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Proceedings of IASDR 2023: Life-changing Design

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IASDR Congress

Lifechanging design

Milan 9th-13th October

PROCEEDINGS OF IASDR 2023

EDITORS:

Daniela De Sainz Molestina Laura Galluzzo Francesca Rizzo Davide Spallazzo







Life-Changing Design

Proceedings of the 10th Congress of the International Association of Societies of Design Research (IASDR 2023)

EDITORS:

Daniela de Sainz Molestina Laura Galluzzo Francesca Rizzo Davide Spallazzo

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Introduction

The Tenth IASDR congress. An Introductory Address from the IASDR Board

IASDR 2023 is the 10th biennial congress of IASDR, and the first to take place after the crisis of COVID-19. With this congress we re-confirm the importance of discussion and debate for the network of researchers in design, as well as the importance of developing younger researchers for the future of the Association.

The International Association for Societies of Design Research (IASDR) was established in 2005 through a collaboration of four academic societies: Chinese Institute of Design (CID), the Design Research Society (DRS), Korean Society for Design Science (KSDS) and Japanese Society for the Science of Design (JSSD).

The history of international collaboration in Design Research in the Asian region can be traced back to 1996 when JSSD organized the first Japan-China Industrial Design Symposium which was hosted by Beihang University in Beijing, 1996. This started a series of international conferences in design research known as the Asian Design Conference. Conferences took place in 1997 (Daejeon, Korea at KAIST), 1998 (Taichung, Taiwan at National Taichung University of Science and Technology), 1999 (Nagaoka, Japan at Nagaoka University of Technology), 2001 (Seoul by National Seoul University), and 2003 (Tsukuba, Japan at Tsukuba International Congress Center). At the 2003 congress – the 6th Asian Design Conference – the three Asian academic societies agreed to welcome the Design Research Society into a new association.

We thus begun the International Association of Societies of Design Research for the field of design research in 2005, in Taiwan. Since that time, we have enhanced the network of researchers and fields of design research and promoted design research education. We will continue to build this incomparable network of design research as we move towards our 2025 congress, at Tapei, Taiwan.

Our deepest thanks go to Luisa Collina, and the entire Politecnico Milano team who have worked so hard, as hosts for IASDR2023, to ensure its success. Your leadership throughout the process has been excellent and we think the result will be much appreciated by the IASDR design research community.

Toshimasa Yamanaka President

On behalf of the IASDR Board
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Introduction

Life-Changing Design. Introduction to the Tenth IASDR congress

The International Association of Societies of Design Research (IASDR) has long been at the forefront of advancing design research, providing an international platform for researchers, scholars, and practitioners to engage in robust discussions, share insights, and explore the ever-evolving landscape of design research. IASDR 2023, the association's 10th Congress, stands as a pivotal juncture in the trajectory of design research, offering a comprehensive perspective on its current state while charting its future directions.

Over the past decade, design research has witnessed a remarkable transformation. From its roots in aesthetic considerations and form-centric approaches, design research has evolved into a multifaceted discipline, extending its influence beyond traditional boundaries. Contemporary design literature now encompasses a wide array of facets, each addressing critical aspects of design's impact on diverse domains, including organisational culture, public policies, product development, and the creation of immersive spaces, services and systems. This transformation underscores the dynamic nature of design research, as it continuously adapts to our society's changing demands and challenges.

The central theme of IASDR 2023, "Life-Changing Design", resonates profoundly in the wake of global events, particularly the unprecedented disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. This theme invites us to reflect on the profound transformations that have unfolded and continue to reshape our world. The pandemic has brought to the forefront questions about the role of design in navigating these changes, challenging us to explore how design can facilitate adaptation, resilience, and innovation in a rapidly changing world.

IASDR 2023 has been organised and host by Politecnico di Milano, where design keeps strong roots in the made in Italy tradition and where at the same time design opens up to the new territories of design research and to the new trajectories of innovation.

