POLITECNICO MILANO 1863

CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OPEN FOR USER-CENTRED DESIGN WORKSHOP OPTIONS
First-year students
DIGITAL AND INTERACTION DESIGN

From 16 to 23 March 2026, students in **their first year** of the **LM Digital and Interaction Design** programme who have it in their study plan will be able to choose the **USER-CENTRED DESIGN WORKSHOP** theme.

All workshops will be held from 8 to 12 June 2026 (the teacher may organise meetings in the preceding weeks).

1 WORKSHOP
Augmented Interaction. Co-designing in Virtual Worlds for boosting innovation
Francesca Rizzo

This workshop reimagines co-design through Virtual Worlds (VWs), pushing the boundaries of innovation across established and emerging industries.

Over the course of the workshop, participants will engage with VWs and co-design, focusing on how these platforms can foster innovation by engaging stakeholders across the design process. The workshop is linked to OPENVERSE ([Fact Sheet](#); [Website](#)), an EU-funded project under Horizon Europe, dedicated to creating open, inclusive, and ethically responsible VWs that strengthen innovation.
The workshop will leverage the foundational knowledge developed by OPENVERSE, providing insights into VWs and their potential impact on industries. OPENVERSE's user research and previous expert sessions will be shared, equipping participants with knowledge to explore how VWs can currently welcome/support co-design and how these virtual environments could be "hacked" and "exploited" to better enhance co-design capabilities for industries.

A selection of VWs will be used as settings of co-design. Among them: **Engage VR, Resonite, Fortnite, Spatial and VRChat**. Each platform offers its unique approach to co-design, with specific affordances and agencies that may either enable or hinder co-design processes.

Participants will be invited to reflect on the following guiding questions:
- What are the key affordances of Virtual Worlds that enable or hinder co-design in/for industries?
- What strategies and "hacks" could be applied to enhance Virtual Worlds' capabilities for boosting innovation-driven co-design processes?
- How to use design tools and methods in Virtual Worlds exploiting and leveraging their affordances?

Therefore, during the workshop, participants will (i) experiment within these environments, (ii) leveraging and hacking tools and methodologies from OPENVERSE, (iii) address promising industries which may benefit from their affordances, by (iv) going into hands-on design activities within selected industries — from fashion to entertainment/videogame, healthcare, cultural heritage and museum, industrial and service design.

Maximum 45 students

2 WORKSHOP
Future lenses
Benedikt Gross

In this workshop, we will explore how alternative futures can be envisioned and constructed through collaboration with generative AI. Working from the premise that futures are plural and shaped by different perspectives, students will engage AI not simply as a tool, but as a creative partner in speculative design processes.

Over the course of the workshop, we will experiment with different "futures lenses" to reinterpret and redesign everyday objects. Using strategies drawn from critical and speculative design—such as constraints, exaggeration, and absurdity—we will transform these approaches into prompts for AI image and text generators. Through iterative exchanges with AI systems, students will decontextualize familiar artefacts and reimagine them across multiple speculative scenarios.

The workshop unfolds as a playful yet critical co-creation process. Students will learn to apply design futuring strategies to generate novel artefacts and scenarios, while cultivating awareness of AI's creative potential and limitations. Particular attention will be given to documenting prompts, iterations, and reflections, building a transparent design process that integrates human and machine creativity.

As a collective outcome, the class will develop a "catalog of fantastic things": a curated collection of speculative objects composed of AI-generated images and/or texts, accompanied by short narratives and critical reflections. Final presentations will highlight both the produced artefacts and the reasoning behind them, demonstrating how different futures lenses open up distinct possibilities for objects and systems. By the end of the workshop, students will have developed a working ability with AI image and text generation tools, strengthened their capacity to articulate and compare alternative futures, and produced a documented speculative artefact that challenges assumptions about everyday life. No advanced technical skills are required—only curiosity, critical engagement, and a willingness to experiment collaboratively with AI.

Maximum 45 students

3 WORKSHOP
In collaboration with Aarhus University, TU/Eindhoven, Tecnico Lisboa, ULapland
Sustainable Interaction Design
Davide Spallazzo

Workshop description: In this one-week intensive workshop, students from five European universities will collaborate on a real-world sustainability challenge proposed by a non-governmental organization, within the framework of the Erasmus+ SID project. Working in mixed international teams, participants will engage with principles and tools of Sustainable Interaction Design, exploring how systems thinking, circularity, and social impact can inform interaction design processes and outcomes.

Structured as a Design Sprint, the week will guide students from framing the challenge to generating ideas, building prototypes, and testing them. Through lectures, mentoring sessions, critiques, and hands-on teamwork, students will develop concepts that address environmental, social, and systemic dimensions of sustainability. Prototypes may take the form of physical mock-ups, digital wireframes, service scenarios, or system maps, and will be presented to faculty and NGO representatives at the end of the week.

By the end of the workshop, participants will have developed and tested a sustainability-oriented design proposal, gained experience in rapid collaborative prototyping, and strengthened their ability to integrate sustainability as a core value in interaction design practice.
Students will be hosted in Lecco from Sunday to Friday, with accommodation provided for the entire week and lunches offered thanks to Erasmus+ EU funding.

Maximum 15 students

4 CROSS DISCIPLINARY WORKSHOP (Lecco Campus)
Designing Participation: Exploring Ways, Tools, and Technologies for Living Together
Profs. Ingrid Janita Mulder, Saad Sulonen, and Anna Meroni

The **PoliMi Summer Break 2026** consists of intensive, coordinated, cross-disciplinary workshops, along with field activities, open to both PoliMi and visiting students. Now in its third edition, the program (in collaboration with **Aalto University and TU Delft**) proposes a combination of activities on the theme of Participation for living together. It will be organized into two intertwined workshops: one led by Ingrid Mulder (TU Delft – titled "Depolarizing public debate. Designing authentic participation in peaceful and inclusive ecosystems") and the other by Joanna Saad-Sulonen (Aalto University – titled "Collaborative explorations of the multiple forms of participation and participatory trajectories"), preceded by online activities, mentoring, and a field experience curated by Anna Meroni (PoliMi).

Maximum 5 students

Students must express 4 options: students can indicate their interest by submitting their application through the **16 to 23 March 2026** online services: Admission request → Admission to selection procedures → User Centred Workshop 1 year DID

Cfu: 6

Language: English

In order to draw up a merit ranking, the following will be taken into consideration:

- Weighted average

It is recommended that all 5 options be listed in order of preference to avoid automatic allocations.

For information regarding the submission of applications
programmazionedidattica-scdes@polimi.it

For educational information, please submit a ticket by selecting the OPTIONAL COURSES-WORKSHOPS section https://www.design.polimi.it/it/invia-una-mail