



Simplification
centre

Information design summer school

Bath, England. 2–6 September 2019

“The summer school was a full-immersion experience that introduced me to new concepts and ideas, inspirational tutors and amazing fellow students who I’ll keep in touch with for years to come.”

The Information Design Summer School, running since 2013, has gained a reputation as the best place to get a fast introduction to the concepts, principles and challenges of information design.

We interpret information design broadly: not just infographics or interface design but also wayfinding, diagramming, legal information, reports, financial information, educational materials, user guides, forms, health information – anything that needs to be simple and clear.

The Information Design Summer School gives you a chance to immerse yourself in the topic for a week in late summer, with expert tuition, deep discussion and good company.

There will be lectures, critiquing, project work, case studies and discussions. And social activities – Bath is one of the UK’s top tourist destinations, and a UNESCO heritage site.

www.simplificationcentre.org.uk

IID
International
Institute for
Information
Design

The summer school is organised by the Simplification Centre in partnership with the International Institute for Information Design. We shall be using studio facilities at the University of Bath.



About the summer school

Information design has developed as a specialist field, with a growing research literature and critical tradition. But education and training in information design is hard to find, and many people come to it from another aspect of design or some other profession entirely. As a result, people who want to develop their expertise can find themselves isolated, without access to expert help, and often without like-minded colleagues.

At the summer school you will meet with leading experts in information design who cover a range of different specialisms, including diagramming, typography, design education, health and pharmaceutical information design, clear writing, editorial structures, financial information, government information, and legal information design.

Teaching methods

The course includes lectures, case studies, group working, presentations and discussions. The practical projects will be informed by an appropriate level of research evidence and theory.

There will be an emphasis on:

- critical methods: how to discuss design and diagnose design problems
- information architecture and content: finding the underlying structures in complex information; understanding its purpose and effect
- understanding users: user journeys, personas, scenarios and use cases
- design patterns, genres and templates
- research and user testing.

To make sure that you get the expert help you need from the summer school tutors, we encourage you to bring your own projects to work on either individually or as part of a group.

Who should come

- Information designers who want to explore the theoretical basis for their work, and extend their range.
- Graphic designers wanting to specialise in information design.
- People without a design training, who want to learn more about information design, and apply it to their own area of work. Participants regularly include textbook writers, lawyers, civil servants, medical researchers, and technical writers.
- Students who would like additional tutorial support and access to a like-minded peer group.

If you've been before

Many former participants told us they would like to return, so we run a parallel Advanced programme. Returning students take part in seminars and discussions each morning, and join in the group projects in the afternoons.

Photos to the left: images from past summer schools.

You can sample the atmosphere at www.facebook.com/groups/283028748506428/



“It was the most engaging and inspiring course I've ever been on, with the right balance between teaching sessions and workshops / exercises / group work. It has opened me up to so many new processes and resources to explore...”





Bath

Bath is one of the UK's top tourist destinations, and a UNESCO heritage site. The thermal baths enjoyed by the Romans are still there, and other attractions include the Abbey, the Jane Austen Centre, great shopping, and numerous cafés, pubs and restaurants. You can find out more at visitbath.co.uk.

Bath is easily reached by rail from London, or from other UK destinations via Bristol or Reading. If arriving at Heathrow airport, you can get the Railair bus to Reading and pick up the train there. Alternatively, Bristol airport serves many European destinations, and there is an hourly bus service to Bath.

Prior learning and technical skills

The course is at postgraduate level, but does not assume prior training in information design. For those with no background in the subject, we will send a list of suggested pre-reading.

If you would like to discuss whether the course suits your needs, please email us at info@simplificationcentre.org.uk.

When you register, we will ask about your interests and existing skills so that we can include projects to suit your needs.

Please note that we do not offer software training in applications such as Adobe InDesign or Illustrator, or in web or app design applications. Software skills are not essential, as projects also involve sketching and organising information. The focus of the course is on critical judgement, so it is suitable for people who manage or commission design as much as for professional designers.

You will receive a certificate of course attendance, but the course is not formally accredited. We do not ourselves offer CPD points, although ISTC members can claim CPD credit.

Course fee

Regular fee: £680 (£640 if you book by 1 May 2018)

Discount price for members of IILD, IDA, ISTC, Clarity or PLAIN: £640 (£615 until 1 May)

Advanced programme for previous participants: £450 (£425 until 1 May)

There are also a limited number of student places at £350. People graduating over the summer of 2019 can apply for the student rate.

