



MONASH
University

MONASH
ART
DESIGN &
ARCHITECTURE

Head of Design

CANDIDATE BRIEF

Society
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Welcome

from Professor Mel Dodd, Dean of Monash Art, Design & Architecture (MADA)

In a world shaped by rapid technological change, deepening inequality and polarisation, and the urgency of decarbonisation, the need for creative leadership has never been greater. At Monash Art, Design & Architecture (MADA), we see creativity as a way of making sense of complexity and of imagining more inclusive and regenerative futures. Embedded within Melbourne's vibrant creative ecology, and networked across the Indo-Pacific, MADA is an open, connected community of creative thinkers, makers, and professional practitioners.

The appointment of our next Head of Design comes at a significant moment for the Faculty. Across communication, industrial, and spatial design, new technologies, materials, and models of practice are reshaping how designers think, make, collaborate, and create value. We are seeking a leader with the vision, energy, and international perspective to help position the Department at the forefront of these shifts, while strengthening its distinctive purpose-led contribution to education, research and industry engagement.

As part of one of the world's leading comprehensive, research-intensive universities, MADA offers exceptional opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration and impact. Our researchers work across Monash and with partners internationally, contributing to major initiatives in health, mobility, climate adaptation, emerging technologies, gender-sensitive design, and urban transformation. As one of MADA's Heads of Department, you will join an ambitious and collegial leadership team, supported by outstanding facilities, services, and systems.

If this opportunity resonates with you, I encourage you to explore the following pages.

Professor Mel Dodd



About Monash University

Monash is a modern, international, and research-intensive university, making a positive impact on today's global challenges – whether that is by mitigating climate change, easing geopolitical insecurity, or fostering healthy communities.

Monash has grown into the largest Australian university: a network of campuses, education centres and partnerships spanning the globe. Our vibrant and diverse community consists of 86,000 students, 17,000 staff, and more than 490,000 alumni. At Monash, work feels different. There is a sense of belonging, from contributing to something groundbreaking. We are a place where great things happen. You know you are part of something special and purposeful.

We have a clear purpose to deliver ground-breaking intensive research; a world-class education; a global ecosystem of enterprise – and we activate these to address some of the challenges of the age, Climate Change, Thriving Communities and Geopolitical Security.

We welcome and value difference and diversity. When you come to work, you can be yourself, be a change-maker and develop your career in exciting ways with curious, energetic, inspiring and committed people and teams driven to make an impact – just like you.

Together with our commitment to academic freedom, you will have access to quality research facilities, infrastructure, world class teaching spaces, and international collaboration opportunities.

We champion an inclusive workplace culture for our staff regardless of ethnicity or cultural background. We have also worked to improve gender equality for more than 30 years. Join the pursuit of our purpose to build a better future for ourselves and our communities - #ChangeIt with us.



Our Strategy and Values

As outlined in our strategic plan, [Impact 2030](#), the following values underpin the behaviours and decisions of the University and shape our distinctive culture.



Discovery

We nurture curiosity and innovation in the pursuit of new knowledge to build our understanding of natural and social environments and their peoples.



Learning

We are open to experiment and testing our understanding with evidence; we adapt and learn from experience, others and new circumstances; we are always 'still learning'.



Purpose

We aspire to use our knowledge and learning to improve our communities; we strive to transform our understanding and engagement to make an impact through contributing to solutions to significant challenges and persistent problems.



Collaboration

We seek to work with others to achieve our goals, and commit to engaging cooperatively, collegially and responsively to developing shared aims and benefits.



Honesty

We commit to acting in good faith with integrity and transparency in our relations within and outside the University community.



Fairness

We pledge to treat all people justly and with respect, making objective and unbiased decisions, and to preventing behaviours such as discrimination, vilification, harassment and violence that inhibit the full engagement of people in our community.

"Consenting Cities", at Palazzo Mora, Venice, 2023.

Monash Art, Design & Architecture (MADA)

MADA is ranked in the Top 1% in the world for Art, Design and Architecture. We transform ideas into reality, and through creativity aspire to change the world for the better.



As a Faculty, MADA is defined by creativity with purpose: a belief that the most compelling ideas emerge when art, design, and architecture are grounded in real places, lives, and experiences. Our unique strength lies in the breadth of our disciplines and the ways they intersect. Our enterprising academics, researchers, and practitioners work across studio, workshop, lab, and public settings, testing ideas through hands-on, practice-based research, and translating them into new forms of knowledge and impact. We ask the right questions, challenge conventional thinking, and explore uncharted territories. This agenda is carried through into our teaching, which prepares graduates to think critically, work collaboratively, and act with imagination in complex and changing professional contexts.

