Overview

Research is the initial discovery phase of any successful environmental graphic design project. It involves the study of people, places and processes prior to beginning the design phases.

The research process involves gathering data, analyzing and synthesizing findings and summarizing, packaging and communicating this information. Designers must be familiar with primary research methods such as ethnography, surveys and interviews. They must also be able to use supporting secondary research methods, such as gathering and synthesizing existing information.
Overview

Once documentation related to the project and context is gathered and clarified, the research phase begins. Part of a Schematic Design Phase, this is creative, exploratory, iterative and is meant to develop a foundation for the rest of the design project. This phase includes empathy and immersion; reviewing case studies related to the project; and determining a methodology to articulate and test possibilities through visual models, plans, mockups and so forth.
Learning Outcomes

- Use primary and secondary research methods to gather data on human needs and environments related to the project.
- Evaluate prior work and other precedents around the topic, affecting practice and project.
- Analyze, write and visualize findings toward defining the project.
- Develop a research proposal including objectives, intellectual framework, research strategy, methodologies and implementation plan.
- Communicate (through written, verbal and visual means) research progress at critical junctures with colleagues, clients, stakeholders and/or community.
Case Studies

Strategy/Research/Planning

Texas Children’s Hospital

Legible London, An exercise in simplicity
http://appliedwayfinding.com/projects/legible-london-a-wayfinding-study/

Carrie M. McLain Museum, Museum at the Edge of the World
http://publicdesign.ca/work/carrie_m._mclain_memorial_museum

Adler University, Vancouver Campus
http://publicdesign.ca/work/adler_university_vancouver-campus

NBBJ, Made to Scale, The Boeing Future Factory
http://www.nbbj.com/work/boeing-future-factory/
Resources

Design Research

An Ethnography Primer (AIGA)
https://www.scribd.com/doc/46873341/Ethnography-Primer#from_embed

Card Sorting (Design Research Techniques)
http://designresearchtechniques.com/casestudies/card-sorting/

Ethnography: Principles in Practice (Hammersley, M. and Atkinson, P.)
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/42800634_Ethnography_Principles_In_Practice

The Field Guide to Human-Centered Design (IDEO) – free PDF download
http://www.designkit.org/resources/1

Getting the Most out of Frameworks (Masuma Henry, Artefact Group)
https://www.artefactgroup.com/resources/getting-the-most-out-of-frameworks/


Lead User-Centered Ideation (Visocky O’Grady, J., HOW Design)
http://www.howdesign.com/parse/lead-user-centered-ideation/


Resources

Architecture/Interior Design