IASDR 2023 encompasses an array of thematic tracks, each dedicated to exploring critical dimensions of design research. These tracks serve as focal points for discussions and investigations, providing a framework for researchers to delve into specific areas of interest.

The following thematic tracks guide our exploration:

[Changing] Organizations and Policies

This track examines the transformative potential of design in the realm of public sector organisations and policies. It aims to foster social justice and sustainability by challenging traditional notions of prosperity. Researchers investigate how design equips itself with tools, methods, and frameworks to support systemic transformation, thereby promoting well-being and addressing complex societal challenges.

[Changing] Products and Production

This track focuses on the transformation of manufacturing processes and their impact on products and

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systems. It explores the proliferation of digital fabrication and digital craft, analysing their potential to revolutionise product development, sustainability, and business models. Researchers delve into how design can envision emerging materials, artefacts, and future scenarios from a sustainable perspective.

Identities and [Changing] Identities

Cultural identities and their evolution in an increasingly multicultural world take center stage in this track. Researchers delve into the roots of design's influence on identity, considering factors such as authorial identities, identity hegemony, and the implications of design on gender, class, and religion. Additionally, this track explores the role of design in translation processes, which involve revising systems, tools, and programs for communicating and preserving identity.

[Changing] Ecosystems

Addressing the imperative transition toward sustainability, this track examines how design contributes to the socio-ethical and economic dimensions of sustainability. It explores design for sustainable materials, energy, business models, and transitions, focusing on fostering positive environmental and social change.

[Changing] Communities

Community empowerment and sustainable behavioural change through design interventions are central to this track. Researchers investigate how design can enhance collaborative processes, codesign knowledge, and tools while addressing urgent public interest issues. The track emphasises shared decision-making, democratic participation, and the evolving roles of individuals, communities, and entities in supporting systemic transitions.

[Changing] Education

This track reflects on the evolving landscape of design education, recognising the complexities and challenges inherent in this domain. Researchers explore the inspirations for change in design education, the transformations it engenders, and the existing gaps and issues. This track seeks to foster clarity, identity, and adaptability in designing educational goals while embracing diversity and differentiation.

[Changing] Spaces and Services

Integrating spatial and service design to create innovative living environments and services is the central concern of this track. It explores how design interventions across various scales, from micro to macro, can drive transformative actions, enhance public participation, and guarantee inclusivity and diversity in service offerings.

[Changing] Interactions

The dynamic interplay between technology, social changes, and design forms the core of this track. Researchers investigate how digital technologies, augmented reality, virtual reality, and mixed environments impact interactions, communities, processes, and professions. This track emphasises the role of Interaction Design in shaping technology-based innovations responsive to social and contextual changes.

[Changing] Heritage

Preserving and reinterpreting cultural heritage in the face of global change is the central focus of this track. Researchers explore how design research can offer novel approaches to knowledge preservation and cultural experiences related to tangible and intangible heritage. This track seeks to activate participation dynamics that reintegrate relevant portions of cultural heritage excluded from current development paradigms.

IASDR 2023, with its overarching theme of "Life-Changing Design" and its diverse thematic tracks, presents an exceptional opportunity for researchers, scholars, and practitioners to engage with the dynamic landscape of design research. The conference serves as a platform for robust discussions, knowledge sharing, and the exploration of innovative solutions to society's complex challenges.

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By examining these thematic tracks and their intersection with the central theme, "Life-Changing Design," we aim to contribute to the ongoing dialogue surrounding design research and its transformative potential, fostering a deeper understanding of design's role in shaping our world.

Luisa Collina Alessandro Deserti Francesco Zurlo



Community voices in visual identity. A reflection on the social significance of dynamism in Visual Identity Design

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In a context where Dynamic Visual Identities (DVIs) are becoming increasingly widespread, this contribution aims to explore their potential from a social perspective. The focus is shifted from the characteristics and mechanisms for regulating variability to their ability to produce a positive impact and build value in a community context, fostering inclusion, relations, involvement, and participation. The presentation of the case study Milano 0.18 provides an example of a Visual Identity System that draws on dynamic features, generativity, and participation to operate simultaneously on multiple levels, representing and valuing the individual, the community, and society. The aim is to foster reflection on the tools and methods to create social value through a Visual Identity project, both in terms of the design process and its outcomes.

