

Faculty of Design and Art

Position call: ***Full or Associate Professor in Product Design:
Exploring innovative approaches to the ideation and
realisation of artefacts, materials, technologies and
systems for Regenerative Sustainable Futures (CEAR-
08/D (Design))***

Position type: **Permanent Position**

Planned position start: **January 2027**

Application deadline: **15th May 2026, 12PM (Local Time)**

INTRODUCTION

Position

We are looking for an ambitious and excellent designer with an international profile, whose work challenges established conventions and advances progressive perspectives in design. The candidate is expected to situate their practice within a broad field that may include the ideation and creation of objects, products, processes and materials, as well as related (emerging) technologies.

The candidate's work should be grounded in ecological and socio-material design research and demonstrate a strong capacity for critical reflection, articulating design practice as an instrument of inquiry capable of addressing environmental, societal and technological transitions. The successful candidate will contribute to shaping forward-looking and responsible design cultures through experimental, reflexive and research-driven practice.

- The position offered is a Full or Associate Professorship in Design (Professore Ordinario / Associato). This is a tenured full-time post with a teaching load of 120–180 hours per annum. Salary is negotiable and highly competitive at top European standards. Applicants may also benefit from extensive fiscal advantages.
- Approximate starting date: January 2027.
- Important: The Faculty expects its professors to take up residence in the immediate vicinity of Bozen-Bolzano.

Region

In the provincial regions of Europe, especially those in Alpine environments, geopolitical conditions, climate warming and market forces present serious challenges while, simultaneously, offering unexpected opportunities for design. Designers, design researchers and their diverse collaborators are well-positioned to explore the potentiality in these dynamics. New pathways can be envisioned and tested through the realisation of tangible cultural and interdisciplinary interventions, products, prototypes, experiences and other initiatives brought to life through artefactual explorations.

The province of Alto Adige/Südtirol offers a unique cultural, historical, industrial and environmental landscape where new visions and developments in and around Product Design are awaited.

This requires visionary qualities as much as the ability and experience in dealing with complexity and collaborative systems in realising the vision(s).

University

The Free University of Bozen-Bolzano is located in one of the most fascinating European regions, at the crossroads between the German-speaking and Italian economies and cultures. Its trilingualism (including English) in teaching and research, its high level of internationalisation as well as an ideal study environment guaranteed by its excellent facilities are some of the reasons why unibz regularly reaches top positions in national and international rankings.

Faculty

The Faculty of Design and Art currently offers degree courses in all academic levels: BA in Design and Art, MA in 'Eco-Social Design', MA in 'Critical Creative Practices', PhD in 'Experimental Research through Design, Art and. Technologies'. Detailed description to all programmes are available online.

Teaching at the faculty follows an interdisciplinary project-based model where product design and visual communication are combined into one study-course. The projects are led by a head designer (this position) and supported by a team composed of practical and theoretical experts. The complex problems confronted by the teaching staff require keen analytical skills and stimulate research and the individual creation of new solutions. The projects are conceived with the aim of encouraging the acquisition of skills related to the work carried out and favouring the gradual development of a personal working method.

Teaching languages are English, Italian and German and are assigned according to need and linguistic competences.

More information is available on our website: <https://www.unibz.it/en/faculties/design-art/>

Teaching

Teaching in all programmes of the Faculty of Design and Art is conducted through extensive practice-led projects that position design as a critical, exploratory and future-oriented discipline. In your role as a project leader, you will be expected to cultivate an engaging and experimental learning environment in which students confront complex design questions and develop informed, responsible and innovative responses. You will challenge students to interrogate contemporary issues, environmental, technological, social and cultural, and to translate these into meaningful design inquiries.

A central component of this work is hands-on engagement with prototyping and material exploration. Students are encouraged to work through full-immersion processes that integrate material experimentation, technological investigation and iterative making. You will actively collaborate with our extensive network of workshops and technical facilities, guiding students in the effective use of tools, processes and emerging technologies, and fostering an understanding of how making and prototyping contribute to knowledge production in design.

Through this approach, students will be encouraged to integrate diverse perspectives, ranging from ecological and socio-material considerations to speculative and systemic thinking, thereby expanding their capacity to work reflexively and creatively within an evolving design landscape.

This position is primarily foreseen to include teaching at the Bachelor level, while also offering opportunities to engage in teaching and supervision within the Master and PhD programmes. You will undertake teaching activities in the Italian scientific discipline ICAR/08-D (Design) for a minimum of 120 hours and up to 180 hours per annum across the Faculty's degree programmes.

Research

In your practice-based research, you adopt a critical position grounded in ecological and socio-material design research, exploring innovative and responsible approaches to the ideation and creation of objects, products, processes, materials and related emerging technologies. This broad thematic scope provides room for you to position and articulate your own research focus; mastery of all areas within this spectrum is neither expected nor required. What matters is the ability to develop a coherent and progressive

research trajectory that challenges conventions and contributes meaningfully to contemporary debates in sustainable and responsible design.

Your research is expected to generate high-quality academic output that emerges from hands-on, experimental and materially engaged inquiry. You will demonstrate how practice-based methods, prototyping and iterative development processes can serve as rigorous tools for knowledge production, enabling contributions that are both scholarly and grounded in design practice.

Your work embraces interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary collaborations and advances design practices that respond to ecological, social and technological transitions. You engage with the complex and interrelated dimensions of product and artefact design by foregrounding environmental impact, material cycles, social relevance and technological appropriateness. Your creative and research-driven engagement may span design, art and spatial practices, and typically manifests through project-based inquiry supported by reflective, critical and theoretically informed approaches.

Your profile is expected to correspond most closely with the Faculty's MAKE research cluster, with strong potential for collaboration with the TRANS-FORM and ENABLE clusters in developing sustainable design projects, publications and other outputs that demonstrate your contribution to the advancement of the field at an international level.

Requirements

According to Italian legislation, **only candidates already holding an equivalent academic position (full or associate professor) at their current foreign university or an equivalent position at a public or private research/teaching institute are qualifying for this call.**

Furthermore, applicants need to meet the following conditions and provide the following documents:

- a) Record of excellence in design-based practice and research on an international level, demonstrated by a detailed curriculum vitae and a detailed description of own projects (portfolio) and scientific publications.
- b) Detailed description of future planned research projects and further vision towards own work and research
- c) Evidence of high-quality teaching and mentoring demonstrated through students' work examples, short description of courses taught together with possible teaching evaluations.
- d) Proof of knowledge of at least two of three official teaching languages at the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano (English, Italian, German)

Application procedure

Please send the above mentioned together with:

- Names and full addresses of at least three referees (address, telephone number and e-mail)
- Statement of current academic position
- Expression of interest and intention

For your curriculum vitae we request the use of the form "Attachment A – University Academic CV" available at the following website: <https://www.unibz.it/it/home/position-calls/positions-for-academic-staff/8119-full-or-associate-professor-in-product-design?group=58>

Your whole application, duly signed and dated on the last page, must be sent to Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Faculty of Design and Art, attn. Mrs. Ines Rosselli, Universitätsplatz 1, 39100 Bozen, e-mail: recruitment-design@unibz.it

Expressions of interest will be accepted until 15.05.2026, 12PM, Local time.

Short-listed candidates may be invited to a preliminary online discussion, and later-on, for a personal interview and a public presentation at the Bolzano campus of the Faculty of

Design and Art.

→ For more information, please contact Prof. Nitzan Cohen: Nitzan.Cohen@unibz.it

→ For general information about the position, terms and conditions of working at the Faculty of Design and Art please contact the Dean Prof. Elisabeth Tauber: Elisabeth.Tauber@unibz.it