The learning environment is going toward new directions due to pedagogical approaches of the "active learning" strand, trying to stimulate new human behaviors and relationships that break down the definitions of roles and barriers in the campus within a total connection of the entire social system. The very concept of education is expanded as an act that can happen anywhere and at any time (D. Oblinger, J.L. Oblinger, J.K. Lippincott, 2005) and new learning dynamics lead to the definition of spaces intended for formal learning, such as classrooms or laboratories, for a planned didactic conveyed through the traditional lesson of a teacher. Informal spaces, on the other hand, include a wide range of places where the exchange of knowledge takes place through the study and cooperation of students or researchers. These areas are located in "the space between" or in those places characterized by a great design flexibility that allows the discovery of new environments devoted to group study and that act as a filter between the different functions in the campus. All these new
behaviours need, however, a new supportive reflection on the physical environment: new ways of living, working, meeting and enjoying are evolving the concept of the campus, triggering connectivity, and the ability to experience in a fluid and strategic way. These needs have to be supported by environments to guarantee motivation, flexibility, personalization, collaboration, and good behaviors. Since colleges and universities around the world are facing the challenges of rethinking higher education facilities according to the emerging needs, this paper focuses on the evolving requirements of learning spaces to become a spatial support stimulating educational and malleable experience by the users involved. It will present experimentation on an on-going research project at the Politecnico di Milano Campus (Italy), aiming at defining a set of parameters in order to build a “grammar” for an innovative learning environment. The expected results aim at a rethinking of the spatial model that can support the learning environment within this continuous mechanism of interaction between people and space, to foster new forms of interaction, collaboration and multidisciplinary for the future growth of the Campus.

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Martina Mazzarello

Phd Candidate on the research “LIVING THE CAMPUS. Spaces and services fostering interactions in the community” (Supervisor: Luisa Collina), MSc in Interior Design (2015) at the Politecnico di Milano (Italy) after an exchange program at Tongji University in Shanghai (China). She collaborated with some research projects: CampUS (progettocampus.polimi.it, Compasso d’oro award 2018), Human Cities/Challenging the City Scale (humancities.eu), DESIS - Design for Social Innovation and Sustainability (desis-network.org). She awarded two research grants as fellow researcher about “Search for content and design artifacts for Sino-Italian cooperation in design for social innovation” (2016), and “Design for education: Research for innovative space design and services for education” (2017) from the Department of Design at the Politecnico di Milano. All these topics had the same objectives: space and service design related to temporary indoor and outdoor installations, the design of green spaces in urban shared agriculture, temporary events, the design of spaces and innovative services for university campuses, innovative learning experiences, with a user-centred approach.

Luisa Collina

Graduated in 1993 in Architecture at the Politecnico di Milano, in 1998 she obtained a Ph.D. in Technical Innovation and Architectural Project. She is an ordinary professor in Design at the Design Department of the Politecnico di Milano. Since 2000, responsible for the international relations of the Faculty of Design (now School of Design) and the Department, she collaborates with universities, research centers and companies in international research programs and in projects of strategic innovation driven by design. From 2004 to 2008 she was elected member of the Board of Directors of the
Politecnico di Milano. Since 2005 she is the coordinator of a second level Degree Course in "Product System Design", a master's degree in design in English for international students. Since 2009 she is President of the same Degree Course. She is currently the Rector Delegate of the Politecnico di Milano for the Expo and the major University events and is an elected member of the Board of Directors. She is also vice-president of Cumulus, an international association of design schools.

Giulia Gerosa

Architect and associate professor at the Design Department of the Politecnico di Milano. Architect and PhD in Industrial Design and Multimedia Communication with a final thesis work about retail spaces, she worked in the field of urban planning and building construction. In the last ten years, her interest turned to the design of interior spaces, with particular attention to the communicative component of the architectural project and the brand identity in retail spaces. She collaborates with the School of Design of the Politecnico di Milano since 1998. Actually, she is Associate professor at the Design Department of the Politecnico di Milano. She is Co-director of the Master in Interior Design, coordinated by Politecnico di Milano and Scuola Politecnica di Milano.

Andrea Manciaracina

I took my degree in Industrial Design at Politecnico di Milano with a focus on the relation between communication design and technological devices for learning. I’m currently a Research fellow, Ph. D candidate and graphic designer. Since 2002, I have been working on traditional graphics projects, multimedia graphics and installations for companies and institutions and I have been collaborating with the Design System of the Politecnico di Milano (School of Design, Department of Design and Poli.design) on applied research projects and on the management of communication tools for teaching and design orientation. From 2003 to 2017 I taught in numerous courses concerning the disciplines of visual communication and visual design. The research topic currently investigated is the relationship between communication, space and innovative didactics and in particular the relationship between teaching space, educational activity and its management mediated by the use of technologies. Currently, my research activity is focusing on: 1) the creation, in a research team, of guidelines for the preparation of innovative teaching spaces (within this project I am in charge of verifying and validating the choices on technological equipment); 2) the development of meta-project activities, in another research team, within a Design department’s project aimed at the innovation of its teaching and service laboratories 3) within another research group, I am about to take care of the communicative aspects concerning the aesthetics of the design processes.

Francesco Vergani

Interior designer with a master thesis on innovative learning spaces in universities with a focus on new ways to stimulate different types of learning and activities in a single
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