Keywords: dynamic visual identity; communication design; social design; community engagement

1 Introduction

Identity is a complex concept determined by and existing only in the relationship and opposition to the Other. In recent decades, the «awareness that identity lives dialectically in continuous dialogue with otherness» has led the communication project to move increasingly towards exploring and recognizing otherness, through the search for «new systems of visual representation, especially for public identity, that differ from previous ones. Models that emphasize the collaborative and participatory dimensions resulting from the introduction of generative and open-source practices into the project space» (Sinni, 2018 p.158 authors' translation).

Due to the constant evolution of society and rapid progress in technology, the concept of dynamism has gained importance in the design of visual identity, growing in prominence alongside the traditional value of stability. Even though the logo retains a central role, it no longer develops as a static element, an immutable seal of visual identity. Instead, it becomes a beating heart, able to spur change and adapt to circumstances, serving as a clear sign of a design that is alive, actively participating and contributing to the transformation of the world and society (Hughes, 2012).



The evolution of the identity system according to the principle of dynamism introduces new design and communication opportunities. For instance, variation within the visual identity can enable two-ways-communication, represent a broad spectrum of values and personalities, and reach a more extensive and diversified public. Due to these potentials, experimentation in this design field has been chiefly performed in contexts that value dynamism and changeability, especially in the public realm, in cultural settings like museums or theaters, and in the identity of regions and cities (Guida, 2014b).

The literature in this area mainly focuses on reasons and implications of the transition from static to dynamic visual identities (Guida, 2014a; Hu & Chen, 2010) and on the definition of paradigms and models to classify and categorize variation (e.g., Kreutz, 2001, 2005; van Nes, 2012, Martins et al., 2019), while the impacts and potential effects of a visual identity project, especially in a social and community context, remain largely unexplored. In this context, visual identity can play a crucial role in communicating cohesion and shared values, serving as an instrument for constructing identity within social formations, and reinforcing distinctiveness and internal cohesion through the creation of a sense of belonging and association.

The purpose of this contribution is to examine the dynamic qualities of visual identity and, through the presentation of the case study Milano 0.18, to emphasize their potential in social and community settings. It also aims to foster discussion on the approaches and tools for an inclusive visual identity project that can convey diversity and variety while still being recognizable, have positive effects, and generate value for society through the design process and its outcomes.

2 Dynamism in Visual Identity

Academics and professionals employ a variety of terms to discuss Non-Conventional visual identities (cf. Kreutz 2001, 2005). For instance, literature refers to them as dynamic (Felsing, 2010; Van Nes, 2013; Martins et al., 2019), variable (Kopp, 2002), mutant (Kreutz, 2005), flexible (Hollington, 2011) and liquid (Elali et al., 2012). In this work, we decided to adopt the adjective dynamic and to use the expression Dynamic Visual Identities (DVIs) to indicate all those systems that exhibit characteristics of variability, non-linearity, variety, performativity but also processuality, context-relatedness, and consistency (Felsing, 2010 p.13; Guida, 2014b p.122).

DVIs are defined and determined through the relationship between essential properties, constant and invariable elements of the system, and accidental properties, subject to variation (Sinni, 2018). Fixed components are essential for the user to recognize the brand, while the variability gives it room to live and evolve (van Nes 2012). The essence of DVIs lies in the different possibilities of combining these two elements, described as a sort of Controlled Randomness (cf. Siswanto, Dolah, 2019), where randomness represents an opportunity to expand the boundaries of the identity to incorporate a certain amount of otherness (Sinni, 2018), and the control lies in managing the multiple variables of a continuous mutation, and especially its constants (Ciuccarelli, 2007) to find a balance between consistency and change (Hughes, 2012).

