



Det Kongelige Danske Kunstakademis Skoler  
for Arkitektur, Design og Konservering

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## **Application for the CIRRUS board for the period of 2019 – 2022**

As newly appointed Head of Institute for Visual Design at The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts Schools of Architecture, Design and Conservation, KADK it would be a privilege to continue strengthening KADK's involvement in the CIRRUS network - following the great work of Tine Kjølser. In applying I also hope to bring new approaches and competences a deep knowledge and extensive experience in digital transformation and innovation to the CIRRUS network.

The past 15 years I have been traversing between academia, research and entrepreneurship within the field of digital design. I hold a Ph.D. degree from the IT University of Copenhagen finished in 2007 within social computing and third-wave HCI. My contribution was a design typology for mobile and digital affective usage, building on aesthetics, art, new media theory and phenomenology. As part of my Ph.D. I created courses in digital aesthetics to social software design and was involved in several arts and science projects.

Following my Ph.D. I have acted as external lecturer and continue to be a censor at the several Danish universities in the field of design, media and visual arts. I have acted as the industry partner in 3 years design research project Give&Take - funded by EU under the AAL program.

Having led numerous digital project and services from prototypes and experiments to large scale digital productions as a partner in a digital innovation design company, I have earned an extensive experience from praxis and research across different industries.

Working with digital design - professionally and as an academic – for more than a decade, I have come to see that digitalization needs design and arts even more than ever. Today we are facing social, ethical, mental and environmental challenges as technology becomes embedded in to our everyday life and is installed as the operating system of our societies. Design and artistic approaches are well positioned to challenge this paradigm.

As artistic driven design educations, we have a special set of skills within crafts and material knowledge that gives us the legitimacy to work against the unintended consequences that often arises alongside the pervasive technological development. Design and art can ask better questions and has more thoughtful, aesthetic and human sustainable answers and solutions.

This does however not mean that we should be working against digital and computational skills, and to stay analogue, instead we need to work towards creating and suggesting better use of the digital material and gestalts. We need to build on the existing crafts and skills to develop new methods, visions and have critical stances aiming for designing humanly preferable futures, not just technological possible digital futures.

It is, to me, obvious that the Nordic and Baltic countries have special answers to these systemic challenges, based on our particular democratic design history and our legacy within the deep design and crafts tradition. I see CIRRUS as an apt forum for extending and discussing this, and thus my motivation and hope to be considered for the board.

Kind Regards,

Martin Sønderlev Christensen, Ph.D.  
Head of Institute of Visual design, KADK