The Master’s program Integrated Design offers you a specific range of design perspectives in four thematic clusters: Material Systems & Lab Culture, Social & Public Innovation, Urban Intensities & Resources, and Visual Cultures & Politics.

We welcome applicants who are looking to engage with, explore, and pursue these cross-cutting clusters and perspectives. They are the gateway to in-depth research and aim to push, transform, and recalibrate the limits of design, theory, practice, and disciplinary methodologies. As a Master student, you will be able to immerse yourself in an integrated, intercultural, and interdisciplinary setting and work in research- and practice-based design processes. Find your theme, choose your perspective, and apply now!

Köln International School of Design (KISD) is an institute of TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences, one of the largest public universities of Applied Sciences in Europe. KISD offers its students a dynamic culture of inventive, experimental, and critical research. Project-based and student-centered learning in inspiring, contextualized problem-solving environments allows students a high degree of flexibility and independence.

Graduates of our Master’s program Integrated Design take on a variety of roles within contemporary design across the globe, with recent graduates in professions as varied as: founder of a design studio, researcher, art director, entrepreneur, project manager, lecturer, senior designer, curator, museum assistant, public relations officer, marketing executive, UX designer, publishing editor, …

Thematic Clusters
KISD aims to overcome traditional design boundaries and combine different approaches, perspectives, and practices, in order to deal with problems and questions that cannot be solved within the boundaries of a single design area of expertise. Design is an integral part of every facet of the material and virtual world. It is responsible for and operates through products, environments, systems, and services within political, social, economical, and cultural contexts. We see design not only as a way to interfere in and question these processes, but as the production, acquisition, communication, and documentation of knowledge.

The Integrated Design welcomes applicants who want to examine how design can engage with questions of contemporary culture, politics, media, ecology, and urbanity. A key component of the program is the development of a Thesis within the scope of one of the four thematic clusters listed below. Following your research interest, you will connect with different fields of expertise, broaden and deepen your competencies, and focus your research. Explore your interests – find your perspective – apply now!

Study Course and Master Thesis
Over the course of three semesters, you will explore, transform, and professionalize your practice. In order to develop your research question, find your inquiry, and conduct your Thesis project, you have the opportunity to receive profound insights in one of four thematic clusters.

The Master Thesis at KISD is both research- and practice-based. Your ultimate assignment will be an integrated design project that unifies practice and theory, pursues methodological innovation as well as interdisciplinary engagement. Accompanied by a written examination and documentation of your process and elaborated research on the topic, it will include hands-on experiments or collaboration with companies to do design work in line with your research question.

KISD Integrated Design M. A. students work on their Thesis throughout their studies. In the first semester they develop their perspective and research question with regard to their chosen thematic cluster. In the second semester they start the design process and approach their topic through observation, exploration, and experimental and practical design work. The third semester is dedicated to in-depth elaboration and finalization of the M.A. Thesis.

Projects
Studying at KISD is integrative, interdisciplinary, and international. While working on their Master Thesis, students are also involved in KISD projects according to the area of expertise that relates to their Thesis topic. In the second semester, they join selected projects as teaching assistants.
Application Process
The Master’s program Integrated Design welcomes design professionals with a research interest in a specific topic, problem, or challenge from an integrated and interdisciplinary perspective. This brings together experienced, open-minded, and critical students from all over the world willing to contribute to a dynamic setting of learning, analysis, critical reflection, and inquiry, conducting experiments and interdisciplinary research, in order to develop their specific design contributions.

We invite applicants looking to immerse themselves in an integrated, research-, and practice-based design process within our newly established thematic clusters: Material Systems & Lab Culture, Social & Public Innovation, Urban Intensities & Resources, Visual Cultures & Politics. The KISD application portal is open between August 01 and October 01.

In order to apply, please upload your application documents in that time period to application.kisd.de

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Study Course

Semesters Abroad
Our Master students are also encouraged to apply for a semester abroad in one of our partner universities (https://kisd.de/en/international/partner-universities/), if it fits their individual study plan and project. This will also automatically prolong their studies by the time spent abroad. Students will return to KISD and finalize their Thesis within one semester.

Double Degree
The Master program Integrated Design is a 3-semester study course. We offer our students the opportunity to apply for the Double Degree Program with our Partner Universities Tongji University in Shanghai, China, and Chiba University in Chiba, Japan. Double Degree Students leave KISD after two semesters in order to study two more semesters at the respective host university, thereby prolonging the study course by one semester. After finalizing their Master Thesis and presenting to their host university, KISD students return to Cologne for their final exam.