What could vary — A visual identity design involves more than defining the identity sign. It encompasses a systemic direction of its relationships with artifacts and people (Tonkinwise, 2019). Therefore, constancy and variability are not limited to the graphic mark: they can affect its logogrammatic and pictogrammatic components (cf. Anceschi, 1981) individually or simultaneously,

but they can also impact the entire system, modifying visual languages along with any aspect of identity, from how it is applied in various contexts to its physical and material characteristics (Felsing, 2010; Hollington, 2011; Martins et al., 2019).

How it could vary – In Dynamic identities: how to create a living brand, Irene van Nes argues that there are several possibilities to generate a Dynamic Visual Identity system, and the key is to provide as much room for dynamism as possible while preserving recognition (van Nes, 2012). Based on this premise, in a context of variability, it is crucial to designate specific constants to ensure an identifiable connection between the different variations (Felsing, 2010 p.22). Consistency can be achieved by defining the system's fundamental components: a list of "ingredients" that can be combined with one another or with other elements to produce new variables. It can also be attained by establishing a variation rule, a general principle that can be applied to different subjects and objects to create a new image each time, or by identifying codifiable parameters to design "control knobs" and determining the degrees of freedom to operate¹. While these principles can contribute to building a sense of stability, there are numerous possibilities to produce dynamism through the individual components of identity. According to Martins et al. (2019) eight variation mechanisms can be identified that can be used either separately or in combination to achieve multiple variability effects: color variation, combination, positioning, repetition, rotation, scaling, shape transformation, and content variation.

Therefore, it is conceivable to affirm that «constancy and variability can be produced either within a sign through its various aspects (characteristics), or through various elements of the visual identity as a whole» (Felsing, 2010 p.17), and can be managed applying different rules and in accordance with multiple variation mechanisms.

When the variation occurs — Dynamism can be either a temporary characteristic connected to a specific circumstance or period or a permanent trait when the variation forms the core of the identity. In the first scenario, there is likely to be a hierarchy that favors the main image as the representation of the fundamental values above the variations that become bearers of a specific and ephemeral meaning. It is different when variability is an essential component of identity, in which case there is no dominant version, and the sense is produced by the sum of the expression of all its variants (Lélis, Kreutz 2019).

Why the variation occurs – The rationale behind variation activation is closely tied to the ideas of longevity and hierarchy discussed above (cf. Lélis, Kreutz, 2019). Flexibility may be necessary to adapt to various situations or media, to provide more information (Martins et al., 2019), or even to develop a narrative, engage users, forge connections with them, and provide them with a memorable experience (Lélis, Kreutz, 2019).

Who determines the variation – Variation may allow for different degrees of control. Kreutz (2001, 2005) theorized a distinction between two categories of DVIs: programmed, where a finite series of variations to be used according to pre-established timeframes and criteria is already foreseen in the

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¹ These principles derive from a reinterpretation of the characteristics defined by van Nes (2012) respectively as DNA, formula and generative.

design, and poetic, where the variation does not have to adhere to a previously determined plan strictly and can, therefore, admit a greater degree of freedom and unpredictability. This option allows for the involvement of those to whom the communication is directed, enabling them to influence the visualization of the identity through an action that prompts a codified response or more freely by codesigning and directly intervening to modify or personalize elements of the identity².

Given these variables, the designer can experiment with multiple combinations, emphasizing some features over others to affect the type of results and the impact generated by the identity project. In the knowledge that «design is not just a practice that produces artifacts: it is a cultural system that affects environmental and cognitive contexts, the structures of thought and the collective behavior, the form of cities, the places of life and every other social reality» (Zingale, 2022 p.24 authors' translation) this contribution intends to investigate the social potential of dynamism within visual identity, how it can generate a positive impact and build value in a community context, as well as the effects it can produce on the entire social ecosystem.

