

DR. NICK DE LEON, ROYAL COLLEGE OF ART

Nick de Leon is an academic and design practitioner with a career spanning engineering and information technology, design and business. He is a Professor at Liverpool Hope University, leads Knowledge Exchange and Executive Education at the Royal College of Art and founded the Service Design department at the Royal College of Art, which he led between 2012 and 2019. This department is recognised as the leading postgraduate programme for Service Design in Europe with over 150 students undertaking Master's and PhD programmes. Under his leadership the department engaged closely with industry and government to both research as well as deliver solutions for some of the most challenging issues these organisations face. The department has worked with the UK Cabinet Office, the Ministry of Justice, the National Health Service and the Department for Education as well as with private sector partners including Telefonica, Samsung, Sainsbury's, Jaguar Land Rover, JP Morgan, and Lloyds, amongst others.

In 2019, he stepped down from this role and Prof. Clive Grinyer, who had worked closely with him as a visiting member of staff, took over. In his current role he is responsible across the School of Design for industry and government partnerships, working with leading institutions in the UK and global corporations, extending the reach and range of the RCA's academic and executive programmes and creating opportunities for RCA researchers, students and faculty to engage with industry and governments across the world. This includes the collaboration with London Business School where he teaches Design Led Innovation, as well as enabling 80 students from the RCA and London Business School to participate in elective courses at the two institutions. He leads 4 electives at the RCA which LBS MBA students participate in, each with 15 credits. The agreement enables the institutions to recognise up to 60 credits from each others' programmes.

He is the Academic Lead for the *Terra Carta Design Lab*, the brain child of HRH Prince Charles and Sir Jony Ive which was launched at WEF in Davos in 2021 and presented at COP26 and exhibited at the RCA this Spring. 400 Designers participated from across the world to create solutions to address the climate emergency and threats to biodiversity with 20 finalists and 4 ultimate winners receiving substantial investment and mentoring by Sir Jony Ive.

He is also a Trustee and Director of *Design for Good*, launched on April 2022, which is an alliance of the UN with 8 major corporations and the RCA. Together they are dedicating their design and creative resources to address a UN Sustainable Development Goal. Companies include Microsoft, McKinsey, Philips, Pepsi, General Mills, Logitech, Lixil, Ned Bank and Nestlé. He helped conceive the programme which will involve over 4500 designers globally, and represents the RCA as part of this initiative.

At a more local level he developed and directs the *Open Innovation Fellowship* with London & Partners on behalf of the Mayor's Office. Its goal is to stimulate innovation and enable major corporations to better exploit the rich innovation ecosystem in London. This 4 month long programme is just completing its 4th cohort and over 60 companies and their Heads of Innovation have participated to date. Companies include Boeing, Microsoft, Schneider, McDonald's, Barclays, the Crown Estates, Arup, Transport for London and many more.

In addition to the teaching and research programmes at the RCA, De Leon also delivers two substantial courses at Imperial College for the Faculty of Engineering and Department of Computer Science, as well as for Imperial Business School. These are delivered to over 300 MEng, MSc and MBA students annually.

De Leon delivers executive programmes for the RCA and other institutions including London Business School, Judge Business School at Cambridge, NYP Singapore and Musashino University in Japan.

PRIOR TO THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF ART

Between 2007 and 2012 he led Design London, a joint venture between the RCA and Imperial College to pioneer new models of interdisciplinary innovation and created in response to the UK Treasury's Cox Review – Creativity in Business. Design London delivered taught programmes to Imperial and RCA students, included a research laboratory, a centre for 3D visualisation and a business incubator that launched a number of award

winning businesses and later became the UK Accelerator of the Year. Design London also delivered outreach programmes to Small and Medium Businesses supporting over 600 enterprises through its Designing Demand programme for the UK Design Council.

