore becomes fundamental, as they have the responsibility to share with a wide audience thoughts that, explicitly or implicitly, carry with them a particular subjectivity. This will inevitably have consequences for the context into which that subjectivity is incorporated.

When observing the role assumed by the designer from the perspective of socially sustainable production, it therefore becomes interesting to observe the design discipline by starting from gender studies concepts. This is true both from a content point of view, analysing the gender gap within the design system, and, from an intersectional perspective, analysing the oppressions generated by this system in terms of the biases contained within processes, design tools, and artifacts. Methodologically, it is valuable to start from the methodologies of feminist pedagogy and compare them with those used in design education.

In order to address both content and methodology, this research is divided into two parallel experiences of analysis in the field:

- firstly, insertion into the Italian company Barilla; in this corporate context, the examination of the project will be filtered through the lens of gender studies, making it possible to develop new concepts capable of subverting the

patriarchal vision that, still today, perceives gender as a dichotomous system based on an oppositional and complementary man/woman model;

- secondly, at the Swiss university FHNW Academy of Art and Design, the fieldwork consists of participation in didactic experimentation, part of the cycle 'Educating Otherwise', a research project that seeks to put design education under an intersectional lens.

The two research experiences, and the data collected, will be compared, allowing us to obtain an overview of the discipline of design in its entirety, with the aim of consolidating awareness about the role that gender studies can play in the design field. The final step will then be project-based, with the aim of thinking about a multi-faceted educational and project-based path applicable to the educational context of design in Genoa.