Carnegie Mellon University

School of Design.

Our specialized **Bachelor of Design** degree—with tracks in **Communications**, **Products**, and **Environments**—prepares students for the profession of Design or advanced study.

Why design?

At its heart, the discipline of design is about solving problems. It's no wonder businesses and institutions are embracing the value of design, and the demand for design professionals has never been greater.

In the Bachelor of Design program, you will learn to design communications (graphic design), products (industrial design), or environments (physical and digital spatial interactions).

Our graduates go on to positions with leading companies, firms, and organizations. Others start their own businesses, and some become design researchers and educators. The career possibilities—and your potential to make an impact on the world—are limitless.
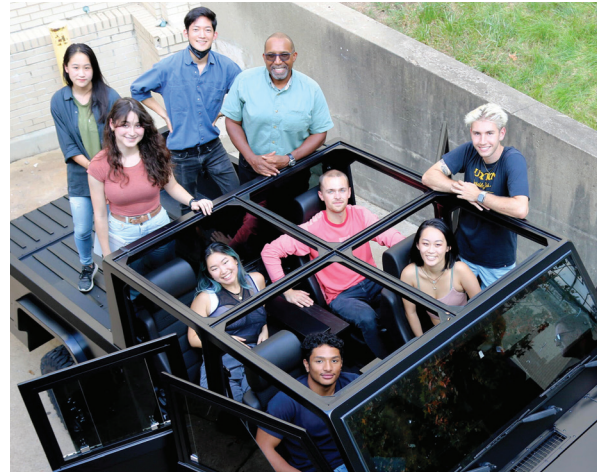
What kind of designer do you want to be?

Look around you. Almost everything you see was designed by someone. Products and communications are all around us, and they come together in physical, digital, and hybrid environments.

Whether you want to create things such as the next smartphone app, the next generation mobile device, a new interactive digital experience, or a line of sustainable furniture, the BDes degree has you covered.

Importantly, you will learn why design is an essential discipline for addressing complex social, environmental, and economic systems, and taught to create outcomes that enhance life experiences.

Program outcome examples:
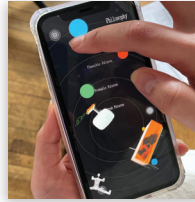
Communications
posters, books, exhibitions, websites, mobile apps, devices, brand and identity systems, music videos, motion graphics, information design, interactive systems, and multimedia

Products
furniture, electronic and mobile devices, medical, sporting and outdoor equipment, tools, toys, safety devices, functional apparel, household goods and appliances, and transportation

Environments
interactive exhibits, branded environments, multi-sensory experiences, spatial sound and spatial computing, smart environments and interactive devices, narrative storytelling, and mixed reality

Work and play in your own dedicated space.

Our undergraduate studios are an exciting, creative place to be. Your desk is home base, with lockable cabinets for your materials and pin-up boards for inspiration or work in progress.

You'll be immersed in the culture of design, working alongside classmates who will offer encouragement, feedback, and opportunities for collaboration.

We are located in the historic Margaret Morrison Carnegie Hall, designed by renowned architect Henry Hornbostel and built in 1905—a great place to study design. Our school facilities include 2D and 3D prototyping labs, a photo studio, and a state-of-the-art spatial experience lab.
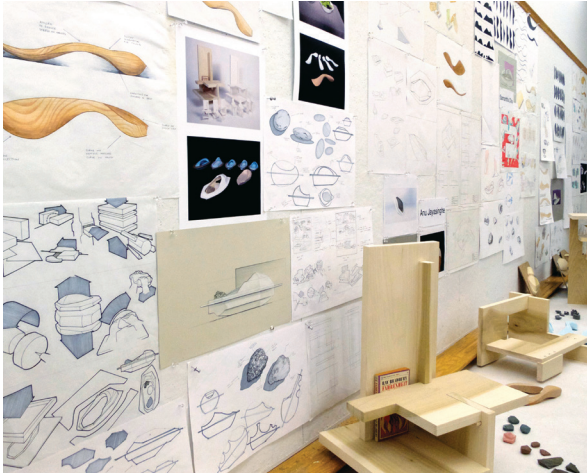
First Year

Fall

Explore basic concepts in design by deconstructing products, communications, and environments. Examine interactions in the built and natural worlds from a design perspective.

Studio: Survey of Design
Investigate how design works in the world, and learn to describe your thinking about design through sketching, modeling, photography, and video.