Before joining academia he worked for over 30 years for IBM where he was Director of Business Development in Europe. During his career he held the positions of Director of Marketing for IBM Europe, Middle East and Africa and Worldwide Director of Channel Marketing for the IBM Server Group. He began his career as an Industrial Designer and his work includes IBM's first and pioneering PC, as well as managing hardware and software development teams. He holds a number of patents on advanced technology displays, disk files and industry terminals.

ACADEMIC BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH

He has a First Class Honours in Mechanical Engineering from Imperial College, a Masters from the Royal College of Art and a PhD in Complex City Systems from Imperial College Business School. He is a Fellow of the Royal College of Art, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, a Visiting Fellow of Imperial College Business School, a committee member of the Royal Commission for the Great Exhibition of 1851, and a member of the committee and awards Panel for the Sir Misha Black Awards for Excellence in Design Education.

PUBLICATIONS

He has published on design and interdisciplinary innovation in leading journals and is a regular speaker at both industry and academic conferences. These include:

Service Design: Innovation for Complex Systems. Mager, B., de Leon, N. In: Edvardsson, B., Tronvoll, B. (eds) The Palgrave Handbook of Service Management . Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-91828-6_25, 2022

The ethics of persuasive technologies in pervasive industry platforms: The need for a robust management and governance framework, Borgefalk, G. and de Leon, N Conference Proceedings 14th International Conference on Persuasive Technology, April, 2019.

Raising the Bar: the future of design education, De Leon, N et al. Fitness for What Purpose, celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the Sir Misha Black Awards, edited by Mary V Mullin and Sir Christopher Frayling, November 2018

Future States: Design and Science for Sustainability, De Leon, N. et al. CERN Journal of Experimental Innovation, December 2018; 2(2): 13-24

Service Design in Criminal Justice: A Co-production to Reduce Reoffending, de Leon, N. Mager and Armani, Irish Probation Journal, Vol 15, October 2018

Managing Innovation — towards a business development model for design-led startups, Hillner, M. and de Leon, N. 21st DMI: Academic Design Management Conference. August 2018

Colliding Disciplines: Science Meets Design for Sustainability, De Leon, N. et al, CERN-RCA joint publication, June 2018

Service Design and the Future of Work. De Leon, N. Touchpoint, The Journal of Service Design, Volume 9 No. 3, April 2018

Managing by Design, Gruber, M. and De Leon, N. Academy of Management Journal 2015, Vol. 58, No. 1, 1–7.
The Service Design Imperative, Touchpoint, The Journal of Service Design, Volume 6 No 1, April 2014

Complex city systems: Understanding how large technical systems innovation arises in cities, de Leon, N. IBM Journal of Research and Development volume 55, No 1 Paper 15, January 2011

The Talent Connection, Leon N, Paradigmes No.1 Ministry of Innovation. Generalitat de Catalunya, Barcelona (2009)

Managed Service Paradox, IBM Systems Journal, Volume 47, Number 1, Page 153. December 2008
Attract and Connect: The 22@Barcelona innovation district and the internationalisation of Barcelona business,

Leon, N. Innovation Management, Policy and Practice Volume 10, Issue 2–3, October–December 2008

CONFERENCES

International Conference on Persuasive Technology, April 2019 21st DMI: Academic Design Management Conference, 2018

Service Design Network 20th Anniversary Conference, Koln 2015 Global Service Design Network Conference 2015 in New York Digital Economy Conference, London 2014

Global Smart Cities Congress, Barcelona, 2014

Global Service Design Network, Opening Address 2013

World Design Policy Summit, Seoul 2013

Engineering and Product Design Education Conference (EPDE) 2012

Ovum Smart Cities Europe, London 2012

Norsk DesignRad, Innovation for All, Oslo 2012

The Well Connected City – Transforming Public Services, Eindhoven, December 2011 Forum de Creative

Wallonie at Liege November 2011

The Well Connected City, Tainan, Taiwan 2011

IBM Smarter Cities – Shanghai 2010