



Collaborative design team



iDON Doctoral course

International Design Observation Network

Organisers

Grenoble University, Luleå University

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Aim

The iDON doctoral seminar aims to give PhD students the practical skills in designing research studies, performing observations and analyzing empirical data. The seminar will focus on the observation of teams to understand the complex social interaction between members in a design team. The main approach is built upon seminars and reflective workshops lead by experienced researchers within the area of methodologies for field studies and design observations.

Objectives

Some empirical research is carried out in realistic conditions, at the place where the phenomenon occurs, but in some cases this is not doable. In an authentic design situation in an industrial setting gathering data can be difficult, for example people who are working in global design teams are not physically gathered at one place making it practically hard to study the phenomena. Yet, an alternative is to set up a specific case as an experimental study. One advantage of doing experiments is that the study can to some extent be controlled. But, setting up and performing experiments is also a main challenge to freshmen. Another challenge is related to the documentation and analysis of data gathered in experiments. Unsuccessful studies can contribute to a steeper learning curve, but it can also postpone the research education.

The iDON seminar gives participants insights into the characteristics of empirical research based on design observations. The participants will be coached to become aware of *when* and *how* to use design observations. Also, the issue of *what* can be observed will be reflected upon. Further, design observations can be applied for generating quantitative and/or qualitative data; the implications for this will also be included in the seminar discussions. The lectures on theoretical and methodological issues provide a sound basis for practical work to set up, perform and analyse experiments in a design observatory. The practical work will be jointly reflected upon, so that the students get suggestions for improvement and advices for the roll out of the 'real' experiment. The practical skills that the PhD students develop can be applied for field work (in situ observations) or in controlled experiments. The objective for the iDON seminar is to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of experimental research, and provide for PhD students to become knowledgeable in design observations. The mix of theoretical and practical workshops will give insights into methodological concerns for this type of studies, and, in turn, increase the possibilities for PhD students to design and perform robust and trustworthy research.

Beside the issues of when, how and what to observe, other concerns that will be discussed in the theoretical and practical workshops are:

- Differences and similarities in field work and experiments
- The application of observations in different research fields
- The role of the researcher
- Terms for research quality

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- Hypotheses, research purposes and research questions
- Measurements, unit of analysis, coding schemes

The iDon seminar is an opportunity to share best practises with researchers that are active within various disciplines within the design science field, and to build a network among research fellows.

Organisation

The organisation of the doctoral school is two folded: a series of *web seminars* and a *co-located seminar*.

In the web seminars, the experienced researchers from different research disciplines lead theoretical and methodological interactive lectures. The lectures present key points and concerns for design observations. For these interactive lectures, the participants are expected to contribute by being able to discuss the recommended readings etcetera.

The co-located seminar will take place at the Grenoble Design Observatory. During this week the attendees should set up, perform and analyse a design observation. To speed up the process the participants should have done some initial homework, so that the two first days could focus on specific features and advices on the research process. Participants are asked to embark from their own research projects, but also, the common design situation will be discussed. The following three days are hands on work to set up, perform and analyse a common experiment using the design observatory. During this time, appropriate tools and methods for this observation will be used. The process will be discussed and reflected upon, so that when leaving the co-located seminar the participants will have increased their skills in doing design observations.

The participants should also carry out different assignments.

Who should attend?

The course is developed for PhD students within the area of Design Science. The intentions are to attract students with different backgrounds and research focuses to provide for a multidisciplinary group. The PhD students should preferably have designed and performed one initial empirical study to be able to share their experiences within the group. Whether the study has been successful or not does not matter, since the reflections are based on methodological and theoretical implications of doing empirical studies.

Practicalities

TIME AND LOCATION

The preparation work will be organised in the month before the located week. 4 sessions of 3 hours supported by videoconference facilities, in **JUNE 2010**

The seminar will be held at the University of Grenoble (Grenoble Institute of Technology), France, in the city centre and close to the station.

The programme will start on the **5th July** and is scheduled to end **9th of July**

PARTICIPATION FEE

The participation fee is 250€ The fee includes the seminar running costs, food during the day and a Seminar Dinner. Participation fee do not include accommodation. Cancellations made before **1 JUNE** will be reimbursed with 10% deduction of the total fee. No reimbursement will be possible after this date.

APPLICATIONS

Interested doctoral students should register online (and add the required documents) no later than **10th of MAY**. Besides doctoral students, other researchers may participate. The number of participants will be limited to create a stimulating environment. The organisers will conduct the selection among the applicants. They will review the following documents that should necessarily complement each application form:

- the applicant's curriculum vitae demonstrating his/her capabilities of doing research,

- a letter of recommendation of his/her local faculty supporting the application,
- a two-page description of his/her doctoral research, indicating the general objectives and his/her experience of design observation.