Visualizing
Use visual design tools and methods to communicate ideas.

Place
Examine identity, values, and worldview through the history of the local bio-region.

Histories
Explore a plurality of design histories beyond the dominant, Anglo-European story of design.

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Core@Carnegie Mellon
English
Psychology

Spring

Work on projects to develop skills across all three design tracks: products, communications, and environments. Enhance your understanding of the broader impact of design in the world.

Studio Design Lab
Practice design approaches, methods, and tools.

Collaborative Visualizing
Learn to work with others to visually generate, iterate, and refine ideas.

Photo Design
Learn how to deconstruct and construct images in the world and in the studio.

Futures
Analyze trends to discern likely futures and then imagine more desirable ones.

Experience
Explore how design touches people's lives and shapes their world.

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Humanities & Social Sciences Elective

Sophomore Year

Fall

Select a design track and investigate the roles that physical, visual, and digital forms play in our lives, and learn methods to understand how people think and work.

Studio I: Form & Context
Learn through project work that focuses on form, context, and interactions.

Prototyping Lab
Refine skills using design tools.

Design Selective
Study basic principles of human-centered design and research methods.

Systems
Draw models of relationships within systems to identify where and how to intervene.

Cultures
Understand differences between people stemming from ethnicity, gender, class, etc.

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Academic Elective

Spring

Take a deeper dive into your selected design track. Build knowledge, hone skills, and learn methods and processes that help you develop and refine your ideas.

Studio II: Design for Interactions
Develop design approaches and methods that expand your knowledge of the discipline through focused project work.

Prototyping Workshop
Develop skills to prototype and iterate design concepts.

Persuasion
Learn verbal argumentation and improvisation, as well as social media strategies.

Power
How the concepts of politics and the political intertwine with design.

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Academic Elective
Free Elective

Junior Year

Fall

Work on projects in your track that expand your view of contexts, constraints, and other system-level design considerations.

Studio III: Design for Complex Systems

Practice advanced design approaches and methods that introduce the constraints of professional practice.

Design Elective I

Choose from a mix of courses— some focus on building skills, while others deepen your experience in design.

Design Elective II

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Academic Elective
Free Elective

Spring

Apply your design training to engage with social and human-centered systems- level problems. Develop the communication skills to create compelling stories about your concepts.

Studio IV: Design for Social Systems

Focus on project work that requires various levels of scale, mediums, applied contexts and established systems.

Design Elective III

Design Elective IV

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Academic Elective
Free Elective

Senior Year

Fall

Work within your design focus to gain broader knowledge and experience. Prepare for the next steps on your professional path by working on projects with real-world constraints.

Design Studio V

Focus on design approaches, methods, and project work that explore the depth of disciplinary practice.

Design Elective V

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Academic Elective
Free Elective

Spring

Further take advantage of electives and outside courses that will further complement your unique sets of skills and knowledge. Work with faculty advisors on a self-defined project that synthesizes what you've learned.

Design Studio VI: Capstone Project

Work on a self-defined project that connects your design practice with people and world needs.

Design Elective VI

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Free Elective

Study with renowned faculty and work with corporate sponsors.

Our faculty bring an array of impressive skills from a variety of academic and professional backgrounds. They are known experts in industrial, spatial, and communication design, as well as design research, fine art, philosophy, human-computer interaction, and business.

We have a history of successful collaborations with leading companies, nonprofits, and academic partners—often connected to studio courses and faculty research. You'll have opportunities to work on real-world projects, interact with and present to sponsors, and work as an assistant on faculty research.

Selected faculty books:

Sponsored research and projects:

Boeing, Bollinger Motors, Bosch, Citrix, Disney Research, Ford, GE Appliances, General Motors, Google, IBM, Industrial Scientific, Innovation Works, Intel, LG, Microsoft, Motorola, National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation, Procter & Gamble, Qatar National Research Fund, Samsung, United States Postal Service, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, Vodafone

Gain access to a wide range of disciplines.

Our program is situated in a top-ranked multidisciplinary research university— a unique place where design, arts, sciences, and humanities converge. Here, you can minor in areas that complement your design focus such as engineering, psychology, business, photography, human-computer interaction, and more.

Design is a universal fit and benefits from the exchange of ideas and interactions with different areas of campus.

