



PDC: Peace, Dialogue, Coexistence. Designing for living together.

Call for Exploratory Papers

In a world marked by disconnections, fragmentations, and conflicts, more than ever, the urgency of participatory design is to become an agent of peace, dialogue and coexistence.

How can participatory design facilitate living together?

PDC 2026 will be an opportunity to discuss research and applied programs, projects, and initiatives where participatory design and co-design have been used to foster dialogue, to create or reconcile communities, to give voice to people or entities who have not voice, to nurture solidarity, to negotiate, to create contexts of conviviality, to tackle even the unmanageable issue of wars and conflicts due to societal, political, economic and climate reasons.

Challenges design must face are related to take care of the others and the planet, counteract marginalisation, prevent conflicts, alleviate the consequences of any conflictual circumstance, and rebuild conditions of peace and dialogue. In all situations, peace is not a product, but a process: to contribute meaningfully, participatory design must first understand why a community struggles to live in peace and focus on how to reactivate communities and heal conflict damages for individuals and the social fabric of a territory.

In addressing the evolving landscape of participatory design, the role of digital technologies is critical: understanding, designing, and using digital technologies for peace, dialogue, and co-existence today is to locate and mobilize diverse agencies. This involves recognizing the interconnectedness of all entities—human, non-human, and technological—and learning how to harness and govern our interdependencies rather than corralling complexity. Digital technologies are not merely tools for individual or human-centric use, but integral to the fabric of a global and interspecies society.

Engaging with peace and conflict means going to the origins of participatory design as a democratic tool for conflict mitigation and resolution. PDC 2026 will explore its political dimension, investigating how participatory processes can foster peacebuilding, social justice, and transformative change.



PDC 2026 is structured around Conversations: they are intended as in-depth and deep dialogues in which full paper presentations, in plenary sessions, will be combined to exploratory papers and local practices, presented in parallel sessions, according to a correspondence of themes. The purpose is to create a variety of conversational contexts centred on selected contributions and enriched by several discussants. Accordingly, exploratory papers will be discussed in an interactive format that combines succinct presentations with deep dives into specific topics and the use of visual materials.

Exploratory papers provide early formative insights from theory or practice that could be further elaborated at a later stage. Exploratory Papers can be submitted on any topic or issue of relevance to participatory design theory, practice or methods – however PDC 2026 is especially interested in soliciting submissions that **relate to the conference themes**, including (but not limited to):

- Explore the interplay between global systems and local experiences, with a critical lens on how globalization impacts peacebuilding efforts and fosters resistance and/or cooperation at a local level. Participatory design can contribute to conflict resolution, emphasizing the importance of inclusive strategies that honour local knowledge and cultural practices as tools for fostering coexistence.
- Reflect on AI, democracy and participation: how to frame participatory conversations and decision-making processes at different levels of governance from neighbourhoods to cities, from national and international levels to allow stakeholders inclusion in the transformations triggered by the digital and green transitions.
- Discuss participatory approaches to embrace diverse voices, fostering inclusion, equity, and resilience by centring marginalized communities in systemic, and long-term transformations.
- Analyse the relevance of design research for participatory policymaking, focusing on how design can support sustainable transitions through collaborative decision-making, inclusive policy frameworks, and prototyping systemic interventions.



- Understand how design can contribute to the civic participation and deliberative democracy processes that are being deployed to address the social, technical and political challenges raised by the climate crisis.
- Rethink AI in more-than-human terms: explore how technology can foster new modes of attunement, collaboration, and survival by embracing human, machine, and ecological interdependence.
- Incorporate multispecies perspectives, critically exploring the implications of participation, consent, cohabitation and interdependence in a more-than-human world.

Important dates:

- **Submission of papers:**
~~Midnight, October 07th, 2025 (CET)~~
Midnight, October 16, 2025 (CET)
- **Notification of acceptance:**
December 04-05th, 2025
- **Conference:** June 16th-19th 2026

Technical guidelines:

Exploratory Papers should present **original ideas and research** that aim to expand the field of Participatory Design. Papers must present unpublished research and are not allowed to be under concurrent review with other conferences, journals, or venues.

Exploratory Papers should be written **in English and should not be longer than 4000 words (excluding references)**. All contributions must use the ACM recommended templates and be anonymised for blind peer review.

- **For Microsoft Word users:**
Please follow **the ACM instructions for preparing your submission with Word**. In the section titled **“The ACM Article Template: Using**



Microsoft Word", you will find the link to download the **Word submission template**.

- **For LaTeX users:**

Please refer to the **ACM instructions for preparing your submission with LaTeX**. In the section titled "**The ACM Article Template: Using LaTeX**", you will find the link to download the **LaTeX template files**.

Exploratory Papers undergo a one-round blind peer review process, with each paper reviewed by two reviewers.* The review period for Exploratory Papers is from October 17 to November 21, 2025.

*Historically, PDC considers all reviewers to be Program Committee members.