Design and science

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Design creates new ways of research communication that allow a more exciting transfer of information.

For improving the dialogue between science and the general public, design plays a decisive role in visualising research projects and results in order to make them understandable to the public.

Just last fall, the Members of the Six Countries Programme (6CP) strongly suggested a fusion of the innovative areas of science and the creative community. The 6CP declared "creativity" one of the main topics for the near future.

At the design department of the Cologne University of Applied Sciences, the research project "Research Goes Public"1 has been working on the development, trial and documentation of innovative strategies for research communication since June 2000.

The contribution to this congress, "design and research", presents an innovative strategy for communicating science and research projects. A selection of projects and specific examples illustrates, how professional design can create new ways of research communication that allow a more exciting transfer of information.

Designers are experts for interfaces - not only for those of products, but also of the transfer of information and knowledge. They map out convincing strategies for visualisations and explain complex information, using distinct images and understandable, interactive processes.

Research Communication can appear with a variety of different interfaces: It can be light-weighted and playful, humorous and impulsive, even erotic. It can also be serious or mysterious, pleasant, dangerous or trustworthy.

The design of the process of visualisation and transfer strongly influences the understanding and impact on an audience.

Research can become an unforgettable experience for the general public and have a lasting effect that arises enthusiasm. Design is an aspect that does significantly contribute to such processes.

It will have to obtain a strong position in research communications in the future.