Editorial: Design for Wellbeing, Happiness and Health

Ann PETERMANS[a], Anna E. POHLMEYER[b], Rebecca CAIN[c], Pieter DESMET[d], Leandro TONETTO[e], DEGER OZKARAMANLI[f], Marc HASSENZAHL[g], Tiuu POLDMA[h] & Matthias LASCHKE[g]
Co-conveners of the DRS Special Interest Group Design for Wellbeing, Happiness and Health (SIGWELL)

[a] Hasselt University, Belgium
[b] diffferent, Germany
[c] Loughborough University, UK
[d] TU Delft, The Netherlands
[e] Unisinos University, Brazil
[f] University of Twente, The Netherlands
[g] University of Siegen, Germany
[h] Université de Montréal, Canada
* ann.petermans@uhasselt.be
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Introduction

SIGWELL is the Design Research Society's Special Interest Group (SIG) focusing on Design for Wellbeing, Happiness and Health. The SIGWELL community has an interest in advancing knowledge, and the development and application of design research in the broadest sense to improve the wellbeing, happiness and personal and societal health of people.

In April 2019, SIGWELL organised a Colloquium on Design for Wellbeing education at TUDelft (The Netherlands). Here, we explored the latest insights in design for wellbeing education with a special focus on ethics. At the end of 2019, our first book was published (Petermans & Cain, 2019), bringing together insights from an international and multidisciplinary research community involved in research on design for wellbeing.

Design for Wellbeing papers at DRS 2020

Following the call for papers for DRS 2020, we noted a particular focus in the topics mentioned relating to wellbeing and happiness. After careful selection and programming, two sections were set up with papers, linking to our SIG's key themes and issues as well as to

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the DRS 2020 conference themes:

Theme 1: Co-creation - Wellbeing

For the first sections, papers that focus on self-training and activities of individuals in order to foster wellbeing, are brought together. Starting this section with a contribution (paper 287) of Eujeen Hwang & Youn-kyung Lim (2020), the design, implementation and arrangement of 'Tune-in' is explored, in order to investigate how and what self-therapeutic enablers support experiences of reflection and mindfulness. In the paper, the authors reveal how these enablers where accompanied with sound in order to let participants experience mindfulness in daily life, so as to contribute to their wellbeing.

Next (paper 152), Austin et al. (2020) discuss the importance of both evidence-based (top-down) and experience-based (bottom-up) input in co-design, especially in a healthcare context. They elaborate about a case study that was set up with cancer patients and oncology nurses in order to co-design an eHealth intervention focused on training self-compassion, and discuss practical strategies to merge top-down and bottom-up input in such a co-design process.

Finally, in their contribution (paper 281), Naqshbandi et al. (2020) focus on digital volunteerism, as all the more people make a transition from physical to digital platforms for volunteering. They investigate the use of generative methods and tools in two co-design workshops with volunteers in an educational program involving both online and physical modules, which enabled them to identify areas of design opportunities that foster relatedness and gratitude in online volunteering and reduce disparities between online and physical volunteering experiences.

Theme 2: Impacts – Human-centredness

The second section brings together contributions that have a human-centred nature and focus on societal impact, as these are key issues in design for wellbeing. First, Atherton's paper (2020) discusses artful design as a lens for achieving subjective well-being (paper 117). Artful design is described as a design philosophy, presenting both theoretical and pragmatic guidance to designers, offered via design principles intended to address human flourishing and humanistic values. In the paper, a case study of a virtual reality experience is discussed in order to show with this aligns with the goals of positive design.

Next (paper 274), the contribution of Nicholas et al. (2020) elaborates about the Integral Living Research Group (ILR). Lack of housing equity in the USA has incited this group to develop solutions to reduce housing-related stress and support enhanced well-being for urban families. The ILR Group uses generative and empirical design research and has focused all efforts on the development and deployment of five interconnected and interdependent principles for healthy urban housing. Their contribution elaborates about these principles via short case studies.

Finally (paper 282), Auernhammer (2020) focuses on human-centered artificial intelligence

(AI), stating that the design of AI has been expressed as essential for societal wellbeing. Different philosophical perspectives and several human-centered design approaches are discussed from the perspective of how they contribute to the development of AI. The paper argues that humanistic design research should play a vital role in the collaboration with technologists and policymakers to moderate the impact of AI.

Reflections on the future

Due to Covid-19, the world as we know it has changed, and various of these changes will have a long-term impact on all of us, emotionally, socially and economically. Looking at the wellbeing and happiness papers brought together in these two sections at DRS 2020, it is clear that new and various design research approaches for addressing the 'wellbeing and happiness' challenges that lie ahead of us, are ready to inspire others in the field, academics as well as practitioners.

References

Petermans, A. & Cain, R. (Eds.) (2019). *Design for Wellbeing: an applied approach.* Routledge: London.

For more information on the Design for Wellbeing, Happiness and Health SIG, please visit the SIG's webpage at http://drs.silkstart.com/cpages/wellbeing-happiness-sig. To find out whether the SIG is organising a satellite event to the DRS2020 conference, or just to get in touch with members and see news on the SIG, please visit the SIG webpage.