

Collaborate and lead

Research at TU Delft
Faculty of Industrial Design Engineering

Once every five years, academic institutes undergo a rigorous research assessment. An independent committee of academic peers is appointed to dissect, digest and deliberate on the institution's research performance before passing a final judgement.

In normal circumstances such a research assessment is a hotly anticipated event. In 2020 that was even more the case, with a global pandemic added to the mix. Inevitably the virus posed numerous practical obstacles, leading to a process re-design and ultimately an online assessment.

The outcome is one which TU Delft's Faculty of Industrial Design Engineering can be very proud of. The committee commended the faculty for its **“highly relevant”** programme, ranking the faculty's research as **good to excellent across the board**. They emphasised that TU Delft “can be proud of having a strong design faculty with international reputation and experience in multidisciplinary collaboration.”

The committee's recommendations are neatly summed it in the subtitle of the report: “Collaborate and Lead” – something that IDE is uniquely qualified to go ahead and do.



IDE's mission

The Faculty of Industrial Design Engineering's has three strategic ambitions each anchored by a mission to **match the evolution of people and revolution of technology**. These are:

- addressing the needs of society by increasing efforts to deal with the complexity of societal challenges (systemic design)
- making Artificial Intelligence work for society by embedding it in designed solutions
- driving the development of ways in which design can be done. In other words, Designing Design.

These strategic ambitions are put into practice through the faculty's three chosen themes - **Health, Sustainability, and Mobility**.

The committee praised IDE's well-chosen strategic ambitions and recognised the faculty's movement and energy to go to a new future state.



Lead

Designing Design

As a discipline, design has been changing. Today some of the historical terms fall short of explaining the ambitions and impact of 21st Century design. As a pioneer in design research, the faculty can play a leading role.

“The committee urges IDE to step in and define the direction that design research should take.”

Define the field

The committee valued our goal of strengthening the scientific standing of design and challenged us to take the lead.

“Be offensive in positioning design as an academic discipline. The committee recommends to use IDE’s position to push the frontiers, within and outside the Netherlands.”



Bring design to society

IDE has a unique and strong research community, capable of taking the lead when it comes to promoting design. The faculty already enjoys successful collaborations with other leading design schools such as Politecnico di Milan and Aalto, with whom it collaborates via the Graduate School and in research projects. IDE can build on these foundations and push on multiple frontiers to bring about **societal impact**.

Define the impact

The relative value of different research contributions is a matter of debate – both within design research and academia in general.

In the process of the research assessment, IDE took its first steps in defining indicators and will pursue the question of research outcomes further, making the value of contributions more explicit to the community.

“It is important to distinguish, recognise and stimulate two types of valuable outcomes: on the one hand traditional publications in academic journals and other publication outlets, and on the other hand design-specific contributions such as demonstrations, exhibitions, commercial societal impact, design awards.”



Collaborate



IDE has a history of successful collaborations: within the faculty itself, across TU Delft and outside of the University. IDE already works in partnership with business, institutes and societal partners, especially around the chosen societal challenges of mobility, health and sustainability. The faculty should build on this to drive the application areas and **grow the impact of Delft Design**.

“Collaboration inside IDE and outside IDE [is] key for the successful implementation of IDE’s strategy.”

To see the latest developments in IDE Research visit:
<https://www.tudelft.nl/en/ide/research/>

To read the full report, please visit here:
<https://www.tudelft.nl/onderzoek/onze-onderzoeksvisie/kwaliteitszorg/resultaten>