



certifyD

the design certification dialogue



use chip to cast your vote

The title “designer,” rather than respected and understood, has become devalued and insignificant. The tools we use, not our knowledge or expertise, have unfavorably defined our field. Design’s focus on problem-solving and creative thinking has been displaced as a needless expendability by the prevalent notion that “anyone can do it.”

Is the title “designer”

meaningful or meaningless?

designer



knowledge



responsibility

Mission

Advocate for the establishment of common benchmarks within our industry, creating a distinction, not a division, between the level of preparation, expertise and commitment among practicing designers.

Vision

Become a platform for sharing ideas that strengthen our field and unify designers under a common goal: the consummation of our field as a valued and responsible profession.

Certification

A flexible system built on inclusivity, not exclusion, can help the business and public sectors navigate through the immensity of available designer options. It can foster the integration of education, experience and accountability as the core of our practice.

manifesto

An effective certification system should

- ① build on the history of design and foment experimentation, development and innovation from education to the highest level of professional practice.
- ② establish standards of excellence and commonly shared expectations for all practitioners to follow, creating a benchmark that reinforces, unites and ensures the ongoing evolution of the design profession.
- ③ be assembled on a flexible platform that recognizes the changing dynamics of our industry, capable of adjusting and expanding to future developments.
- ④ define the professional Communications Designer as a knowledgeable, experienced and ethical individual, capable of providing visual solutions that add value and go beyond superficial trends, looks or ephemeral styles.
- ⑤ embrace the inherent responsibility and power of Design in the 21st century, integrating accountability into the fabric of our discipline.

- 6 advance the fundamental notion that Design plays a vital role in the preservation of our quality of life, the use of natural resources, our human interactions and the enrichment of our local and global society, introducing People, Planet, Profit as the foundation of our field.
- 7 identify that a formal design education, combined with a commitment to long-term development, are the core for growing our profession.
- 8 require its members to follow strict codes of Ethics & Rules of Professional Conduct, holding them accountable for complying with such standards.
- 9 understand that certification is not a superficial title, but a symbol representing an individual's level of business expertise, ethical standards and professional commitment to the practice, our industry and the general public.
- 10 defend the value of designers inside industry, government, business and science, promoting the benefit that a multi-disciplinary exchange of knowledge has on innovation, and the betterment of the global community.

“The design profession, emerging from a long period of adolescence, seems now to be wavering... the designer, just as much as the scientist, the engineer, the doctor, or the teacher, has an important part to play. After all, nobody knows better than they do what as a profession they have to offer.”

Herbert Spencer, The Penrose Annual 57 (1964)

DESIGN BUREAU

SECOND ANNIVERSARY
EDITION
2

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Valid through
January 31st, 2013.



panelists



Matias Corea

CO-FOUNDER & CHIEF OF DESIGN
BEHANCE

Co-founder and Chief of Design at Behance, a company on a mission to empower the creative world, Matias has led the development of all Behance products since his arrival in 2005. His work has earned awards and distinctions from the Type Directors Club, SXSW Interactive and Webby nominations. Born and raised in Barcelona, Matias received his BFA from Massana Art School.



Emily Heyward

PARTNER & HEAD OF STRATEGY
RED ANTLER
CONTRIBUTOR
FAST COMPANY

Emily is a founding partner of Red Antler, a Brooklyn-based branding and design consultancy that specializes in startups and new ventures. She spends her days working with teams of designers to bring ideas, businesses, and brands to life. Emily started her career in advertising as a Strategic Planner at Saatchi & Saatchi followed by JWT. She has a degree in Social Studies from Harvard University.



John Estes

DIRECTOR OF TRAINING &
TECHNOLOGY STAFFING SERVICES
ROBERT HALF INT'L / THE CREATIVE GROUP

Director of Training for Robert Half International's Technology Staffing divisions, which includes The Creative Group, a specialized staffing service for interactive, design and marketing professionals. He has been with the company for 17 years and has served roles in Sales, Recruiting, Management and Training around the country. John holds a Bachelor's degree in Personnel Management from the University of Arkansas.



Tom Dolle

CREATIVE DIRECTOR/OWNER
TOM DOLLE DESIGN
 ADJUNCT PROFESSOR
PRATT INSTITUTE

Principal at Tom Dolle Design, a strategic design firm in NYC focused on communications, branding and packaging for retail, arts and non-profit organizations. Tom has garnered awards from the AIGA, Print, Art Directors Club, American Graphic Design Awards, Type Directors Club and others. Tom joined the Pratt faculty in 1992 and is currently an Adjunct Professor in the Graduate Communication Design program.



