The Campaign For
UC San Diego

At the University of California San Diego, challenging convention is our most cherished tradition. The Campaign for UC San Diego is a university-wide comprehensive fundraising effort to transform the student experience, our campus, and ultimately the way humanity approaches problems and develops solutions.

The Design Lab

Making UC San Diego a world center for design research and education

Design as a way of thinking
The UC San Diego Design Lab treats design as a way of thinking. It can be applied to any problem, including everyday events, industrial organization, products, services, routines, and structures. We focus on the interaction of people and technology, treating issues as systems.

A UC San Diego original
The Design Lab’s seeds for success were rooted years ago. We are the inventors of what is now called “Human-Centered Design,” with our 1986 book entitled UCSD – User-Centered System Design. Along the way we created many of today’s design success stories, ensuring that our technology was understandable and effective.

With founding faculty including originators like Don Norman and Irwin Jacobs, UC San Diego is the place where higher education finds new form. Accordingly, the Design Lab is not situated within a particular academic department. It is an emerging cross-campus venture, with students and faculty from all areas.

Design as a practice
Traditional academic disciplines reinforce great depth of knowledge, which naturally results in extreme specialists, often working primarily with similar specialists. Outside of academics fields of practice are different — such as management, law, journalism, and medicine -- where a broad range of knowledge is necessary, tapping disciplinary specialists when necessary.

Design is a field of practice. It is a way of thinking, and as a result, any practical result of design is not contained within the field of design but must by necessity cut across other disciplines. Working with groups, working with real problems, and ensuring that what we produce makes a difference in people’s lives is a critical component of what we do.

Through the Campaign for UC San Diego, you can play your part in cultivating the Design Lab’s lively future.

Nation’s first ever
Department of Cognitive Science, founded by Design Lab director Don Norman

5th in the world
Public university across the globe (Times Higher Education, 2018)

1,000+
Companies that utilize or have utilized technology produced at UC San Diego

2,500+
Average number initiated each year at UC San Diego Health

Changemaker Campus
Designation by Ashoka U for campus role as a leader in social innovation education

Continue the nontradition.
Design Lab Priorities

Multiple channels

» Centers of excellence divide our research activities into opportunity clusters, spanning the campus. Centers include Activity-Centered Visualization; Design-Driven Transformation; Health Design; Large-Scale, Individualized Learning; People-Centered Automation; Social Computing; and Work, Technology, and Society.

» Because design is a discipline of synthesis, building and testing ideas, we are able to work collaboratively with industry. Our Design Lab Collaborative Program works with industry partners to move forward areas of common interest.

» Teaching is central to our mission. We teach an undergraduate Design Minor and are planning a Masters Degree and PhD specialization. Jointly with the Rady School of Management, we offer Executive Education programs in Design-Driven Transformation.

» Community partnerships on and off campus – namely Design Forward, region-wide design challenges and mentorship of student groups – emphasize the real-world application of design, the foundation of our evidence-based approach.

Philanthropic opportunity

Philanthropic contributions expand the science of design through research, community-connected projects, educational opportunity, and creating places for people to collaborate.

» Space. The Design Lab’s future location, the Design and Innovation Building, will offer unparalleled access to community participants from across the metro area. A naming gift will prominently recognize your generosity and the critical importance of design.

» People. The Design Lab has enjoyed a surge of interest from research and project partners in an array of disciplines and fields. Support for postdoctoral scholars, graduate students, and program directors lets us go wherever ideas take us.

» Activities. More and more, an effective science of design has to include people on the inside and outside of our university community. Your support of conferences, events, and a nontraditional curriculum expands channels for connection.

» Innovation. We don’t always know what the most exciting opportunities are going to be a year, six months, or even two months in advance. Your support of a Design Lab Innovation Fund makes it possible for us to act quickly when opportunities come our way.

Help us continue the nontradition.

With your help, UC San Diego will help design thinking proliferate as a change-catalyzing practice in technology, health, business, communication, and all areas of societal endeavor. Together with your philanthropic support of the Campaign for UC San Diego, we can become the world’s preeminent resource for design education, research, and community connection.

Learn more at campaign.ucsd.edu

For more information, please contact:

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