

Design Economy 2021 Commissioning Brief

12 November 2020

Background

Design Council is looking to commission an organisation or consultant(s) to carry out a five-month scoping project to set out the research parameters, methodology and stakeholder strategy for the next iteration of the Design Council's flagship Design Economy report.

Our History

Set up in 1944, when the UK was facing uncertain times after the Second World War, Design Council's role was to invest in the design sector to help rebuild the economy. Now aged 75, we use design to tackle major challenges and improve economic, societal and environmental outcomes as detailed in our [2020-24 strategy](#).

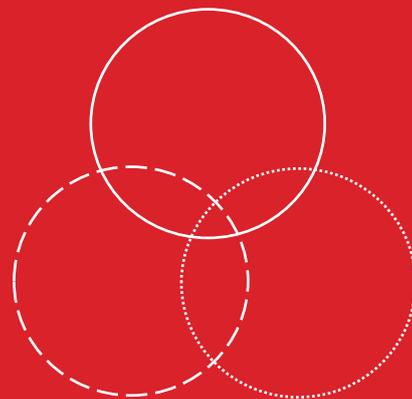
Our Mission

Design Council's mission is to make life better by design. We work with people to create better places, better products and better services and systems, all of which lead to better outcomes. We do this by **commissioning pioneering evidence-based research**, develop ground-breaking programmes and deliver influencing and policy work to demonstrate the power of design and how it impacts three key areas of the economy: business innovation, places and public services. We bring together non-designers and designers – from grassroots to government – and share with them our design expertise to transform the way they work.

Our Research

Our research seeks to demonstrate the value of design. We do this by showing the [impact](#) design can have on business, places and public services, by evaluating the impact of our work; but also publishing, every 3 years, the Design Economy - and in 2018 its sister document [Designing a Future Economy](#) – which together are the only publications in the UK (and arguably world-wide) that give us data on the state of design and design skills in the UK, and their value to the Economy.

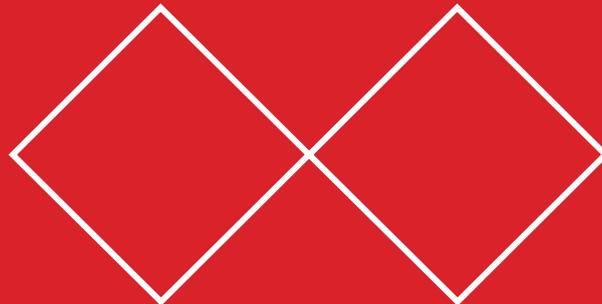
**We uniquely offer services across
architecture and built environment,
public services and social and
business innovation**



We provide the following core offers:



All underpinned by our Framework for Innovation, based on the world-famous Double Diamond.



Design Economy 2021

The ambition for Design Economy 2021 (DE21) is greater than the work we carried out in [2015](#) and [2018](#). We want to build on these past efforts but to move the Design Economy from being just about the state of design in the UK, to more robustly illustrate how design makes a difference; and demonstrate the value it brings in helping the UK tackle major challenges that we are facing today – socially, environmentally and economically.

It is our intention to bring together, in DE21, our work on the value of design (Design Economy) and the value of design skills (Designing a Future Economy).

A useful blog that outlines our ambition can be found [here](#).

Our overall approach is to ensure DE21 is developed in an open and transparent way, engaging with key stakeholders along the way and iterating our thinking and approach as needed. As such we expect to publish our thinking throughout 2020/21 in the form of working papers and engage key stakeholders, inviting comment and critique and iterating as we go.

Final versions of these working papers will be brought together as chapters in a single publication in late 2021: DE21. This publication will be supported by a strong communications strategy and tools that will enable people to work with the data and engage with the issues it raises in a dynamic way.

You will want to note that, at the time of writing, we envisage we will have around £75-150K to commission DE21.

This commission

This commission is the **phase 1 scoping stage** and will enable Design Council to determine a robust methodology to underpin DE21, the research process and develop a stakeholder strategy. It is envisaged that a second phase of procurement(s) will take place by mid 2021 to carry out the research that will form the backbone of DE21.

At this stage it is envisaged that a separate procurement will take place for the Phase 2 research phase (this could change if there is a compelling reason to extend this contract to do phase 2 of this research). Please note bidding for Phase 1 will not exclude you from bidding for Phase 2.