Glen Cummings

FOUNDING PARTNER **MTWTF**
 VICE-PRESIDENT **AIGA/NY**
 LECTURER **YALE UNIVERSITY**

Principal at MTWTF, a design studio specializing in publications, environmental graphics and identity systems. Glen received a BFA from The Art Institute of Chicago and a MFA in Graphic Design from Yale University School of Art. He was also Art Director at 2x4. His work has been recognized by the AIA, AIGA, New York Times Magazine and has been exhibited at the San Francisco MoMA. Glen teaches Exhibition Design at Yale.



Albert Ng

PAST VICE-PRESIDENT **ICOGRADA**
 FOUNDING PRESIDENT **REGISTERED**
GRAPHIC DESIGNERS OF ONTARIO (RGD)

An award winning package design instructor, Albert is a Member of the Order of Ontario, one of the highest Canadian honors. He led a ten year campaign for the professional accreditation of designers in Ontario. The resulting legislation caused him to become known as the “father of graphic design accreditation.” Ng founded the Association of Registered Graphic Designers of Ontario (RGD). His model was a first in North America.

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“Vigilance is needed not only in the spheres where we are vaguely aware of the intentional misuse and manipulation of words and ideas, as in political propaganda and the cheaper aspects of advertising. It is needed also in fields where we assume that we know what we are talking about, in our own profession.”

proposal

Certification must arise as a partnership that honors the diverse backgrounds that form our professional network. The following road map presents **CRED** (Certifying REponsible Design) as the conceivable association appointed to establish a comprehensive certification system that provides opportunities for the growth and advancement of its members.

The association must be

- 1 an independent non-profit organization.
- 2 partnered with major local and international design bodies.
- 3 governed by a Board of Directors, comprised of working designers, educators, businesses and social science professionals, as well as representatives from the public sector.
- 4 invested in fostering activities that unite the design community with the general public.
- 5 organized with no required payment or membership fees that could hinder its transparency and objective mission.

Membership categories

1 Fellow

A designer with 10+ years of working experience, an exceptional portfolio and who has made a substantial contribution to the profession.

2 Senior

A practicing designer meeting the established minimum requirement of 40 points.

3 Junior

A practicing designer meeting the established minimum requirement of 25 points.

4 Graduate

A recent graduate meeting the established minimum requirement of 10 points.

5 Student

An individual enrolled in an accredited design degree-granting program.

The **CRED Point System (CPS)** guarantees a culture of inclusion and opportunity amid the varied design community. Its structure, divided into five levels, is built at the reach of designers from different backgrounds and experience levels, encouraging learning, development and continuous participation.

How it works

To become certified, applicants must fulfill and provide proof of CPS requirements based on the desired certification level. Failure to comply and maintain all requisites will result in denial or cancellation of membership. This overview presents the specific areas required to reach each membership category.

MEMBER	PTS	EDUCATION	WORK	ETHICS	CONFERENCE	PORTFOLIO	CREDITS
Fellow			●	●	●	●	●
Senior	40	●	●	●	●	●	●
Junior	25	●	●	●		●	●
Graduate	10	●		●			
Student							

● Required

The CPS flexibility cultivates a connection between its members by demanding action and involvement. Unlike many traditional associations, where anyone pays to become a member, the active CPS model positions Communications Design as a professional title that must be earned, not given away.

The system provides designers with numerous

1 Education

Underscoring the importance of a formal design degree, education carries points based on the following scale. The value of non-design related education is also recognized and built into the system.

DESIGN

Associate Degree = 6 pts
Bachelor's Degree = 12 pts
Master's Degree = 8 pts

NON-DESIGN

Bachelor's Degree = 6 pts
Master's Degree = 4 pts

2 Experience

CRED retains the right to contact employers, clients and others to guarantee the veracity of claimed experience level. Years of work carry points based on the following scale.

WORK 1 year = 2 pts

3 yrs = 6 pts (minimum years)
4 yrs = 8 pts
5 yrs = 10 pts
6 yrs = 12 pts
7 yrs = 14 pts (max years considered)

3 Ethics + Professional Conduct (EPC)

EPC points are provided in two tiers, reflecting the level of ethics expected of each membership category. The code enforces guidelines as related to business, legal practices, social responsibility and environmental resources among others. Failure to comply with regulations will result in loss of certification. Abiding by the code carries the following point value.