As part of Monash University, MADA has a distinctive platform from which to extend this work. Monash's scale, global reach, and research intensity create significant opportunities to collaborate across fields including health, engineering, technology, and business and economics. This enables MADA to connect creative practice with deep disciplinary expertise, major research infrastructure, industry and government partnerships, and a university-wide commitment to addressing global challenges.

To learn more about MADA, please visit [our website](#).

The Department of Design

With 71 staff (59 FTE), Design is MADA's largest department, bringing together significant expertise across communication design, industrial design, spatial design, and design history and theory. It has a reputation for continuously delivering quality and progressive learning and project outcomes.

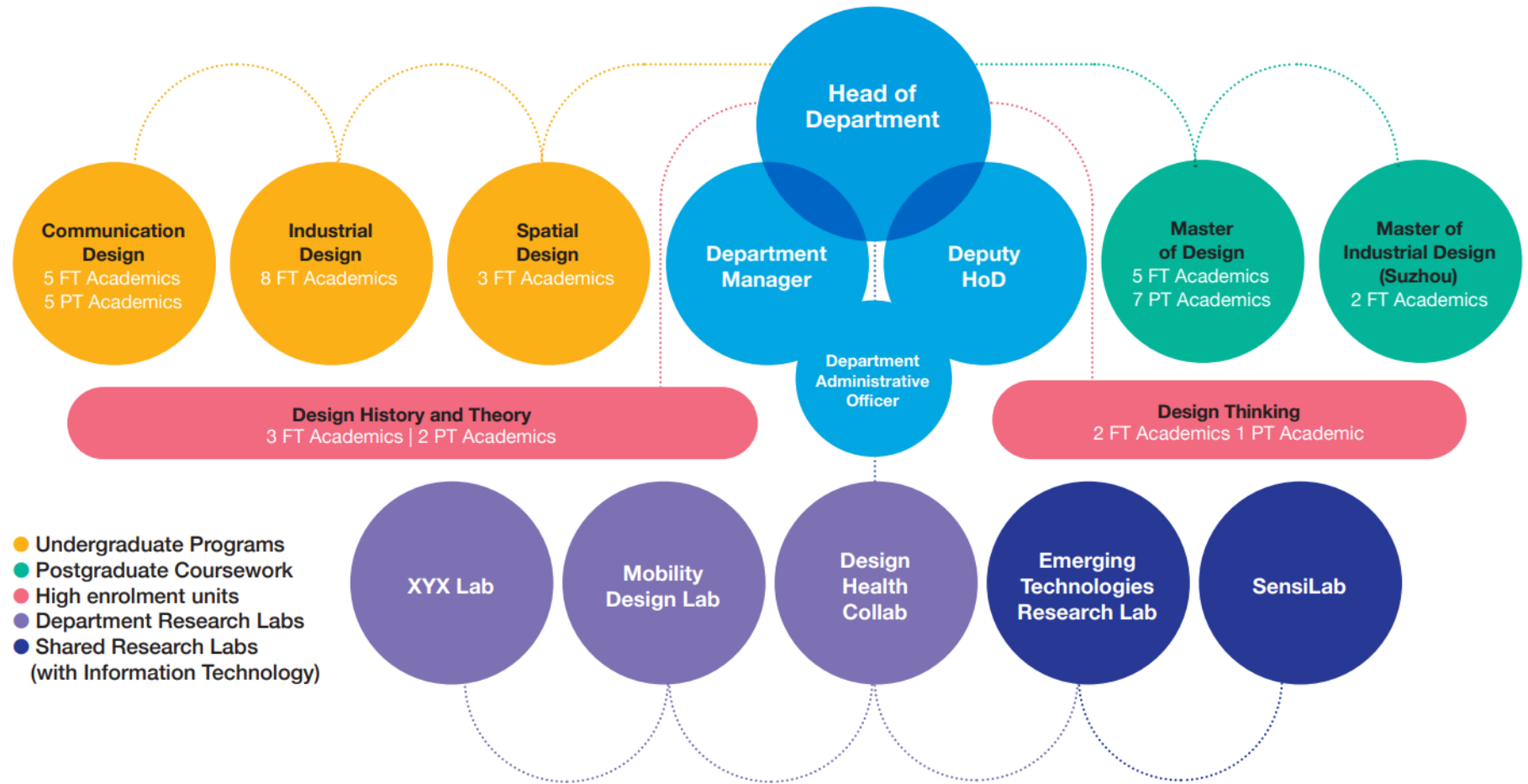
The Department boasts a responsive, future-focused course offering, innovative and passionate teaching staff, and researchers working at the forefront of critical design thinking and practice. Design's ambition is to lead research that makes a positive difference in the world through meaningful design practices, supported by interdisciplinary collaboration, sound methodology, and theoretical underpinning. Its academics play the various roles of disrupters, catalysers, translators, facilitators, and provocateurs.

