



DESIGN FUTURES

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Design Futures is a 5-day convening to re-imagine the role of the designer in centering community power in the built environment

**Community-Based
Design Convening**

**University of Detroit Mercy
Detroit, Michigan
June 1st-5th, 2026**

In this time, over 70 student leaders from across the nation representing 13 universities convene with faculty and leading practitioners in the field of community-based design and spatial justice to learn practical skills, advance the field, and build community.

How to join Design Futures 2026:

Email **DesignFuturesForum@gmail.com** to confirm your attendance and reserve your spot.

We can provide you with additional materials to help recruit the faculty and students.

STANDARD MEMBERSHIP

2026 Forum: Standard Membership

This membership entitles the participating university to the following membership benefits over the course of the year beginning at the start of the Design Futures academic year, whether or not participants take advantage of them. We cannot provide refunds and encourage you to fully use the benefits.

- Participate as members of the Design Futures University Consortium, including publicly identify the university as a member of the consortium
- First chance to register to attend the virtual Winter faculty convening, 1 faculty registration fees is included (additional faculty can attend at registration rate)
- Send **one** faculty member and up to **five** students to the student symposium in June hosted by University of Detroit Mercy.
 - Includes entry to the Forum for faculty and students, on-campus housing for the students and all food except dinners.
 - Travel and other expenses are not included.
- Ability to host Design Futures; to be a host university, a university must have been a consortium member and attended the symposium for at least two years in a row prior to committing to hosting

Early Bird Fee: \$6,300, due by 12/31/25

Standard Fee: \$6,600

Add on: +1 student to cohort: \$1,100/student, up to 2 additional students. Exclusive to returning universities only.



In 2024, 72% of student attendees were people of color and 65% were women or non-binary.

100% of the design workshops were led by people of color and 100% co-led by women.

Impact on students

COMMUNITY

Breaking isolation and finding other people who are dedicated to spatial justice

ADVANCING SKILLS

Bringing rigor: Learning and practicing frameworks, tools and mindsets

CAREER CHOICES

Expanding their understanding of what career pathways are possible by meeting people who are practicing community-based design in the field

MENTORSHIP

Receiving mentorship from award-winning practitioners and building peer-mentorship circles

Impact on faculty

COMMUNITY

Joining a network of peers to share curricula, student engagement approaches, and systems change strategies for their university

ACADEMIC RECOGNITION

Renewing energy for their work in receiving validation for efforts that aren't always recognized within their university

Impact on the field

COMMUNITY

Building relationships between aligned practitioners across the country

CENTER BIPOC LEADERSHIP

Lifting up the existing BIPOC leadership in community-based design

EXPAND ACCOUNTABILITY

Creating space for practitioners to share their work and be accountable to responsible practices

FREEDOM TO INNOVATE

Providing an opportunity for practitioners to try more radical frameworks than what they can typically explore in the field