AUTODESK FOUNDATION

INTRODUCTION TO IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR DESIGN

OVERVIEW

How might designers and architects utilize impact assessment strategies, tactics and tools to show the effects of their work? This is the question we will address during a 90-minute roundtable discussion. After a brief introduction to our research project on impact assessment, we will dive into discussion on what is impact measurement, how to incorporate it into the design process, why it's important, and which organizations are leading the charge. Participants will then break out into small groups to learn and test the Theory of Change, a popular tool to map project and organizational impact. Finally, we will wrap up with key lessons learned and 'impactful' steps each participant can use for their work.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of this class, you will be able to:

- Understand the importance of impact measurement within the context of the architecture and design industries.
- Become familiar with the impact assessment planning tool Theory of Change.
- Learn how to apply Theory of Change to a project or organization..
- Obtain knowledge about different organizations that are currently measuring their impact and the relevant context within which they work.

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

Gilad Meron is an independent designer, researcher, strategist and writer focused on community-based design practices and design education. His current work includes research and program development for the Autodesk Foundation, strategy and visual communication for Enterprise Community Partners, and research that explores emerging models of social impact design firms. With backgrounds in design, research and environmental psychology, Gilad brings a rigorous research-based approach to impact assessment focused on both qualitative and quantitative metrics.

Katie Crepeau is an architect, writer, and strategist focused on socially-engaged design and enterprise. As Editor at Autodesk Foundation's Impact Design Hub, she has developed a deep understanding of the field through curating, interviewing and writing daily posts on people, projects, and happenings around social impact and community design. With a keen interest in bettering the communication of design's impact, Katie has been testing impact measurement systems with small and medium sized design organizations in the US and UK.

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INTRODUCTION TO IMPACT ASSESSMENT 5 MINS

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT?

To enable designers to use their resources most efficiently and effectively to create the maximum impact for beneficiaries and funders.

Through our research, we aim to:

- Build understanding of existing impact assessment frameworks and tools by exposing the logic and identifying best practices.
- Demonstrate the value of applying impact measurement into the design process.
- Encourage designers to communicate the impacts of their work through a variety of disciplinary lenses.

To achieve our mission and aims, we have three main activities:

- **Awareness:** Develop a set of resources that enable designers to gain a broader awareness and understanding of how and why impact measurement is important to the design process.
- **Application:** Compile a set a tools that will be simple and useful for incorporating impact measurement into their design process (project level) and operational process (organization level).
- **Discourse:** Convene experts from different disciplines to provide field-specific knowledge on impact measurement, advance discourse and establish partnerships to develop case studies.

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DISCUSSION 15 MIN

TOPIC 1

WHAT DOES IMPACT ASSESSMENT MEAN TO YOU?

How do you define impact assessment?

Does your firm practice or engage in impact measurement in any form?

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DISCUSSION 30 MIN

TOPIC 2

HOW DO YOU DETERMINE WHAT TO MEASURE?

What are related or analogous fields/disciplines you could look to?

What are the different indicators that you could look to measure?

What types of data could you collect?

What are tools, metrics, or methods you could use?

What are visual or graphic tools to map your plan for measurement?

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DISCUSSION 15 MIN

TOPIC 3

HOW TO INCORPORATE ASSESSMENT INTO YOUR PROCESS?

When do you incorporate impact measurement into a project?

Who is responsible for doing this?

How might you analyze and evaluate the measurement you take?

How might you use the information gathered to inform or direct your project process?

How might you report or disseminate your measurement work?

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DISCUSSION 15 MIN

TOPIC 4

WHAT IS THE VALUE OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT TO YOU?

What might be potential value of measuring impact for your firm or work?

How might impact assessment relate to affect your financials?

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WRAP-UP 10 MIN

What were key lessons learned from the discussion?

What might you use and apply to your own work?

What is one action you can take to incorporate impact assessment into your work?