The next phase for the Department is full of possibility. Few design schools are positioned so directly at the intersection of creative practice, applied research, and large-scale institutional capability. Faculty members work across health, mobility, gender-sensitive design, emerging technologies, human-machine relationships, and creative AI, giving the Department a distinctive base from which to explore how design disciplines are being transformed by new tools, new forms of practice, and new expectations of graduates. The next Head will have the opportunity to give shape to this agenda, building on established strengths while setting a bold direction for the future of design education, research, and industry engagement.

Past research projects have included the design of a user-centred cochlear earpiece for the hearing impaired; headgear for Monash Vision's Bionic Eye; designed approaches to improve the commuter experience on public transport systems in Australia; and championing equality, diversity and inclusion for vulnerable communities through the planning and design of public spaces.

The Department delivers a comprehensive, flexible and adaptive curriculum, underpinned by interdisciplinary studio-based practice that opens up emergent areas including the collaborative fields of service, interaction, and experience design. Its flagship undergraduate program allows students to work across disciplinary boundaries and develop the creative, technical, and critical capabilities needed for evolving design careers.

Departmental Structure



Education and Thinking

The Department of Design's education programs operate across creative, critical thinking and material making. Our courses are founded on a practice-based approach to research and cultivate a collaborative environment with a broad range of disciplines including Medicine, Health Services, Information Technology, Engineering, Business and Arts. Academic staff are committed to teach students in areas that will prepare them for sustainable creative careers.

Bachelor of Design

Our flagship undergraduate program has been revitalised with the introduction of an integrated Bachelor of Design, in which studio-based units promote the currency of design practice. The program brings together spatial design, communication design and industrial design in a manner that permits students the opportunity to cross pollinate their design education, or remain dedicated to one selected field of expertise. This provides a flexible and contemporary program that remains responsive to the changes in the design profession.

Master of Design (by coursework)

Referencing multiple creative disciplines our Master of Design provides students with the platform to explore advanced principles in contemporary design through a project-based and studio focused course within a specialisation area of interaction design or multimedia design. Through these core studios, students engage with design systems, services, processes, environments and objects. In addition to these studios, students also undertake units in design thinking to analyse real-world challenges through design thinking strategies and approaches.

Master of Industrial Design

This international double masters program enables students in China to complete the requirements of the Monash Master of Industrial Design as well as the second degree with Southeast University (SEU) located in Suzhou, Jiangsu Province. Designers are encouraged to sharpen their practice and further their industrial design skills at an advanced professional level. Graduates of the Master of Industrial Design have enhanced, highly developed creative and critical capabilities, which place them at the forefront of their field of design practice.

Higher Degree by Research

Design researchers draw on diverse approaches in contemporary visual culture and the built environment to generate ideas and undertake practice that leads to the creation of paradigms, novel approaches and fresh insights. We advocate a higher purpose for design that adds value beyond the aesthetic to make contributions that are significant culturally, economically, environmentally and socially. The Master of Design (by Research) and Monash Doctoral Program position designers as the leaders of change.

Design Thinking

The Department of Design has refined, critiqued and adapted the processes of traditional design thinking to generate new methodologies that suit the bespoke needs of organisations, communities and multiple student cohorts. The Department leads the University's Design Thinking curriculum, offering it across multiple faculties, including the Monash Business School, where it delivers a bespoke program to approximately 350 postgraduate business students every semester.

Our Research Labs

The Department of Design hosts five collaborative research labs:

Design Health Collab

Design Health Collab, led by Professor Daphne Flynn, combines design methodology with a people-focus to solve challenges in the health and wellbeing sectors. Design Health Collab's research takes place at the centre of the complex health services ecosystem, including patients, clinicians, nurses, device manufacturers, medical researchers, engineers, and healthcare management. Its research aims to understand and activate significant, high-impact healthcare services and products in the world.

