

School of Design Master

Design

School Overview

The School of Design at East China Normal University was established in 2004. Leveraging the university's comprehensive disciplinary strengths and profound humanistic heritage, it maintains close collaborations with numerous renowned enterprises and overseas institutions. School of Design is dedicated to cultivating design professionals with international perspectives and innovative capabilities. At the master's level, the School offers Design (Professional Master) to the International Students, and students can apply for dual-degree programs in collaboration with international partner universities. The curriculum encompasses both Chinese-taught and fully English-taught modules, with enrollment of international students, fostering a strong international atmosphere and vibrant cross-cultural exchange. School of Design has established semester exchange agreements with over 30 universities in Europe, America and Asia. Students are eligible to apply for overseas semester exchanges, enabling them to experience diverse classrooms and gain international exposure.

For years, students of School of Design have consistently won numerous prestigious international and domestic design awards, including the Red Dot Award, IF Design Award, Muse Design Award, and the Gold Medal for Design at the National Art Exhibition. They have secured hundreds of design patents in total. Graduates from both undergraduate and graduate programs demonstrate outstanding employment performance, with stable career paths and high-quality job placements.

Program Overview

The Master's program in Design is positioned within the broad field of contemporary design practice and research. Responding to real-world challenges arising from social transformation and industrial change, the program establishes a talent-development framework characterised by practice-led learning, research-informed enquiry, interdisciplinary integration, and collaborative education. Delivered through a studio-based model, it adopts a joint supervision mechanism led by individual supervisors and supervisory panels. Drawing on both internal resources and an

extensive network of external partnerships, the program integrates teaching modules, thematic research, and applied projects into a coherent training pathway. Students are supported through a complete developmental cycle—from problem identification and contextual investigation to proposal development, prototyping and validation, and final dissemination—ensuring an equal emphasis on academic rigour and professional competence, and enabling learners to cultivate independent design judgement and a confident professional voice in situated contexts.

The curriculum is underpinned by art theory, humanistic enquiry, and design methodologies, and encompasses key domains including media and communication, product and service innovation, spatial and environmental design, and public culture and curatorial practice. It further extends into creative practices closely connected to contemporary everyday life, such as animation and moving-image storytelling, fashion and lifestyle design, and branding and packaging. In parallel, the program actively engages with the accelerating trajectory of digitization and intelligent systems by introducing computational approaches, data-informed thinking, and emerging media as both design language and creative toolkit. This supports advanced exploration in interaction experience, intelligent systems, and digital creation, and prepares students to propose integrated design solutions that are implementable, verifiable, and scalable within the intersecting contexts of technology, culture, and commerce.

The program's educational objectives focus on cultivating high-level, interdisciplinary, and innovation-oriented design professionals. Graduates are expected to demonstrate an international outlook and a strong sense of social responsibility; to conduct systematic research and work effectively across disciplines; and to possess robust project-delivery capability from concept through to implementation. At the same time, they should have critical thinking and aesthetic judgement, and be able to address public issues and societal needs through design, producing outputs with both scholarly value and tangible impact. Through a structured combination of coursework, studio practice, thematic research, and staged reviews and presentations, the program continuously strengthens students' research capacity, creative competence, and professional communication, enabling them to develop sustained competitiveness and long-term professional growth across diverse design contexts.

Degree	Master of Arts	Length (year)	2
Instruction Language	English	Classes Open to International Students Only	Yes

Major Courses

Introduction to Chinese Civilization; Design documents index and study method; Material and form; Studio Practice Course (1, 2, 3, 4); User Experience Design; Research on Innovation of Chinese Traditional Handicraft; Hybrid Drawing: Sensory Cities; Future Career Thinking: Dialogue with Professional Practices; Animation Masters Research; The Research of Iconology; Case Study & Practice: Image as Communication; Fashion Styling etc.

*Course details are subject to the School's orientation after enrollment.

After Graduation

Designer (foreign-funded enterprises design department, design studio), Start-up entrepreneurs, University lecturer, International high school teacher etc.

Scholarship Options

Chinese Government Scholarship

Shanghai Government Scholarship

* All scholarship students are required to take scholarship annual review.

Application Contact

Emma Li: jlli@gec.ecnu.edu.cn