Stage One: Review and Refine Report Core Structure

We would like you to review, refine and build on this proposed structure and outline the most effective research methodology. We envisage that Design Economy 2021 will have core chapters on:

1. What is design? including how the public view design
2. What are design skills? including the state and value of design skills to UK prosperity today and in the future (what was previously embodied in [Designing a Future Economy](#))
3. The value of design to the UK - the value created for the UK economy by designers operating either in design industries or outside in wider economy measured to include
 - Economic value
 - Social value
 - Environmental value
4. The scale and scope of the UK design economy to include:
 - number of firms
 - number of people employed as designers
 - qualifications of designers
 - pay and working patterns
 - diversity
5. Regional presence of the design economy and design skills
6. Public sector use of design and design skills
7. Business use of design and design skills
8. International use of design and design skills including comparisons of investment in exports and design registrations
9. The future of design and design skills – its potential

Stage Two: Design the methodology

A key challenge of this work will be to have enough methodological consistency with past efforts (so an assessment of change over time can be made) but to expand our approaches to be inclusive of for example:

1. New and emerging design roles in the labour market;
2. Growth and decline in different design disciplines. Newer disciplines (like service design) were not well represented in the last Design Economy (as it was reliant on publicly available data), this research needs to illustrate where there is new demand and high growth;
3. Qualitative and quantitative data analysis that demonstrates both short term returns to the UK economy and provides evidence that demonstrates the wider benefit of design, not just to the economy or to business but to the triple bottom line of people, planet and profit; and
4. Qualitative research that digs deeper and more meaningfully into the diversity issue and why this continues to be an issue in the design economy.

There are up to 5 discussion papers we would like to be developed through this commission:

Develop exploratory, pioneering research methods for the following:

#	outcomes for 2021	this commission	notes
1	DE21 provides data and stories on the environmental and social value of design (in addition to economic value)	Develop a robust methodology to capture the environmental and social value of design	<p>We have started thinking about what metrics could be used to measure the impact of design (design of places, products and services) on the triple bottom line (people, planet and pounds).</p> <p>We have developed some early thinking in this area which will be available on request by Monday 16th November. This work has recognised that it can be hard to dis-entangle social from environmental value, that given the diversity of design it will be a challenge to create an overarching standardised method and that there is currently no design-led value measurement system. Early recommendations could be to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a deliberative process to engage stakeholders in conceptualising social and environmental value. • Putting a monetary value on social and environmental value (through a Social Cost Benefit Analysis approach), and combining this quantitative data set with qualitative case studies - which can be structured along impact pathways as well as allowing for looser ripple effects/unintended outcomes. • Open up this methodology/ structured questionnaire for other designers to capture value and share their stories. <p>We also think there is value in correlating data around design intensity and social & environmental value in different regions and sectors.</p> <p>Building on this early thinking, we are looking for options/clear recommendation on how we could capture this value.</p> <p>Our expectation is that this paper will recommend a combination of qualitative (case study) and quantitative approaches (metrics) to do this effectively. We are also open to trialling this approach on a specific area of social policy that aligns with our strategy or a particular sector. We will want you to recommend which sector or area would provide the best opportunity at this time.</p>

			<p>We have a range of potential demonstrator projects that could aide thinking here – projects that are focussed on achieving environmental impact through design, including those that we will be supporting through our Design in the Public sector programme which is working with local authority teams to use design to address their local climate change challenges.</p> <p>We also have some work in progress is capturing evolving design practice that may help in your thinking here. Part of this work is exploring how circular and systemic methods are being used by businesses, sustainability and climate experts and designer to create more sustainable businesses, public and their sector organisations. You will be able to speak to the Design Associate taking forward this work to help develop your thinking.</p>
2	Data on the number/%, and type, of people in the UK that have design intensive jobs and the economic value of their contribution to UK GVA	Make recommendations based on the clear evidence, on what tools/methodology Design Council should use to map design skillsets and mindsets that are inclusive of emerging design roles (but also allows Design Council to compare data to 2018 DE stats and talk about trends)	<p>2018 DE has a developed methodology to do this which we can share with you on request. However we are aware that we were reliant on publicly available data and as such the true extent of designs’ use in the UK is probably underestimated. For example, service design was not included and since 2016/17 new design roles have emerged.</p> <p>The challenge here is to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revisit the 23 roles that were used as the basis for DE 2018 – are they fit for purpose? 2. Recommend a robust approach of identifying new design roles that exist today setting out the pros & cons of the approach 3. Make clear recommendations of what roles to include for DE2021 <p>As noted above the ambition for DE2021 is to move beyond looking at just design intensive roles but also at design skillsets and mindsets. So you are also asked to:</p> <p>Determine what is the best/most robust way to measure design skills and mindsets so that we can measure their use across the economy in the UK. A methodology that will stand up to Government (inc. Treasury/BEIS) scrutiny but also draw in less tested newer ground breaking approaches.</p>

We recognise the above two are the most complex, so would anticipate a significant chunk of your time to be dedicated to developing these methodology discussion papers.