3 Community and Dynamic Visual Identity

Designing in a social context entails a forward-looking approach, focusing on a desired and desirable model of society; it means designing for the common good, understood according to Settis (2013), as the ability to nurture a long-term vision, invest in the future, care for and take responsibility for the community of citizens. Caring and concern for the community are crucial, especially at a time in history when relationships are becoming increasingly fragile due to a pervasive utilitarian attitude, growing individualism, and a progressive depersonalization of relationships (Aime, 2019). From this perspective, even the visual identity project can and must be considered, analyzed, and evaluated in terms of its ability to produce value for society, fostering inclusions, relations, involvement, and participation.

In a complex and layered social context, a visual identity project must operate simultaneously on multiple levels, valuing and enriching the individual, the community, and society. In this work, the term community, according to Aime's definition (2019), refers to a group of people who are connected by a subjectively felt sense of belonging and who share thoughts, feelings, and actions. In contrast, society, indicates a broader entity that can also be denoted as an association, which, unlike the community, rests on a rationally driven relation of interest, such as physical proximity (Weber, 1992; Aime 2019).

Representing the individual – A visual identity in the social sphere must first and foremost be able to represent the individual, enabling them to recognize themself in the system and to contribute to it by providing their input and expressing their qualities by creatively intervening in the graphic sign, performing actions that can have an impact on the system or sharing thoughts, ideas, and opinions.

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² For more information on the different possibilities and potential of the integration of participatory content within identity systems, refer to the contribution of Lélis and Kreutz (2021) The Realms of Participation in Visual Identity Design.

An individual-centered visual identity can foster self-determination processes and encourage active participation, sustaining the development of a community in which each member's contribution is perceived and highly valued.

Representing the community – Community is a multifaceted concept encompassing elements of similarity and difference, identity, and otherness (Aime 2019 p.102), and includes individual and collective experiences. A visual identity system that addresses it should be able to translate diversity while conveying a unitary vision, a perceivable and shared representation that allows the community to recognize itself and to differentiate within the broader context of society. The visual identity must also allow the community to communicate itself as a group, collaboratively intervening on the graphic sign, performing actions, or sharing collective opinions and interests. This can sustain the development and reinforcement of internal relations while fostering the ideals of collaboration and sharing, and self-awareness.

Engaging the society – In a social setting, a visual identity needs to look inward towards what it represents, and outward towards society as a whole (Sinni, 2018). It should be renowned, easily identifiable, and serve as a tangible sign and a trace for those still outside the group; it should aim to engage and motivate them to participate, supporting community growth by allowing more people to identify it in its outward expression.

These three principles served as the framework for designing the Milano 0.18 Visual Identity System.

4 Milano 0.18, designing with and for the community

The presentation of the Milano 0.18 case study provides a chance to reflect on the potential for the application of dynamic features in visual identity within the social sphere to create a system that can respond to context-specific demands, promote inclusiveness, enhance the diversity of individualities, and create a unified community image that can be disseminated and recognized throughout the city.

Milano 0.18 is a visual identity system developed in the framework of WishMi. Wellbeing Integrated System of Milan3, a project funded through the European initiative Urban Innovative Actions that aims to enhance well-being among children and young people in Milan through creative initiatives that address child poverty, inequality, and segregation.

The project started with confrontation and collaboration, engaging, in its first stages, 48 people among directors, organizational positions of the Municipality of Milan, and project partners in two workshops and various participatory activities to define the system's qualities and characteristics. The core values identified were Singularity, listening, inclusion, immersion, beauty, and dynamism. These values were employed as design axes to develop the visual identity. Singularity, as the design paradigm focuses on

³ Project lead partner: Comune di Milano. Project partners: Abcittà, Actionaid, Fondazione Politecnico di Milano, Università Cattolica, Design Department – Politecnico di Milano. The visual identity project is designed by the DCXW research group – Communication Design for Welfare: Valeria Bucchetti, Research Coordinator; Umberto Tolino, WP Leader; Pamela Visconti, Project Manager; Team work: Michela Rossi, Tommaso Tresso, Benedetta Verrotti di Pianella).

children and adolescents, with their subjectivity and individuality, as the unquestionable protagonists within the system and identity; listening, as the generative rule, transforms each person's voice, a metaphor for uniqueness, expression, and relation, in the element through which identity develops; inclusion, as the visual grammar, assures singularity and variation, through the use of a personal, yet transversal language; immersion, as the mode of interaction allows participation and activation; beauty, as the expressive translation facilitates accessibility to contents, fostering communication and building a positive, pleasant, and trusting relationship with young people; and dynamism, as the application formula enables the creation of a system in constant transformation and that can be deployed in both the physical and digital environments.

