Curriculum 2018-2020

Code:

Credits: 120 ECTS cr

Responsible Professor: Arja Karhumaa

Aims of the Master of Arts (Art and Design) degree

The aim of the degree is to provide students with:

1. good theoretical and general knowledge of as well as artistic and practical expertise in their field of study as well as a general knowledge of the field of arts;
2. knowledge and skills needed for independent and demanding artistic work and for multidisciplinary collaboration as well as knowledge and skills needed to apply scientific knowledge and scientific methods;
3. knowledge and skills to perform, both independently and collaboratively, demanding expert, development and management duties of the field, and to cooperate internationally;
4. knowledge and skills needed for education leading to a Doctor of Arts (Art and Design) degree and for lifelong learning;
5. good language and communication skills for work in the field of arts and for international operations and cooperation.

The education shall be based on scientific research and artistic activity and professional practices in the field.

Learning Outcomes

Within the vast field of visual communication, a graduate of the VCD programme understands design as a multiplicity of positions practices such as:

Material practice: The student has a sense of authorship regarding both form and content, and a solid understanding of the tools, technologies, materials, and media they work with;

Communicative practice: The student knows how to shape and organise information and narratives within various knowledge domains, and to consider different audiences and collaborations in multidisciplinary and multicultural settings;

Critical practice: The student is able to deliberate on how design relates to meanings, values, representations, cultures, and power structures. They are familiar with contemporary critical discourse, and adopt that to explore new modes of action within design;

Research practice: The student knows how to apply research methodologies and academic writing in order to investigate practice-based or theoretical research questions related to design; and

Project management: The student is able to manage collaborative and iterative design projects, and to envision entrepreneurial and autonomous strategies for emerging design practices in contemporary working life.

Students with a Concentration in the Information Design will also be able to:

- Deal with trans-disciplinary approach learning various methods and analogue and digital tools for dynamic as well as static forms of Data Visualisation and Information Design.

- Build knowledge combining theory and practice approach through various mcourses, studio courses, hands on tools learning courses and Projects Studies bringing artistic and real-life challenges in classroom situation to create unique learning experiences.
- Develop their own approach in a peer learning and iterative and experimental approach in achieving clear learning outcomes.
- Design for Digital Public Services, Information Design for Journalism, Information Graphics to explain concepts, Visualise Business insights and revel scientific Visualisation, Legal information Design, Geographic Maps, Location based information Design and Information Design in narrative context.

Students with a Concentration in the Visual Narrative will also be able to:

- Relate their own design practice within the frameworks of narrative studies and contemporary design discourse
- Use design as a tool for inquiry, reflection, speculation, and storytelling, and to publish self-initiated and/or assigned projects whether in print, digital media, or emerging technologies
- Demonstrate mastery in various aspects of narratives within design, employing skills such as writing, typography, mapping, interactivity, and hierarchy.

Education Content

The purpose of the programme is to situate visual communication design within societal, cultural, political and environmental frameworks. Visual communication is seen as a material practice involved in multiple and diverse knowledge domains. The programme supports the student in finding their own voice and strengthening their individual design approach, all the while fostering a sense of community, collaboration, and peer learning.

The student is encouraged to master their skills in their chosen area, such as information design, visual narrative, or design that is investigative and critical in nature. They acquire methodological skills in design research and develop a responsible view of the effects of visual communication while deepening and broadening their competencies.   The master's programme is intended to be completed in two years. The student makes a personal study plan that builds on their background and interests, and supports their master's theses. The degree structure provides the student with an opportunity to pursue studies towards a minor in the other schools of Aalto University or at other national or international universities.

Visual Communication Design with a Concentration in Information Design

Information Design combines perspectives from various disciplines which include Visual Perception, Multi Sensorial Perception, Cognitive psychology, Systems thinking, Human Computer Interactions. Information Design is a good combination of Art and science to generate effective and enjoyable information experiences in a context.

Purpose of information design is to make insights and making meaning out of complex and entangled data or information for creating enjoyable and understandable information experiences.

Visual Communication Design with a Concentration in Visual Narrative

The Visual Narrative track looks into all the various ways narratives are embedded in design practices. The student is introduced to various theoretical frameworks they can feed into their practice. They are invited to create and publish narrative, editorial, and/or investigative design projects where they can strengthen their sense of authorship as well as their design skills, and their sensitivity to critical, cultural and contextual issues.