FELLOW & SENIOR 6 pts
GRADUATE & JUNIOR 3 pts

avenues from which to reach their desired level.

4 **2-day Conference**

The CRED conference is a bridge between school and practice. It will address topics such as: accessibility, management, law, user experience and research. Content can be constantly revised, responding to economic, social and technological needs.

CONFERENCE 6 pts

5 **Portfolio**

Applicants must submit and defend 6 case-studies, with visual references and written rationales, in front of a jury. Portfolios will be judged and graded based on the following criteria.

Application of the client's brief
Concept, strategy and implementation
Production and delivery

PORTFOLIO 1-3 pts

6 **Professional Development Credits (PDC)**

PDC emphasizes the importance of a designer's long-term commitment to education and growth. Fellow, Senior and Junior members are required to complete a specific number of credits every year.

FELLOW & SENIOR 40 credits/year

JUNIOR 24 credits/year

1 HOUR (regular activity) = 1 credit

1 HOUR (CRED-sponsored) = 2 credits

APPROVED ACTIVITIES INCLUDE

Formal academic study
Research projects
Teaching or mentoring
Participating in seminar/lecture
Attending workshop or conference
Publishing an article, essay, book
Engaging in pro-bono work
Conducting workshop
Designing or curating an exhibition
Judge or panelist in design event

A graphic design certification system

that is self-administered, agreed upon and malleable can break through the wall of limitations and forge opportunities like never before. Nevertheless, it is critical that any support for certification be made with the right intentions.

Certification can only become viable if we approach it as a vehicle and a journey, not as a final objective. Limits do not need to become limiting and rules are only restrictive when made inflexible. It is in the application, not in the idea, of establishing benchmarks common to all practitioners where the consummation or failure of design certification lies.



I am not advocating a division between who is a “good” designer and who is not. What I present is the idea that a Professional Designer, in capital letters, is more than someone with the ability to manage tools and manipulate a computer, much more than receiving awards or being featured in annuals.

Professionalism in any field begins when knowledge, practice and ethics come together. It should not be any different in graphic design.

Standards need to stop being taboo. Differentiation does not make a person better by making another worse, but it can define the distinct capabilities of each.

Defining our profession, our role in the economic and political spheres and our responsibility to humanity carries more benefits than consequences.

Certification would be a momentous first step for professional design in the USA. Not only can we trace a direction for future generations to follow, we can begin to influence the outcome of the work we produce and the effects we have on other living things today.

Graphic design certification in the USA is within our grasp. I stand firm and undeterred, openly awaiting to continue this conversation with you.
Thank you for participating.

Made possible with the support of our partners



Design Bureau delivers an honest and inspirational dialogue on design from diverse disciplines and points of view. It gathers creative professionals, style arbiters and industry leaders and connects them with a like-minded community of design enthusiasts across the world with one common idea: discovering great design and the people who make it happen. Design Bureau is published monthly in Chicago by ALARM Press. wearedesignbureau.com



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The Creative Group, a division of staffing leader Robert Half International, specializes in placing highly skilled creative professionals with a variety of firms. Their business relationships spread throughout markets across the USA and Canada. TCG strives to serve as responsible members of the community while bringing the best resources to our business. thecreativegroup.com

Pratt

Pratt Institute's Graduate Communications and Package Design programs have been educating designers for over 40 years. Pratt prepares individuals to explore design as a means for communicating meaningful messages and affecting social change. Graduates develop a voice as authors and entrepreneurs engaged in solving problems within cross-disciplinary environments. prattgradcomd.com

Bēhance™

In 2006, Behance set out to put control into the hands of creatives suffering from inefficiency, disorganization, and at the mercy of bureaucracy. Empowering the creative world to make ideas happen, Behance has built a worldwide platform that removes barriers between talent & opportunity.
behance.net

tdc.
Type Directors Club

Since 1946, the Type Directors Club has been the leading international organization whose purpose is to support excellence in typography; both in print and on screen. The TDC is the home for typography, a physical meeting place and a strong affiliation, welcoming professionals from a variety of fields and a keen interest in type and the written word.
tdc.org

[]™

Founded in 2007, the Communication Designers Association (CDA) is a non-profit organization connecting the world's largest CD communities. In times where anyone can create an online group, their unique membership model makes the CDA a proactive association, looking for new ways to engage its members.
communicationdesigners.org

thank you.



contacts

My aim is to reinvigorate this dialogue, to question previous stances and existing inclinations and present a fresh notion of what is possible.

Stay in touch.

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