

Call for book chapter proposals: The transformative power of exhibition and experience design.

Submission of interest (250–500 word abstract and 100-word bio) – due September 1, 2024

The turbulence of current times has brought real world challenges into sharp focus and has raised questions about how design can address and even mitigate against growing systemic social and environmental perils. Exhibition and experience designers specialise in communicating difficult or complex content in ways that engage people’s imaginations, stir their feelings and provoke critical thinking. What is the innovative practice that we can turn to for inspiration here? What obstacles emerge? What means do we have at our disposal to create deeply moving exhibition experiences that transform people’s minds and even their behaviour?

Book Description

This multidisciplinary anthology focuses on four main global challenges: social polarisation; racial injustice; the climate emergency; and techno ethics. The book investigates how exhibition-making teams are tackling these concerns and how they reflect on their work. It explores how diverse and collaborative exhibition-making teams use visual and sensory storytelling to create powerful, immersive experiences that communicate aspects of the global challenges in an accessible and inviting way. It also asks how exhibition-makers evaluate their processes, what works well and what doesn’t, and how they measure the impact of their exhibitions on their audiences, the institutions, and clients they are working for.

It is intended that this edited volume will be global and thoroughly inclusive with a substantial representation of exhibition-makers from the Global South. It seeks a high level of diversity and discussion concerning the intersections of design and pressing socio/economic and environmental issues. We are interested in chapters that explore one or more of the topics above, but we do not exclude other important global challenges that you might feel relevant to this context.

Book Themes

Social polarisation

Exhibition and experience design projects/topics that aim to communicate current historic divisions and efforts to overcome tensions around gender, sexuality, class, economic status, race, age, physical disability, biases, and neurodiversity. It also embraces issues about audience accessibility and inclusion.

Racial injustice

Exhibition and experience design projects/topics that take a critical look at current or historic race relations and people’s struggles for equal rights. It might also include exhibitions about immigration, political resistance, and reconciliation.

Climate emergency

Exhibition and experience design projects/topics that explore the changing climate and related themes such as the fall in biodiversity, multispecies cohabitation, air and ocean pollution, sea level rise, waste, and the circular economy. It might also include exhibitions that are experimenting with materials that can be reused and designed for longevity.

Techno ethics

Exhibition and experience design projects/topics that engage audiences with the ethics of AI (Artificial Intelligence), AR (Augmented Reality) and VR (Virtual Reality). This theme could also encompass the ethical pros and cons of new methods emerging in the exhibition-making process.

Book Format

We are looking for chapters that offer a critical analysis of one or more case studies. The chapters will range from 2,500-5,000 words and be accompanied by 6-8 images. We welcome other chapter formats, such as transcribed interviews with key project participants/personnel, or visually driven approaches such as illustrated narratives and storyboards. The book will be published as part of the [Museum Making](#) series by Taylor and Francis. It will be distributed internationally with an anticipated release date in early 2026.

Submission Requirements

If interested in contributing the book, please submit an abstract of 250–500 words with three case study images, and a 50–100 word bio for each contributing author to the volume editors, Tricia Austin p.austin@csm.arts.ac.uk and Tim McNeil tjmccneil@ucdavis.edu by **September 1, 2024**.

Book Editors/Reviewers

[Tricia Austin](#) is a PhD Supervisor Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London where she founded MA Narrative Environments in 2003. She has lectured in Europe, Asia and Latin America and led a number of collaborative projects with universities, businesses and governmental organisations across the world. Her most recent book is *Narrative Environments and experience design, space as a medium of communication* which was published by Routledge New York in 2020.

[Tim McNeil](#) is a Professor of Design at the University of California Davis and Director/Chief Curator of the UC Davis Design Museum. He has spent over 30 years as a practicing exhibition designer working for major museums, researching exhibition design history and methods, and teaching the next generations of exhibition design thinkers and practitioners in the Americas, Europe, and the Middle East. He recently authored *The Exhibition and Experience Design Handbook* published by Rowman & Littlefield/American Alliance of Museums (2023).

Research to Date

Between February 20 – May 8, 2024, Tricia Austin and Tim McNeil chaired eight online forums with invited exhibition and experience designers and firms from all over the world. Each participant was

asked how any one of the challenges (social polarization, racial injustice, climate emergency, techno ethics) affects their practice and how they respond to it as designers. The forums offered an opportunity for practitioners to share their visions for the exhibition/experience design medium beyond the constraints of the commercial context.

On June 20–21, 2024, Tricia Austin and Tim McNeil will co-chair the biannual 2024 SEGD event in Washington DC, themed “Transformational Impact of Exhibition and Experience Design,” it is set to explore the pivotal role of design in addressing today’s complex global challenges.

These inspirational and highly informative events and forums have/will provide a testing ground for the book’s hypothesis – positioning exhibition designers as change agents that are successfully tackling these complex topics in their work and demonstrating the important transformational impact of exhibition and experience design on society.

Brief version of the call

Call to contribute a book chapter proposal about the transformational impact of exhibition and experience design!

This multidisciplinary anthology will focus on four main global challenges: social polarisation; racial injustice; the climate emergency; and techno ethics. The book investigates how exhibition-making teams are tackling these concerns and how they reflect on their work. It explores how diverse and collaborative exhibition-making teams use visual and sensory storytelling to create powerful, immersive experiences that communicate aspects of the global challenges in an accessible and inviting way.

If interested, please submit an abstract of 250–500 words with three case study images, and a 50–100 word bio for each contributing author to the volume editors, Tricia Austin p.austin@csm.arts.ac.uk and Tim McNeil tjmcneil@ucdavis.edu by **September 1, 2024**.