

MINI-KEYNOTE: INFRASTRUCTURING SUSTAINABLE AND EQUITABLE SOLUTIONS



Abstract

Traditionally, design had a focus on the built environment and how humans interact with it. However, contemporary challenges of equity, sustainability, and computation in health, mobility, food, finance, housing, and energy require design to refocus its attention on the systems that emerge from the complex and adaptive interconnectivity of humans and non-humans agents. These complex interactions between agents form the infrastructures that shape contemporary livelihoods, consequently governing how resources are appropriated, used, managed, exchanged, monetized, and disposed by different populations. Therefore, designing infrastructures for equitable and sustainable livelihoods has become the biggest challenge for designers in the twenty-first century. It requires the understanding of the interconnectivity of the built environment and humans as systems. In this lecture, we will discuss the role played by large organizations from multiple sectors — for profit, not for profit, and government — in designing equitable and sustainable infrastructures. Frameworks on how to interpret and design infrastructures will be presented with the goal of discussing strategies through which systems can be designed by a coalition of organizations. Projects and case studies developed at the IIT Institute of Design in the past five years will be used to illustrate how designers and large organizations are well positioned to drive impact by designing sustainable and equitable solutions powered by computation.

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Carlos Teixeira is an Associate Professor at IIT Institute of Design (ID), where he teaches graduate courses and advises doctoral students on the strategic use of design capabilities in complex spaces of innovation. He is also faculty director of the Action Lab.

He is the founder of ORGE Innovation Consulting, which advises global leaders in organizations on how to build the know-how to innovate through design capabilities and strategies. Carlos received a doctorate in design from ID in 2002. Previous to his PhD, he received master's and bachelor's degrees in design from Pontifícia Universidade Católica in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Before joining ID in 2016, Carlos served as a faculty member at Parsons School of Design in New York (2003–09), where he was instrumental in developing undergraduate and graduate programs in strategic design and transdisciplinary design. In 2014, he received the Distinguished Teaching Award by The New School for his innovative pedagogy in graduate design studios and projects.