Below are areas we anticipate may draw on more tried and tested approaches to capture data – drawing on both qualitative and quantitative approaches. We would envisage these discussion papers would be up to 5 A4 pages each.

#	outcomes for 2021	this commission	notes
3	Baseline understanding of design and design skills by business	Develop an approach that will allow Design Council to gather this baseline data (with an over-sampling of SMEs and giving due regard to diversity and inclusion)	<p>As a minimum we would like to capture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business understanding of design • The extent design is used by business (e.g. where on the design ladder) • what design skills are they drawing on (e.g. technical skills to realise an idea or as human-centred research activity to inspire and test ideas), • quality of experience and • what overall impact using design has (productivity, innovation, resilience, social & environmental value) <p>We envisage there are a number of ways to collect this data to provide depth of understanding but also reach. We can imagine a mixed approach – survey of businesses supplemented with some qualitative approaches (interviews/focus groups) so that we can draw on the numbers as well as the stories (case studies). You may also want to add business audits to triangulate the data and test the self-reported results from any survey.</p> <p>We are looking for clear recommendation of the best approach - what questions we should ask businesses and how.</p> <p>For any survey work we would like you to recommend how this could be administered to achieve the best return rate from a wide range of businesses. We have had early discussion with business membership bodies (e.g. British Chamber of Commerce and CBI) about adding questions to their existing surveys of business for a cost – we can provide these contacts to you.</p> <p>We have good links with McKinsey who have done some work in this area. We also have our 2018 survey that we conducted which we can share with you on request.</p> <p>We have already commissioned some work that is speaking to SMEs and developing a prototype design offer to meet their needs – you will be able to speak to the lead taking this forward to help with your thinking.</p>

4	Baseline understanding of design and design skills by public sector	Develop an approach (and a draft questions) that will allow Design Council to gather this baseline data	<p>We would want this work to elicit how design and design skills are understood and used in local and national government.</p> <p>We imagine that this could be done through a combination of a survey and some follow-up interviews, but welcome your thoughts on this. We would like you to develop the approach we should take and detail the questions we would seek to ask (whether via survey/interviews)</p> <p>Local government We want to gauge, for the first time, how design is understood and design skills are deployed in local government as they shape places and services for their residents and citizens.</p> <p>This thinking can build on work we have been exploring with the Place Alliance – to survey local authority staff - that we will be happy to talk you through or link you to. We also have good links into the LGA who could support here.</p> <p>National government Ideally we would survey&/interview key stakeholders in government that advocate for the use of design (such as Policy lab who support design’s use in policy making and work with government departments as a core of what they do) to understand how design is currently understood and used to develop policy, services and products.</p>
5	Baseline understanding of design and design skills by the public	Develop an approach that will allow Design Council to gather this baseline data	<p>At Design Council we often say that people do not understand what design is – we are keen to explore this hypothesis. This work will also help us shape future programmes of work (e.g. a national celebration of design) if we better understand how the public understand it.</p> <p>We envisage the best way to collect this baseline in through some sort of survey questions maybe will follow-up focus group type sessions. We are looking for clear recommendation of what questions we should ask and how and when this survey should be administered to achieve the best return rate.</p> <p>We recognise that it may be best to piggy back on an existing omnibus survey of the public – and would be looking for clear recommendation on which and costs of doing so.</p> <p>We are doing some work to determine how communities talk about design – that may determine ‘layman’ proxies for design mindsets and skillsets. We may want to use the proxies for design that emerge from our communities work in this survey.</p>

Please note the above list does not indicate the order in which work needs to take place. We will expect you to tell us, in your timeline for delivery, the order that makes most sense – as we recognise work in one area might impact how to take forward work in another area. Design Council are keen however to publish the discussion papers as soon as they have been produced and signed off.

Please also build in time early on to speak to key senior stakeholders at Design Council (up to 4 people) to understand better the wider work of Design Council, our over arching ambitions and values and how this work fits and supports.

In addition to the above you may want to note that Design Council will in parallel be leading on developing the following that will also inform DE21:

- A draft glossary of definitions including how we [define design](#) and how this is distinguished from other terms like [innovation](#)
- Exploring what methodology is best to understand the story of design in the regions of the UK
- Exploring what methodology is best to capture how design and design skills are defined, invested in, promoted internationally and with what impact.

