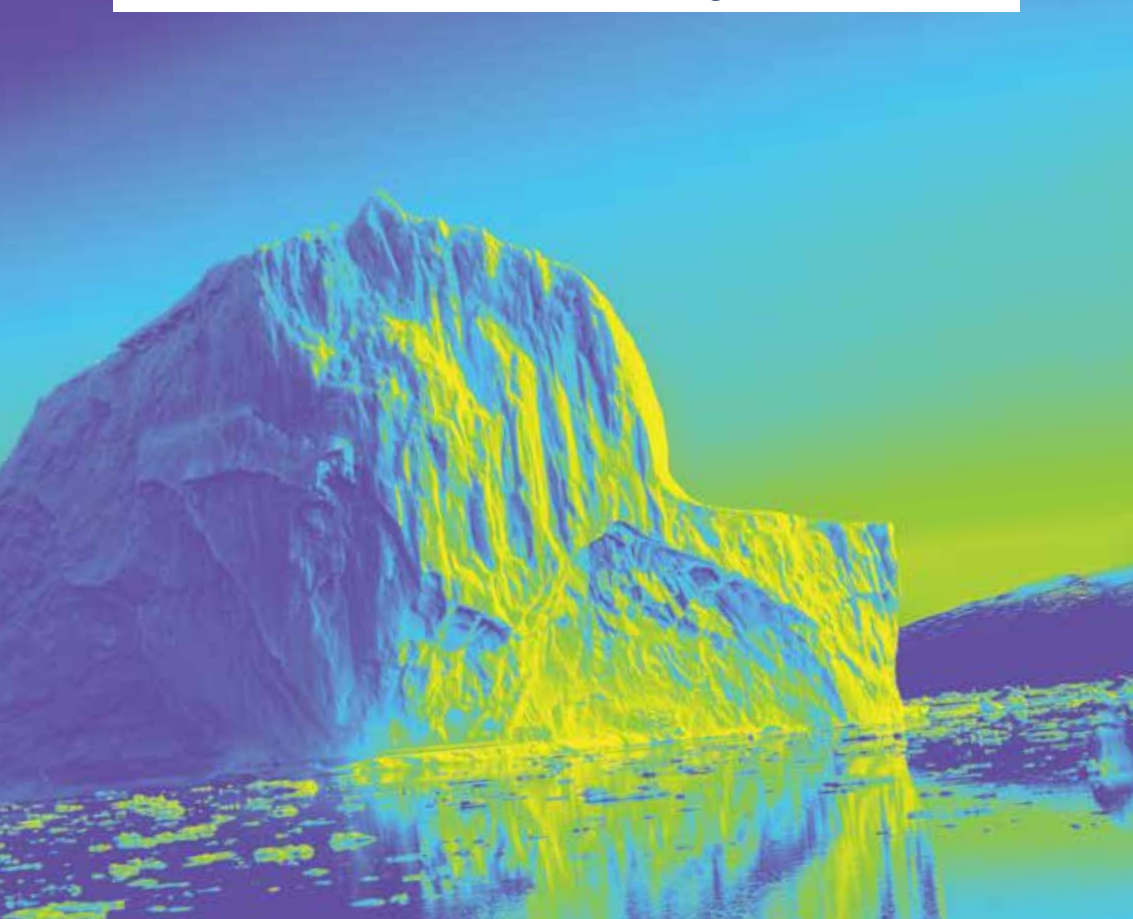


# DESIGN FOR ADAPTATION

Cumulus Conference Proceedings Detroit 2022



Cumulus Conference  
Proceedings Series  
00/2022 Detroit

## **Design for Adaptation Cumulus Conference Proceedings Detroit 2022**

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# DESIGN FOR ADAPTATION

CUMULUS DETROIT

Cumulus Conference  
Proceedings Series

Cumulus: The Global Association  
of Art and Design Education and Research

Detroit 2022



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# CUMULUS PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## Design for Adaptation in the Complexity

**The 2022 Cumulus conference in Detroit at the College for Creative Studies is the second in the U.S. in more than 30 years of history and the first after a long global pandemic, which made us rethink how we meet, network and disseminate globally in new, creative ways. Accordingly, the topic selected revolves around the concept of adaptation, which is one of the properties of any complex system to survive and grow under the pressing global challenges, such as global warming, while reducing vulnerabilities and fostering resilience. As the call points out, climate change consequences are impacting not only our environment but human rights, poverty, inequity, global food security and health. They are calling for rapid action and adaptation. Such an emergency, without precedent, requires bold and creative thinking.**

Along with three days of paper presentations, panels, keynotes and working groups, the conference sent a clear call to action to the large global design community to explore sustainable and equitable solutions: we are living in a time of emergency and at the same time of complexity, which needs bold ideas and actions, where every single element may interact to each other and the whole at different levels, without any linear predictions. The good news is that a property of a complex system is adaptivity, which means it can adapt to its surrounding environment when it is composed of many elements in a network of actions and feedback in a dynamic state.

All living and social systems are considered complex adaptive systems, from ant colonies to the stock market, from the biosphere to ecosystems, from the brain to social networks, and from technological to communication systems, therefore falling into the broad and increasingly widespread transdisciplinary cognitive paradigm developed with complexity theories in its ability to describe nonlinear systems, such as biological, ecological, financial, economic, medical and healthcare, and social systems.

What is the future of the cities? How do we combine local and global solutions? Where are the flows of migration going? What is the role of the citizens, the communities and the people? How can we develop equitable solutions to ensure access to life-saving resources? How can we foster technological innovation safeguarding access and inclusion at every social level?

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# CUMULUS PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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Since Detroit is a UNESCO City of Design, it was the ultimate location to convene globally for sharing knowledge, research, projects and practices responding to the urgent challenges emerging from the environment and society. Additionally, Detroit is speaking a long story of technological, economic and social transformations, which are noteworthy for the design.

Moreover, the partnership developed by the College for Creative Studies for the conference with the Association of Independent Colleges of Art & Design (AICAD) gave participants coming from all over the world a broader view to design education in North America.

The memory of such a rich experience is included in the following volume, which is not only speaking about the conference proceedings, but furthermore, it is celebrating our large global Cumulus community through its common values around open exchange and knowledge sharing.

Finally, we were back in presence!

**Lorenzo Imbesi**  
**Full Professor, Sapienza University of Rome**  
**President, Cumulus Association**

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