

Open Session Proposal

Title: **Prosthetic design between aesthetics and functionality**

Session organizer:

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The history of prosthetic devices is full of contradictions: the functionality and beauty, the mimicry and ostentatious artificiality, the engineering and design. Prostheses used to be bashfully hidden as a stigma and a sign of disability, but also proudly exposed as proof of bravery on the battlefield or the miraculous capabilities of medicine. Whether the subject of craftsmanship, biotech manufacturing or DIY practices, prostheses are often discussed and researched in terms of the history of medicine, health identities, and technological development. In this session you are invited to investigate prostheses and other assistive technologies as objects of design practices and strategies. What cultural presuppositions about the human body, functionality and norms shape the design and manufacturing of prosthetic limbs and assistive devices? What are the users' experiences and how (if at all) are they included in the design process? What is the impact of geographical and social 'location' on the design of and access to prostheses and assistive technologies?

In exploring the relations between prosthetic design and aesthetics, please consider the following potential themes:

- Design strategies for hiding and camouflaging prostheses
- Race, age and gender in prosthetic design
- Promotion and advertising of prosthetic devices
- Prostheses as exhibits – strategies for presenting assistive technologies in offline and online museums
- Prostheses as fashion objects
- Mimicry and realism in prosthetic design
- Prostheses as a material/tool/object of the artistic process
- The disabled user/the disabled designer
- The wheel chair, the ear trumpet, artificial limbs... – the histories of particular assistive technologies
- DIY, reusing, repairing and bottom-up prosthetic designs
- Post/trans human elements in prosthetic aesthetics
- Social and cultural notions of normalcy in prosthetic design
- Representations of prostheses in popular culture

Other themes on the intersection of engineering and design in prosthetic and assistive technologies are welcome.

Please send your proposals (a one-page abstract of maximum 500 words and CV of maximum 300 words, as well as current contact information) to: magda.zrodowska@uj.edu.pl by March 25th, 2019.