Dynamism, interpreted in this context, presents an opportunity to engage children and teenagers and to communicate the complexity of a community, to develop a visual identity that results from the collective layering of personal traces and that can adapt to multiple scales, serving at the same time as the representation of the individual, the community, and society.

Representing the individual — The need to express individuality through visual identity (why the variation occurs) led to the identification of the voice as the system's defining characteristic. The voice is an example of a personal and transversal language that embodies the values of listening, singularity, and relationship. To create a unique sign for each voice that can be recognizable within a broader system, a logo with generative features was designed (what could vary) that can react to sound and transform accordingly, resulting in potentially unlimited variations. Embracing multiplicity (cf. Remotti, 2010, pp. 52-54) as an identity paradigm, it was necessary from a design perspective to establish constraints and transformative properties to ensure that all elements could be modified without compromising recognizability and traceability to the system. In this instance, typography was designed to undergo elastic transformations, allowing each letter to lengthen and shorten along a vertical axis. Additionally, the underlying pictogrammatic, consisting of three "sunbursts" in three different colors, was conceived to vary according to the principles of expansion and radiation and it is subject to chromatic alternation (how it could vary; see Figure 1 for an example).



Figure 1. Overview of the generative characteristics of the sign: elasticity, expansion, radiation, and chromorhythmia.

The formulation of these transformational paradigms, or "control knobs," serves as the foundation for operating a generative tool that permits the interaction with the graphic mark. The tool allows people to create personal versions of the logo by transforming it while playing with the voice or manually intervening to add a name or select a color from the available options. This enables each person to affirm and define themselves as individuals by manipulating the mark (see Figure 2 for an example).



Figure 2. Generative tool interface that allows voice interaction with the logo (available at https://www.dcxw-milano018.org). It enables the generation of potentially unlimited versions of the identity sign that can be recognized as expressions of the same system.

In a social context where relationships seem to become increasingly one-sided and narcissistic, where everyone transmits but rarely listens (Aime, 2019), the generative tool was conceived to be more than just a mechanism for interacting with the visual identity. It was designed to serve as an actual listening device, enabling individuals to express themselves not only through the generation of a personal sign but also through sharing their opinions and ideas. The platform is specifically designed to periodically propose questions on issues of interest, providing children and adolescents with an opportunity to contribute by voicing their thoughts (who determines the variation). This feature enhances the value of each individual thought, and creates a "listening basin", a place where various voices can come together to create an asynchronous dialogue (see Figure 3 for an example). The insights gained from these interactions can be leveraged by the institution to take concrete steps towards promoting societal progress, as they gain valuable knowledge about the beliefs, aspirations, and opinions of children and teenagers.

Represent the community – Besides being a generative sign, the logo Milano 0.18 is conceived to incorporate participatory components. The aim is to provide children and adolescents with the opportunity to contribute to the graphic sign directly, experiment with creative languages, and develop a stronger emotional connection and engagement with the identity system and between them (why the variation occurs). Recognizing the importance of artistic activities for young people in developing transversal skills, acquiring of self-esteem, exercising self-determination, and stimulating active citizenship practices (Robinson et al., 2019), creative workshops involving 80 children and young people from 5 to 18 years of age (who determines the variation) were organized in the city. These workshops were conceived as a means to foster expression, listening, dialogue, and personal and collective growth through the experimentation with various artistic techniques, ranging from self-production of stamps for the youngest participants to papercuts and lino prints for the older ones.