The course fee includes lunch and teas/coffee, but it does not include accommodation or other meals, except for our course dinner on Wednesday. Most people stay on campus in student accommodation booked directly from the University of Bath. And there are many local hotels (see visitbath.co.uk, any hotel booking site or Airbnb).

The university is on the edge of town, but there are buses from the city centre about every 15 minutes.

The book your place go to www.simplificationcentre.org.uk or email us at info@simplificationcentre.org.uk.

Cancellation policy: If you cancel after 1 July your payment will not be refunded, unless you can find someone else to take your place.

“The summer school provided me with a precious set of questions to ask when approaching an information-design-problem. Thanks!”



Provisional programme

Please travel to Bath on Sunday 1 September or earlier.
The programme will start at 9.00 each day.

	<i>Morning session</i>	<i>Afternoon session 1</i>	<i>Afternoon session 2</i>	<i>Evening</i>
Monday	<p>Introductions We get to know each other, and our goals for the week.</p> <p>Design critiquing We review examples of information design, good and bad, and introduce critical methods and core design concepts.</p>	<p>Shared experiences Bring your own work for comments and suggestions from the tutors and other participants. Take away actions for your project, and influence the programme for the week</p>	<p>Group start-up We will finalise the groups based on your backgrounds and needs. For example, last time we divided into:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wayfinding • Diagramming risk and uncertainty • Simpler contracts • Innovative approaches. 	See Bath, socialise, discuss, relax.
Tuesday	<p>Focus on visualisation <i>Clive Richards</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How diagrams can work – perceptual coding • Fundamental design variables of diagramming • The role of graphic metaphor • How diagrams and pictures can fail. 	Project work in groups.	Tutorials: one to one sessions with individual tutors.	See Bath, socialise, discuss, relax.
Wednesday	<p>Focus on users <i>Jenny Waller and Karel van der Waarde</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer journeys • Personas and scenarios • Design for all • User-testing 	Project work in groups Tutorials: one to one sessions with individual tutors	Free time in Bath	Tapas evening
Thursday	<p>Focus on text design <i>Rob Waller</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design for strategic reading • Design patterns and genres • Multiple channels and their affordances 	Project work in groups	Tutorials: one to one sessions with individual tutors.	See Bath, socialise, discuss, relax.
Friday	<p>Focus on transformation and change <i>Jenny Waller</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritising audiences • Organisational challenges • Arguing for change 	Presentations of project work Personal action plans	Presentations of project work Personal action plans	Depart



The tutors



Left to right: Rob Waller, Clive Richards, Karel van der Waarde.

Below: Jenny Waller



Rob Waller BA(Hons) PhD FISTC

Financial and government information, design patterns and genres, wayfinding

Rob Waller is a practising information designer with over forty years experience. His clients have included many well known service brands and government departments, and he has held academic posts at the Open University and the University of Reading. He was the founder-editor of Information Design Journal, co-founder and former Chair of the Information Design Association in the UK, and he is President of the International Institute for Information Design (IIID).

Clive Richards MPhil PhD(RCA) FRSA

Diagramming, visualisation, design education

Clive Richards is a leading design educator and Emeritus Professor of Information Design at Birmingham City University. He is past President of IIID, a former President of the Chartered Society of Designers in the UK, and a trustee of the Simplification Centre. He has a doctorate from the Royal College of Art in London, for his influential work on diagrammatics, and he was an early pioneer of computer animation and computer-aided drafting.

Karel van der Waarde BA(Hons) MA PhD

Health and pharmaceutical information, user-testing, regulation of design, design education

Karel van der Waarde is a leading expert on medical communications and user-testing. His clients include many well known names such as Bayer, Procter & Gamble and Glaxo Smith Kline. With a doctorate on the subject from the University of Reading, he has published numerous papers on information design research and is a frequent conference speaker on information design and pharmaceutical labelling. He teaches visual communication at Basel School of Design and is Vice President for Education and Research of the IIID Executive Committee.

Jenny Waller BA(Hons) MBA PhD

Simplification, management communications, editorial structures, skills training

Jenny Waller's career has included both teaching and professional communications. She has worked in information design, technical documentation, and change management communications for large organisations, such as British Steel, DHL and Guinness, and taught information design at Coventry University, where she was Head of Information Design. She developed and leads the Simplification Centre's training programme, and holds a doctorate in art education from the University of Reading.



We will be using the architecture studio at the University of Bath.

It's a great studio space, with break out areas for group working and crits.