

# DESIGN FUTURES



# STUDENT LEADERSHIP FORUM

**May 21**

**May 25**

**2018**

**University of Detroit Mercy**  
**Detroit, Michigan**  
**[DesignFuturesForum.org](http://DesignFuturesForum.org)**

## WORKSHOP REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Please submit proposals to  
[admin@dfstudentforum.org](mailto:admin@dfstudentforum.org)  
no later than February 2, 2018



### **DESIGN FUTURES STUDENT LEADERSHIP FORUM REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS 2018**

Design Futures Student Leadership Forum is seeking elective workshop proposals from practitioners and educators in design, planning, community development, community organizing, philanthropy, social entrepreneurship, public health, economic development and related disciplines for the 2018 Design Futures: Public Interest Design Student Leadership Forum

The University of Detroit Mercy will host the 6th annual Forum from May 21st through the 25th, 2018 (previous conferences held at the University of Texas-Austin in 2013, Tulane University in 2014, University of Kansas in 2015, University of Virginia in 2016, and University of Minnesota in 2017), and supported by a consortium of leading member schools and funders from across the country.

With five very successful Forums behind us, we are excited to expand our practitioner-faculty network even further and attract a broader base of the leading thinkers in this emergent field to share lessons learned, contribute to this professional network, and support the growth of our future leaders. Each year we make sure to include new workshop leaders and welcome back successful workshops from previous years. If you've never submitted a proposal or have been unsuccessful in the past, we encourage you to try this year. And whether you're a seasoned professional or in the early stages of your career, we welcome you to apply.

### **WHAT IS THE DESIGN FUTURES STUDENT LEADERSHIP FORUM**

The Design Futures Student Leadership Forum is a five-day, interdisciplinary convening bringing together student leaders from across the country with practitioners and university-faculty to learn and discuss best practices in social equity and community impact. We typically welcome 60-70 students from as many as 14 participating schools of design, planning and related disciplines, as well as 30-40 practitioners and faculty attending with their students and/or leading workshops throughout the forum.

At the Design Futures Public Interest Design (PID) Student Leadership Forum, we frame the conversation broadly, but try to engender leadership and skill-building for future leaders hoping to use design as a tool for social equity and positive change in and with historically marginalized communities. Our guiding principles include striving to build the next generation of leadership in the field; continuing to diversify the ecosystem of PID in terms of discipline, background, race, gender, and scale; elevating the rigor and critical capacity of PID curricula; and curating a national network of thought leadership drawn from contributing universities and practitioner-faculty committed to the advancement of the field.

We do this through the five-day forum, as well as through the nurturing of our student and faculty (both practitioner and academic) networks, and our consortium of committed member schools. Our goal is to foster peer-based professional development through enrichment and critique and to counter the dispersed nature of this emergent movement by creating opportunities for collaboration and collective innovation.

For more detailed information about the event and its evolution, please look over our website and the annual yearbooks produced: [designfuturesforum.org/forums](http://designfuturesforum.org/forums).



## FRAMING THE 2018 FORUM

The relationship of the built environment disciplines with issues of social equity and community impact has evolved significantly in recent years, from an increased focus within communities and institutions, to the increasing emergence of work that more explicitly addresses social justice. If the events of the past year have shown us anything, it is that the need for these disciplines to more deeply invest in the latter continues to grow. That investment includes training the next generation of practitioners to not only understand the traditional skills around shaping the built environment and undertaking community engagement, but also what are the components of the systems of oppression that continue to enable the context that we're working in, the history of forces in the built environment and beyond that produced that context, the ways in which we engage in the system through our own power and privilege, and the skills needed to understand what community engaged design leadership looks like in an intentional landscape defined by actors, allies, and accomplices.

Throughout its history, Design Futures has consistently evolved to provide a dynamic learning environment in which this next generation can gain the knowledge and skills needed to become effective agents for change. In response to the changing needs of our larger national and global contexts, this year, we're introducing two learning tracks: Core and Electives.

NOTE: although the core will be a closed selection process this year, the selection committee is enthusiastically soliciting submissions for its elective workshops.

### Design Futures Core

The Design Futures Core will provide the foundational knowledge mentioned above and will be taught by an invited group of leading practitioners of those issues. The courses to be taught as part of this core curriculum are as follows:

#### Oppression 101: What are the components of the systems of oppression impacting the context that we're working in?

This training will be a platform to create a shared definition and understanding around the concepts of oppression including racism, sexism, ableism, classism, (etc) and how these methods of oppression intersect with each other and appear in everyday life from personal experiences to institutionalized examples. Participants will be able to identify how these oppressions manifest in the built environment and community-engaged design, and discuss tools to dismantle and address these issues to move towards justice and equity as outcomes.

#### History: How did we get here and how has the built environment played a role?

This lecture will highlight the history of injustice and oppression, and how it has been codified in the built environment. Examples will be framed on a national and policy level, while also using place-specific examples in Detroit to contextualize and concretize how injustice has manifested in neighborhoods while also providing programs, efforts, and campaigns that have successfully addressed and negotiated these oppressions.

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### Privilege and power and fragility: How do we understand our own positionality and self work in the context of these issues?

This workshop will outline and collectively explore concepts of privilege and power and how these important ideas exist in community-engaged design. Participants will reflect on their own positionality, including their fragility and their privilege, and understand how these are fluid and complex in projects. Students will workshop tools around personal agency and how to leverage their power but also learn to identify fragility and how this can also impede projects.