We would like to engage the contractors, with other experts, in discussions that will help inform our thinking. At this stage we would recommend you build in at least a day of your time to engage in these discussions.

Stage Three: Develop a stakeholder engagement strategy

As noted above we want DE21 to be produced in an open and transparent way. We are conscious that if this data is to make an impact (and support a programme of change) it will need to be supported widely by key thinkers and influencers (including the wider design community) in the business, public services and place shaping world.

In this context we would like you to develop a stakeholder strategy that will ensure we have the infrastructure/governance in place to support the development of the DE21 and buy in from key influencers, over the next 2 years.

We are keen for you to develop this strategy but as a minimum we want you to:

1. Put forward names of individuals that we should engage with to amplify this work and refine and iterate our thinking. These names, as a minimum, should be drawn from the following audiences:
 - Business (inc. SMEs)
 - Policy makers (local and national)
 - Government depts (specifically including BEIS/MHCLG/Treasury/DCMS)
 - Designers (across sectors and disciplines including those involved in futures thinking/place shaping/service design/systems thinking)
 - Academics/design researchers (including technical methodology experts looking at capturing social and environmental value)
 - International design bodies
 - Funders

Please state clearly which stakeholders are particularly relevant for which of the 5 pieces of work listed in the table above – we understand that there will be over-lap of names. Please also ensure these people between them are diverse in relation to the professional and personal insight they may bring given different life experiences and backgrounds. For GDPR reasons we are just looking for recommendation of names at this stage. Once final decisions are made Design Council will make direct contact.

2. State how these individuals should be engaged. We would like the contractor to recommend the governance infrastructure that should be in place for DE21 over the next 2 years, as well as people we should engage with at this stage of the work. For any formal groups you recommend (e.g. challenger group/technical group) we would like the contractor to develop draft terms of reference. Design Council project manager (PM) will reach out to the individuals and service any groups established.

Our thinking to date is that some of these stakeholders may:

- a. Form part of a senior ‘challenger’ group. This is a group of senior critical friends that are working in or influence this field and can support to amplify and shape the work but will also be important to have buy-in from. We anticipate this group will meet once or twice a year and have no more than 8-10 members. We are already in discussion with some senior stakeholder who we can let you know about at the initiation meeting.
- b. Form a core group of technical/methodology experts that understand our ambition and support us to ensure DE21 is methodologically robust – meeting government and particularly treasury standards, but is not shying away from less tested ground breaking approaches to capture data (e.g. looking at job adverts for example). In this context it will be important that we draw in some of the best methodologists from academia and beyond to test and iterate and shape thinking. Early thinking is that this group should include technical experts from organisations like ONS, NESTA, Datakind, treasury, BEIS, senior design researchers. We envisage this group (made up of up to 10 people) would meet formally no more than 2x a year but would be on call to support this work as thinking evolves.
- c. Be brought together via webinars where papers/thinking can be discussed, critiqued and developed. We anticipate Design Council will organise and host up to 3 of these sessions from late March – early May. While Design Council will do most of the heavy lifting we would expect the contractor to work with the Design Council project manager to support these sessions in particular taking the lead in:
 - putting forward the names of people to be invited
 - writing any copy required (e.g. for the invite/website)
 - attending the session
 - re-draft the working paper following comments received

Design Council Project Manager will send the invitations out and deal with RSVPs and Design Council senior staff will Chair the sessions.

Reporting requirements/deliverables

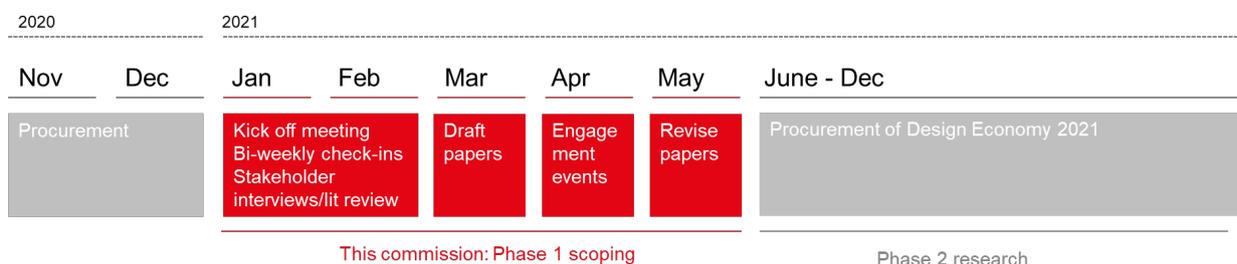
Design Council will require:

1. Up to 5 discussion papers (which will be published by Design Council). Each paper must be clear to understand to a non -design and non-technical audience. Design Council would like to publish the papers as soon as they are ready but certainly all of them by early April 2021. Exact number of papers will be negotiated with the contractor as we appreciate that some topic areas may be better to bring together into one discussion paper.
2. Up to 3 short blog piece(s) (700 words) to engage stakeholders with the content of the discussion papers, drawing out the key points and areas for discussion. These will be widely disseminated by Design Council when the discussion papers are published and a key way in which to invite comment and critique.
3. A stakeholder engagement strategy to include:
 - A recommendation on the governance infrastructure that need to be in place for DE21
 - Terms of reference for any groups recommended
 - Named individuals
4. Attend and support up to 3 engagement events from late march to early May, and following these, revise the discussion papers
5. One presentation to Design Council staff including the senior management team of the findings

**All papers should be produced in MS Word – electronic copies only.*

Timescale

Design Council anticipate the contractor to be in place before Christmas break 2020 and this work would be done from January to May 2021. An over-view timeline is below:



Brief issued	12 th November
Questions by respondents submitted by	19 th November
Q&A made available to all by Design Council	24 th November
Deadline for submission of brief	Monday 30th November – 5pm
Shortlisted candidates informed	4 th December
Interview days (if required)	10 th December
Decision made	15 th December
Initiation meeting	22nd December
Bi-weekly Catch-up with Design Council Project Manager with a formal review at mid-point	w/b 8 th February
Submit draft outputs agreed	12th March
Design Council feedback comments	19 th March
Final draft of outputs available	2nd April
Design Council publish papers and blogs	April – or before if available
Stakeholder webinars (hosted by Design Council)	End of March to early may
Final submission of discussion papers	31st May
Design Council commission DE2021	Summer 2021

Budget

This project is being funded by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). A sum of up to £56,000 (excluding VAT) has been awarded to cover the project fee which includes research, planning, meetings and any materials and resources as required.

Invoices schedule will be monthly with the expectation that 80% of fees will be invoiced by end of March 2021 with a remaining 20% retained for work to be carried out in April and May (that is the engagement events and final iteration of papers post external feedback).

Proposals should itemise daily or hourly rates and demonstrate how many days or hours each consultant / researcher / administrator will spend on the project and what each person's key responsibilities will be.

We appreciate the budget and time-table is tight for the range of work to be done. We are open to bidders detailing a minimum viable product given the resources and time available but would be keen to hear what additional value could be added if there was some (modest) flex in either budget and/or time.

Evaluation criteria

Respondents are asked to outline the following – which is also the evaluation criteria against which this proposal will be assessed:

Evaluation Criteria	Points
Bidder has demonstrated they understand the values and wider work of Design Council; and the requirements of this commission.	10%
Bidder has provided a summary of previous relevant work/experience of the Team that demonstrates the skills, knowledge and experience needed to complete this work. In support of this please include up to 3 case-studies of your previous work that is relevant to this commission.	10%
Bidders proposed methodology supports the outcomes being sought.	25%
<p>Bidder has put together a team with relevant skills and experiences. Please highlight the added value your team can bring to this commission.</p> <p>In support of this please</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide a diagram showing the team structure and roles and responsibilities; • provide CVs of team members, outlining their relevant experience and professional qualifications. These should be no longer than 2 pages; • give assurance that the Team will be able to mobilise by January and deliver within the time-scales outlined. 	30%
Bidder is competitive in terms of budget	10%
<p>Bidder has a robust project management process in place, an achievable and relevant timetable for delivery and has demonstrated they have plans in place to mitigate any risks. In support of this please ensure you provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A named lead for this work • A visual timeline highlighting the key milestones and worksteps that will be taken forward and by whom • A risk register 	15%

Please also supply 2 references that Design Council can follow up. We will only follow these up if you are our preferred candidate.

Contact details

If you would like to discuss this brief prior to submitting a proposal please contact Rebecca.busch@designcouncil.org.uk

Any questions seeking clarification should be submitted by 19th November 2020. Answers to questions submitted will be made available to all bidders.

Please note Design Council will have a dedicated Project Manager for this work who will be your key point of contact.

Deadline

The closing date for proposals is **5pm 30th November**.

Proposals should be emailed to Rebecca.busch@designcouncil.org.uk by **5pm 30th November** – only electronic copies are required.

Respondents will be informed if they have been shortlisted by 4th December. Successful respondents will be invited to an interview (if these are required) on the morning of 10th December and informed of the decision by 15th December. This will be via teams.



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