



**Titel: New Nordic Design Thinking**

ECTS: 20 ECTS

Teaching language: English (unless all enrolled students are Danish speaking)

Examination language: English

Grading: Pass/fail

Assessment of 20 ECTS participation: 3000-word written essay in the form of a publishable scientific paper.  
Oral presentation of the paper at a conference or research seminar.

Period: Spring semester and August 2017

Offered in: Kolding (with some activities in Odense)

Approved:

Approved by the Academic Study Board of Design and Tourism: 5 January 2017

Approved by the Dean's Office, The Faculty of Humanities: 30 January 2017

**Subject director:**

Jacob Buur, SDU Design Research, Department of Design and Communication

**Prerequisites:**

Students in SDU Master programmes and final year of Bachelor programmes.

Applicants are accepted based on a motivated application letter, CV, grade record and interview. Based on the submitted material, students are selected for an individual interview to establish the details of the student CV and to elaborate on the motivated application letter. In the selection procedure, the grade record weighs 50 percent, and the motivated application letter, CV and interview weighs 50 percent.

Selection criteria:

*High academic level:* A top grade record in the regular study programme.

*Expressiveness:* Ability to creatively express opinions and ideas orally, visually, in text, video, theatre or otherwise.

*Urge to explore:* Daring to try new ways, to experiment and reflect, to question status quo.

*Initiative:* Drive to take initiative and responsibility. Students may already have had leadership roles in sports, special interests, social activity.

*Collaborative skills:* Ability to establish networks and collaborate with others inside and outside university.

We will accept min. 10, max. 25 students.

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this programme is to educate game changers, strong in their own discipline but also skilled in co-creating untraditional solutions too complex societal and corporate challenges in cross-disciplinary, holistic, democratic and inclusive ways. No matter which profession an academic education aspires to, real

life problem solving requires insights from a variety of professions – as indicated by the project structures of today's organisations. Thus, innovators of tomorrow are not only competent in their own profession but also agile in activating those of others. We achieve this by training the students in consultative practice in private and public sector organisations while at the same time nurturing their research curiosity.

Internationally, Design Thinking has proven to be very promising for developing untraditional solutions to both business problems and complex societal challenges. With a departure in a particular Nordic tradition of holistic, democratic and inclusive design practice, a new Nordic perspective on Design Thinking has the potential to re-vitalise the concept of design thinking. The programme brings together the design insights from three disciplines across SDU faculties:

- Design Cultures: A Nordic understanding of form and values (HUM)
- Participatory Innovation: The Scandinavian tradition of collaborative design (HUM and SAMF)
- Design and Innovation Management as practiced in Scandinavia (SAMF)

Nordic countries have strong traditions in each of these three fields, and SDU in particular holds ground-breaking research.

In a collaborative research endeavour the programme students and faculty will investigate what is particularly 'Nordic' in design culture, design management and participatory innovation as well as investigate how 'Design Thinking' as concept and practice can apply beyond design to each of the students' main study disciplines.

#### **Learning outcomes:**

The objective of the talent programme is that the student should acquire and demonstrate:

Knowledge about:

- Nordic traditions of Design Cultures,
- Nordic traditions of Participatory Design and Participatory Innovation
- Nordic traditions of Management and the role of management in facilitating design and innovation

Skills to:

- Conduct explorative studies
- Analyse cultural conditions of design
- Establish co-creation processes
- Facilitate stakeholder interactions in co-design,
- Communicate project findings in designerly ways

Competence to:

- Initiate, organise and manage collaborative design/innovation processes
- Engage consultatively with private, public, and mixed public/private sector organisations.
- Solve problems that require cross-disciplinary solutions
- Enact own profession in cross-disciplinary teams.

#### **Form of instruction:**

The teaching in the programme emphasise experimental learning and aims at the solution of future oriented challenges.

*Project sprints:* The programme runs in three concentrated project sprints. Each sprint includes three 4-hour master classes, a 2-day camp in a case organisation, and a reflection seminar. The master classes each combine lectures from two design disciplines on research knowledge and key practices. They expose the students to cross disciplinary synergies and challenges, and serve as a preparation for the camp. The 2-day

camp is project oriented: the participants are asked to respond to a real life challenge with the case organisation and come up with proper design solutions. The camps explore the challenges of (1) a private design-oriented ('iconic') company, (2) a municipality with co-creation ambitions, and (3) a public-private innovation consortium (e.g. in the health sector).

*Peer facilitation:* Representatives of the students join the programme faculty in organising each 'sprint' to establish a collaborative milieu between student cohort and professors. We relish the opportunity to work as a 'learning organisation' optimising process and procedures continuously to secure best learning outcomes.

*Individual coaching:* We will invite the accepted students to individual sessions at the beginning of the semester to establish what individual learning goals the student is setting for her/his participation in the programme. Coaching continues in 'learning sets' of five students to learn from each other's unique professional backgrounds to be able to 'play each other good' in the following co-creations. The semester concludes with an evaluative session to reflect the individually formulated learning goals and offer the students feed-forward on her/his career and further professional development.

*Nordic outlook:* Towards the end of the first semester, students will present their results at the *Nordic Design Research Conference* in Oslo June 2017 at a special workshop on the theme of New Nordic Design Thinking.

**Teaching language:**

The teaching and mentoring language will be English (unless all enrolled students are Danish). Essays and presentations are completed in English to allow the use of international examiners.

**Assessment:**

Attaining 20 ECTS requires participation in the three sprints (March, May, August) and conference participation (June). Assessment is based two aspects: (1) a 3000-word<sup>1</sup> written essay in the form of a scientific paper publishable at an international design research conference (equivalent to the NORDES conference paper specifications). The paper may be authored individually or in groups of two students. The paper outlines a position statement on the theme of New Nordic Design Thinking based on the extensive design experimentation and analysis conducted in the course innovation camps. 'Publishable' here means that the paper is either accepted in peer-review process at a conference or deemed of acceptable research quality by examiners. (2) An oral presentation of the paper at a design research conference or research seminar. Based on the scientific paper and the oral presentation evaluated with regard to design experimentation, analysis, originality and level of cross-disciplinary solution and reflection, grading is pass/fail with internal examiner.

Master students who complete the 20 ECTS programme receive an Honours Degree on their diploma, if also their main study programme is completed within the regular study period. Bachelor students need to complete also the +10 ECTS New Nordic Design Research course in Autumn 2017.

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<sup>1</sup> 3000 words correspond to a position paper in the NORDES conference paper format (<http://nordes.org/nordes2015>)

**Specification for the diploma (competence profile):**  
SDU Talent Programme: New Nordic Design Thinking

Candidates in the Talent Programme of New Nordic Design Thinking have attained knowledge about Nordic Design Culture, Participatory Design and Design Management. Candidates have taken part in cross-disciplinary problem solving in collaboration with a private sector design company, a Danish municipality and public-private innovation consortium. In addition, the candidate has presented a position statement paper at a scientific design conference on the theme of New Nordic Design.