Mobility Design Lab

The Mobility Design Lab, led by Associate Professor Robbie Napper, is a world leader in research that focuses on how design can improve the physical, environmental and experiential aspects of mobility. From personal to public transport, bikes to buses, family cars to autonomous vehicles, its researchers engage with user-centred and participatory techniques to reveal new insights into passenger experiences. Affiliated with the Monash Institute of Transport Studies, the Mobility Design Lab combines evidence-based research methods with design-led innovations, functioning at the junctions of science, government, engineering and user experiences.

XYX Lab

The XYX Lab, led by Professors Nicole Kalms and Gene Bowden, investigates how space and design can influence and promote safety, equity and inclusivity. XYX Lab is grounded in feminist and queer theory. Activated through real-world projects, its researchers explore gender-sensitive design practices and theory operating at the intersection of identity, urban space and advocacy. Building equity into urban life requires long-term vision and a strategic, often radical, approach to the design processes. We work collaboratively with policy makers, government and stakeholders to contribute towards a movement for change.

SensiLab

SensiLab, led by Professor Jon McCormack, is founded on the idea that the best way to learn is by making things. Their purpose-built workshop incorporates dedicated design, fabrication and production studios, all integrated with advanced computing infrastructure. The lab operates as a joint initiative between the Faculty of Information Technology and Monash Art, Design and Architecture and this interdisciplinary team of researchers explores the innovative creative applications and undiscovered opportunities of technology.

Emerging Technologies Lab

Shared with the Faculty of Information Technology, and led by Professor Sarah Pink, the Emerging Technologies Research Lab undertakes interdisciplinary and international research into the social, cultural and experiential dimensions of new and future technologies. Its work seeks to prepare us for an emerging technological environment where automation, AI, and the questions of ethics, responsibility and user experience and engagement that they bring with them are becoming increasingly central. Bringing together the highest quality academic scholarship with deep engagements with external stakeholders, they are revising our understandings of how technologies can best participate in human futures, and how to use this knowledge to ensure that we design for a better future.



Role Description

This role will provide enthusiastic, engaged and visible leadership of the Department of Design; fostering excellence in research, education and engagement, both within the University as well as with the wider community of industry and practice.



Reporting Line

The position reports to the Dean of the Faculty



Supervisory Responsibilities

This position provides direct supervision to the Design Department



Financial Delegation

Yes, in line with the University delegations schedule



Budgetary Responsibilities

Yes, in line with key responsibilities, developed in consultation with the Dean, Faculty General Manager and Faculty Finance Manager

Specific duties required of the Head of the Department of Design will include:

Leadership and Strategic Direction



- Providing high-level and ambitious leadership and developing appropriate strategic and operational plans for the Department that align with the broader Faculty's strategic direction
- Implementing quality assurance and improvement procedures with the goal of enhancing all aspects of the Department's activities
- Providing high-level reporting, advice and professional insights on key departmental activities, service quality, academic outcomes and portfolio operations to drive effective planning and strategic decision-making

Staff Management



- Providing overall leadership of staff management across the Department, including recruitment, selection, induction, mentoring, performance development and the appropriate delegation of day-to-day activities to managers
- Fostering a safe, equitable and high-performing workplace culture by promoting OHS&E (Occupational Health, Safety, and Environment) and equity policies and managing staff grievances in a fair and timely manner

Financial and Infrastructure Management



- Providing effective financial leadership for the Department, including planning, implementing and monitoring agreed budgets, and exercising strong budget management to support strategic and operational priorities
- Ensuring that the Department complies with all financial procedures and regulations
- Coordinating measures to obtain funds from outside sources and to disburse such funds within the Department

Additional Responsibilities

By virtue of being an Associate Professor/Professor, the appointee's responsibilities will also include:

Research and Education



- Providing strong and committed leadership teaching and curriculum development, while making a distinguished personal contribution to the Design teaching program
- Participating in the Faculty's curriculum planning and development processes, academic committees, and relevant examination processes
- Providing research leadership that enhances the Department's international reputation by establishing a strong and coherent program of design research and contributing to top-tier publications
- Leading the acquisition of external research funding through competitive grants and other funding sources to support a productive and sustainable research agenda
- Fostering a collaborative cross-disciplinary research culture, promoting research collaboration and opportunities for engagement
- Supporting a strong research culture in the Department
- Supervising research projects and postgraduate research theses

Service



- Representing the Faculty, Department, and Design discipline in relevant Department, Faculty and University committees
- Contributing to academic and administrative leadership within the Department and participating in the development of policy in the Department, Faculty and University

External Relationships



- Engaging with external agencies and with industry, as a representative of, and spokesperson for, the Department of Design

Appointment Period



The professorial appointment will be a continuing appointment in the Department of Design and will include the role of Head of Department for an initial period of up to five years with opportunity for renewal.