You can also explore study abroad options in your Junior year. Formal exchange agreements are in place with select institutions, complementing our curriculum and broadening the range of your experiences.
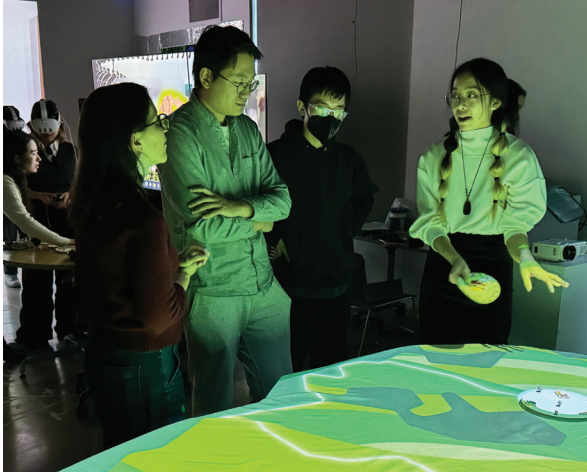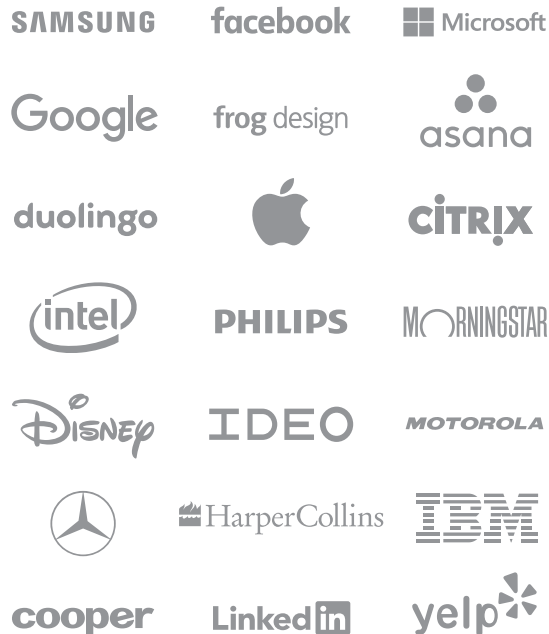
Take advantage of Confluence.

Each year, top companies attend Confluence, the School of Design's career event, to connect with our upper-level students and engage with our community to find their next intern or employee.

In the weeks leading up to the event, you'll work closely with faculty advisors to prepare your resume and portfolio, and hone your interview skills. Then at Confluence, you'll have the opportunity to speak with prospective employers and discuss your work.

You'll also have a chance to connect with alumni from leading firms across the country, who return to our School to pay it forward and recruit new talent.

SAMSUNG   facebook   Microsoft

Google   frog design   asana

duolingo   Apple   CITRIX

intel   PHILIPS   MORNINGSTAR

Disney   IDEO   MOTOROLA

Mercedes   HarperCollins   IBM

cooper   Linked in   yelp

These companies, and many others, have attended and recruited our students at Confluence in recent years.

Love where you live and learn.

Pittsburgh is recognized as a center of research, education, and technology. It's been named America's most livable city, most affordable city, and safest for walking—and it's among the best cities for young entrepreneurs.

You'll be able to walk or bike to world-class museums, libraries, parks, and restaurants. It's easy to find housing on or near campus, and you'll get to know people from around the world who now call Pittsburgh home.

As a design student at Carnegie Mellon, you'll be part of a diverse, intellectually rich community that fosters innovation and ingenuity.

Learn to design for the present and the future.

Increasingly, employers are recognizing the need for new problem-solving approaches that respond to mounting social and environmental challenges.

We acknowledge people's relationship with our planet and social system as the context for design problems and opportunities. As a result, our students become "systems thinkers," able to see and process complexity in a globally-connected and interdependent world.

Our program prepares you for top jobs in leading companies and organizations today, while teaching you to design with the future in mind.

Apply to our School and come for a visit!

Everything you need to know about applying to the School of Design can be found on our website: the application process, how to prepare your portfolio, information about planning a campus visit and studio tour, and important dates for application. Get all the details at design.cmu.edu/admissions, or contact our office at 412 268 2828.

The School of Design is a special place that is best experienced in person. We welcome the opportunity to meet with you and your family, and encourage you to visit as part of your application.

Undergraduate

BDes
Bachelor of Design

BXA
Interdisciplinary Degree

Minor
Minor in Design

Graduate

MDes
Master of Design in Design for Interactions

MPS
Master of Professional Studies in Design for Interactions

MA
Master of Arts in Design

Doctoral

PhD
Doctor of Philosophy in Design