



The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts
School of Architecture
Institute 4 – Design and Communication

Graphic Design – the relation between the design and perception of typefaces

The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, School of Architecture, Institute of Design and Communication invites applications for a PhD scholarship in Graphic Design. Applicants should describe their projects within the following research theme:

Background

As a research and teaching area at the School of Architecture, the graphic design subject area focuses chiefly on the design of typefaces and symbols and of graphics in an architectural context, i.e. signage in general and wayfinding in particular.

Theme

As urban development grows increasingly complex, greater demands are made as regards the legibility of all sorts of signs in public space. However, so far, existing research in typeface perception has mainly been directed at printed media, and research on the perception of typefaces for signs is even more deficient. Consequently, the design of both reference and road signs and actual traffic signs are more often than not based on estimates and conventions.

Therefore, it is necessary to initiate practice-based research on signage in urban environments. Research will be based on perception studies of wayfinding situations in relation to signs. As a significant part of the project, the objective of the studies will be to clarify factors concerning legibility and reading speed. The project should also contain an experimental practice-developing part that will develop and test concrete typefaces and their performance in different contexts in relation to urban spaces and legibility.

This research theme combines two of the subject area's most significant current research areas: original typeface design and wayfinding.

The object of the PhD project is to strengthen research on graphic design and to contribute to the School of Architecture's experimental and practice-based research.

Method

The PhD studies will be based on perception research and empirically founded studies of signs/wayshowing *in situ*. In addition to documenting a new research field in a Danish context and collecting empirical data related to legibility under variable conditions, the project should result in an original, experimental design of typefaces to be used in urban environments.

The Institute

The PhD project is located at the Institute of Design and Communication, which covers the following subject areas:

Design, Information and Communication Technology and *Visual Communication* as well as *the Center for IT and Architecture – CITA*.

This Institute's area of study encompasses architectural design – with its various design-related specialisations, including graphic design – architectural tools and methods for description and visualisation for use in documentation, analysis, design and communication processes, as well as information technology and its possible uses in the design process.

The design process is the Institute's common overall subject area. It includes the study of design as artistic, architectural work, as a part of systems and processes, and the study of design as a methodical process ranging from sensing and reflection to the creation of appropriately designed objects. This process includes the study of the architectural profession's work and communication tools, drawings and IT.

The Institute of Design and Communication participates in interdisciplinary and international collaboration with both academic and profession/industry orientated partners. These collaboration projects consolidate and extend the researchers' international and national networks. Teaching at the Institute develops common foundational disciplines in a crossfield between analogue and digital tools and technologies. New creative hybrids between research and teaching have been created in the form of courses and workshops, which provide students with the opportunity to engage in specific aspects of architecture's field of possibilities through practice-based design methods, whereby they acquire methods for innovative problem-solving.