

# **From URBE to ETHOS: A Positioning Proposal Addressed to Technical-Scientific Actions Focusing Design and User Relationships.**

Marli Teresinha Everling <sup>1</sup>,

Rua dos Ciclistas, n. 90. Apto. 304. Joinville, SC. 89222-530

<sup>1</sup> marli.everling@gmail.com

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## **1 Context**

In a society facing complex problems, and in which economy is experiencing continued growth, professionals and thinkers from different areas are discussing their fields of action in search of alternatives. In this scenario emerges the idea of collaboration and sharing economy with people using products and services rather than possessing them.

In the field of design (an interdisciplinary area) these discussions have significance considering environmental and social-economic aspects. The World Design Organization believes that design as a problem-solving strategy needs to contribute to the quality of life of people everywhere through carefully idealized human-centered designs, which requires including social-economic, social-cultural, technical and ecological factors. It also expresses that design can catalyse the creation of a better world for all (WORLD DESIGN ORGANIZATION, 2016, web).

In 2012 URBE project [named 'The Study of Use Relations and Urban Context as a Support to the Prospective Design of Products and Services in the City of Joinville'] was consolidated, with the aim of investigate user behavior and analyze its activities (circulation, education, recreation, work and housing) in the urban context of Joinville as a resource to produce information to support design of products and services.

Four years after, in 2016, the results were published in the Ergodesign / USIHC newspaper, in order to reflect on their performance and enable the reorientation of objectives, procedures and future activities. The discussion showed that: (1) between 2013 and 2014, part of the actions related to the URBE project consisted in the structuring of research proposals of the scholarship students of the PPGDesign and of the graduation; there was also a great emphasis on establishing links with entrepreneurships due to the relevance that answers to the challenges (of social, public and private organizations) have for the professional masters; in this sense, partnerships were established with local enterprises. It was observed that part of the actions linked to URBE was strongly linked with concepts associated to use relations than to the urban context. Finally, the retrospective approach at research also contributed to remodeling the project, which, since 2016, has been experimentally directed the discussions related to Design and use relations (considering their unfolding in themes associated with city, social/local entrepreneurship, education, collaboration/participation, senior citizenship, prescribed use versus actual use, user behavior connected with experience, and concepts associated with the body).

## **2 Method**

Considering the scenario and the four years of the URBE project, it is intended to: analyze the history and articulations of the urban project; categorize information identified as relevant to the repositioning process; standardize keywords to contribute to the repositioning process of the proposal; identify the main scope and update connections.

## **3 Results**

The repositioning purpose is, above all, to structure the actions of the research group with a focus on design and use relations through the connection of teaching, research and social activities together associated to the group. As for the name, from the beginning, it was clear that the central terms should be Design and Use Relationships.

Regarding the acronym, it was initially intended to replace URBE (which emphasized the city and, therefore, no longer reflects the essence of the proposal) by PEOPLE. However, the focus of the studies should also be connected with maintenance of life, so, ETHOS (a greek term), seemed to be a better choice because it considers that human reality "is historically and socially built from the collective relations of human beings in the societies where they are born and live" ( DICTIONARY ETIMOLOGY, WEB).

The synthesis of the proposal, including acronym, objectives, emphasis, contents and connections is shown below:

- acronym: ETHOS;

- name: Technical and Scientific Research Actions Oriented for Design and Use Relationships;

- driven to: [1] contribute with technical-scientific knowledge covering design content (participation culture, new design, protagonism, sustainability) and usage relations (usability, user experience, user behavior, empathy, prescribed use and actual use among others); [2] explore methodological approaches connected with current challenges such as user/human-centered design and participatory design, service design and other approaches based on use, participation and collaboration relationships; [3] conduct theoretical-practical actions (in the scope of teaching, research and social realm) focused primarily on design and use relations and, where possible, explore the catalytic role of education, participatory processes and social innovation in the approach Sectors; [4] expand theoretical and technological possibilities from the structuring of a research network with emphasis on design and use relations including institutional partners, local institutions and local and inter-institutional organizations;

- Emphasis: [1] methodological process; [2] project process; [3] educational process; [4] process of social innovation; [5] creative process.

- first level acting connections: [1] public enterprises; [2] private enterprises; [3] social organizations and institutions; [4] non-governmental organizations; [5] urban context and public spaces; [6] educational context.

- second level acting connections: [1] internal community (knowledge development); [2] basic education for protagonism and citizenship through design; [3] local community (social insertion); [3] inter-institutional community (research network).

## 4 Conclusions

It is believed that the care in building the repositioning proposal should contribute to tune the research project to what is expected (in terms of technical scientific production, social insertion, connection with elementary education, among others) of professional masters. The greatest motivation fort that is use the project to built relevant knolledge conected to people, users, significative approaches related to design and the social, public, service and industrial context.

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