The creative activities in this context were planned to promote the visual identity and produce graphic signs to enrich the system, but more importantly, with the desire to develop a meaningful experience on an individual and collective level, inspiring the participants through art and creativity, to recognize

of their value, learn new languages to express themselves freely, collaborate, build relationships and personal connections, share experiences, viewpoints, and interests to encourage the production collective reasoning. Each individual contribution made during the workshops arises from debate and dialogue and only holds a partial meaning. To acquire full meaning, these individual contributions need to be combined with those of others, giving rise to new visions and becoming an integral part of the visual identity (how it could vary; see Figure 4 for an example).



Figure 3. The backend of the generative tool, where voice recordings can be retrieved, and marks created through interaction are stored.



Figure 4. The artistic techniques explored during the workshops: stamping with five- and six-year-olds, papercut with elevenand twelve-year-olds, and lino print with sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds. Over 3000 new logo configurations can be created by combining the individual contributions from each experience.

At different levels, the workshops and the generative tool have the potential to promote active involvement, foster interpersonal connections, and encourage individual and community self-affirmation. The project emphasizes the significance of people and their active participation within the visual identity, creating a sign that relies on both individual and group contributions to exist. In fact, the Milan 0.18 logo can only take on any configuration with the voice or creative action of children and adolescents).

Engage the society — Milano 0.18 is a contextual visual identity system (cf. Tonkinwise, 2019, p.10) in which the graphic construct is fully expressed in relation to the visual context in which it operates. In the urban setting, the system's dynamism is primarily structured in terms of adaptability and materiality (how it could vary). The logo and identity components (what could vary) were specifically designed to be adaptable to multiple situations and deployable in a physical dimension in dedicated spaces and environments within the urban setting. The system expresses itself through archigraphic signs that reinterpret the graphic mark and permeate the city spaces involved in the system's actions. In addition, the project allows for the translation of the identity's signs and characteristics using a variety of materials according to the circumstances enabling greater customization in leaving recognizable and tangible imprints on the territory (see Figure 5 for an example).



Figure 5. Archigraphic signs in the exterior and interior settings of the city, as well as material characterization, are examples of how the logo can be translated.

Characterizing the physical and urban aspects give the community a sense of place, making its presence visible and recognizable in a broader context. This facilitates learning about the community for those who are not part of it, which can, in turn, lead to greater involvement and participation (why the variation occurs).

5 Conclusions

The case study Milano 0.18 is not intended to be a universally applicable model but rather a catalyst for expanding the conversation about the design of dynamic visual identities, drawing attention to its potential and value on a social and community level, both in terms of the quality of the representation and the impacts generated. In a time when we are moving steadily towards an era of relationally-based, contextually-specific design (Blauvelt, 2008), the project Milano 0.18 provides an opportunity to reflect on the approaches and resources that a dynamic visual identity can provide to embrace diversity, welcome personal contributions, and foster inclusion, involvement and active participation in a local dimension. It also serves as inspiration for the affirmation of an ever-increasing human-centered communication project that focuses on creating value through both the designing process and its results.

From a design standpoint, adopting a community perspective entail changing the visual identity project's axes and objectives. The design focus shifts from the visual sign toward the experience it may provide, aiming at building a memorable encounter that adds value to the identity project by fostering attachment, cohesion, and a sense of belonging rather than just creating a recognizable and high-quality image. The role of the communication designer is also affected by this change, requiring them to approach the design of graphic signs from the perspective of creating significant relationships and experiences and hand over some control of the design outcome to the participants, thus accepting the possibility of unexpected outcomes.

This contribution represents an initial step toward understanding the visual identity design as a social and community project. It mainly aims to raise awareness of its potential for producing positive impacts and effects and to guide reflection toward experimenting with new approaches in order to strengthen the visual identity project's social worth and make it an effective tool for building the future and a society that can be increasingly defined by values of inclusion, dialogue, participation, and cooperation.

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