Industrial Design student, Anja Johansen, *The Citarum River Project, Precious Plastics Bandung, 2024.*

Person Specification

The successful candidate will be expected to demonstrate evidence of the following skills, capabilities, and experience:

Education/Qualifications

The appointee will have:

- A doctoral qualification or equivalent accreditation and standing
- Recognition as a leading authority in a Design-related discipline

Other Job-Related Information

- Travel to other campuses of the University may be required
- There may be a requirement to work additional hours from time to time
- There may be peak periods of work during which taking of leave may be restricted
- A current satisfactory Working With Children Check is required
- This position will require a successful National Police Record check

Knowledge and Skills

- Evidence of outstanding scholarly activity of an international standard in design, including significant publications in the highest impact journals, and/or through non-traditional research outcomes, a consistent record of high-level research engagement and productivity, and a demonstrated continuing commitment to one or more programs of research
- Understanding of the disruptions shaping the discipline, and the emerging skills that graduates need for traditional and expanded career destinations
- Capacity to lead practice-led research initiatives and alignment with Faculty and University strategic direction, in context of the broader Australian research environment
- Sophisticated performance development and management of staff at all levels
- Demonstrated connection to international Design practice and capacity to engage the profession
- Highly developed interpersonal and communication skills including the ability to liaise effectively with other academics, to mentor and develop staff and to represent and advocate for the Department as a contributing member on various board and committees within the Faculty and the University
- Demonstrated experience in various facets of academic management including the necessary leadership, strategic planning, financial, human resources and decision-making skills needed to manage a Department
- Evidence of collaborative and interdisciplinary research projects and the ability to foster a research culture with less-experienced researchers
- Demonstrated ability to attract external funding in the form of both national competitive grants and other research income and in building links with industry, government, and/or professional bodies
- Evidence of innovation in curriculum development, course design and course management and proven excellence in teaching
- A vision for the future needs and development of Design within Australia and internationally, from research and educational perspectives
- Commitment to delivery of quality services to students

Appointment Process and How to Apply

Monash University is being assisted in this appointment process by the executive search firm Society (www.society-search.com).

Applications should consist of:

1. A concise covering letter (ideally no longer than two pages), addressing the criteria in the Person Specification;
2. An up-to-date curriculum vitae;
3. Names and contact details of three referees (although referees will only be approached at the final stage of the process, and only with your express permission).

General advice on how to write a [strong CV](#) and [strong covering letter](#) can be found on our website.

To upload your documents via Society's website, [click here](#).

The deadline for receipt of applications is midday (AEST) on Monday 20th July 2026.

An appointment will be made subject to receipt of satisfactory references. The appointed candidate will be offered a salary that is commensurate with their experience and the seniority of their new role.

We are committed to ensuring that anyone can access our application processes. This includes people with hearing, sight, mobility, and cognitive impairments. Should you require access to this document in an alternative format, wish to apply in a different format, or need any other reasonable adjustments made for you (including at interview), please contact us at inclusion@society-search.com. We also welcome suggestions or comments about any more general access improvements we should consider.

Design Health Collab, visualisation of the Micro-X Stroke Imager deployed in an ambulance (2024)



Contact Us

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ABOUT NORMAN BROADBENT

Society recently became part of the Norman Broadbent Group. Founded in 1979, Norman Broadbent is an established executive search, interim management, board advisory, and leadership consultancy firm. With over 45 years of experience shaping leadership across diverse sectors and functions, we have a proven track record of success supporting SMEs, major brands, household names, and global organisations both in the UK and internationally.

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Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Your Voice, Our Commitment

ED&I in the workplace is a priority for Norman Broadbent and the organisations we partner with. We are committed to reducing barriers and fostering workplaces where individuals from all backgrounds have equitable access to opportunities.

As part of this commitment, we collect anonymous data to help us track our progress and inform our approach. Our Data Team will be in touch via email with a short, anonymous ED&I monitoring form.

Your input will support us in creating a more inclusive and representative hiring process.

Society and Norman Broadbent acknowledge the rights, mana and contribution of all peoples. This is enshrined in our core values of partnership and authenticity. As we have the privilege of working across both Australia and Aotearoa / New Zealand, we offer the specific acknowledgements below: Society acknowledges ngā iwi ō Māori as the tangata whenua of Aotearoa / New Zealand, and their rich contribution to society. In the spirit of reconciliation, Society acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.