### Leadership and Allyship: How does leadership need to look different to advance social equity?

This training will explore examples of authentic leadership, partnership and allyship with communities and in movement building. Participants will expand their understanding of leadership to include how to situate themselves within the frames of actor/ally/accomplice and what it means to show up within these frames in the communities that they work with. Students will gain awareness around multiple forms of leadership, including fostering and supporting the leadership of others and knowing when to step up, step back and step aside.

### Design Futures Electives

In addition to the core, there will be several Design Future Electives, which is the focus of this request for proposals. This elective curriculum is intended to provide the practical skills needed to support application of the foundational knowledge within built environment projects. Examples of practical skills include — but are not limited to — understanding financing for low income real estate development, specific methodologies for building successful stakeholder partnerships, and understanding successful models of revitalizing distressed commercial corridors. These are just examples, we are very open to your ideas and what you think future leaders in community engaged design need to know!

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### Strong workshop proposals must:

- Be interactive experiences for all participants. While it may be necessary to have a lecture style introduction to the workshop, it should be brief and prepare the students for some kind of hands-on, interactive learning experience.
- Have clear learning objectives that are tied to developing specific skill sets.
- Be appropriate for a multi-disciplinary group. While the majority of participants are attending schools of design and/or planning, we also have participants coming to this work from different fields such as urban ecology, engineering, public health, business, and others.
- Directly address how your own work addresses equity and social justice.
- Provide a “takeaway for practice” handout or resource (e.g. best practices case studies, community engagement workshop types list, “my path to PID,” etc.)
- Fit into either a 1.5-hour or 3-hour time slot.



Proposals must include the following for review by the Design Futures Student Leadership Forum selection committee:

- Name of workshop facilitators
- Contact Info for all facilitators
- Title and organization for all facilitators
- Proposed Workshop Title
- Proposed Workshop Summary (Specifically respond to the values articulated in the framing of this year’s approach, including how the workshop will engage some or all of those issues (be specific as possible); 500 word limit)
- Learning Objectives (at least three bullet points)
- Example(s) of Possible Exercises
- Example(s) of a “takeaway for practice”
- Audience (Workshops are open to both Design Futures students and faculty. If the content of your workshop is more appropriate for a student only audience (e.g. because of power dynamics, issues of vulnerability, etc.), then please note that and include an explanation. If the content is appropriate for all, then you can leave this blank.)
- Relevant Past Teaching/Training/Workshop Experiences (at least three)
- Statement of Work (brief description of your work and how it addresses equity and social justice, with specific examples; 250 word limit)
- Whether you are requesting a 1.5-hour or a 3-hour time slot

## HONORARIA AND OTHER RESOURCES

Successful workshops will each be awarded a \$1,500 honorarium that is expected to cover all travel and accommodation costs. If there is more than one facilitator we will likely be able to support part or all of the travel of an additional presenter and will work with successful workshop applicants to best allocate these funds. There will be a local hotel identified with special discounted rates for Design Futures faculty. We will also coordinate two evening working dinners where the Design Futures faculty cohort can get together and discuss their work as a peer group and more generally explore the growth of public interest design and related fields.

Design Futures faculty are also expected to commit at least a day and a half of their time to participating in Forum events—most of our colleagues find attending other sessions to be quite beneficial to their own professional development, and they find engaging deeply with high quality students to be energizing and enriching as well.

In addition to the honorarium, accepted faculty will also receive access to the Design Futures Faculty LinkedIn group where they can further connect with social impact thought leaders and receive access to academic and professional resources. They will also receive an invitation to attend an annual faculty retreat where participants share challenges, opportunities, and models in teaching and practice.

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## SELECTION PROCESS

All workshop proposals submitted are reviewed in full by the selection committee. The committee is comprised of five members; the Design Futures Program Director, two members of the Advisory Board programming committee, one representative from the host institution (University of Detroit Mercy), and one Design Futures alumnus/a from a previous year.

The committee reviews applications for alignment with the criteria. In addition to assessing the quality of the workshop proposed, the selection committee has a mission to foster a diverse faculty cohort and will take into consideration the diversity of the workshop presenters (in terms of gender, race, age, professional affiliation, geographic location, and career advancement) when making its final decisions.

Please be advised that only one application per institution is permitted.

## SCHEDULE

**Friday December 8th, 2017 - RFP released**

**Friday February 2nd, 2018 - Deadline for workshop proposals**

**Friday March 2nd, 2018 - Successful applicants notified**

## FAQs

*If I have applied in the past but was not selected, can I reapply?*

Sure! If you were not selected in the past, please review the criteria to better understand what makes for a strong application. We have tried to make our criteria clearer each year so that workshop leaders can better focus their proposals.

**I have questions about my application and/or the submission process. Where can I get help?**

Email [admin@dfstudentforum.org](mailto:admin@dfstudentforum.org) with any questions you have about your application or the submission process. Please email at least one week in advance of the deadline if you have questions about content for your application.

**More than one person in my organization wants to submit a proposal, how do we proceed?**

Given that we limit applications to one per organization (be it a school, professional firm, non-profit, etc.), if there is interest from more than one person or group of people in your organization we ask that you develop an internal selection process and choose which proposal you would like to put forward for consideration.

**Can I submit an application to lead one of the core workshops?**

No. This year we are reaching out to specific people to lead these workshops. In future years we will likely run an RFQ process to lead the core workshops, but this call is for proposals for the elective workshops.

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