

Esther Y. Kang

Education

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Design

Carnegie Mellon University | Pittsburgh, PA (US)

2020 – Present | Graduating May 2024

Advisory Committee: Jonathan Chapman, PhD (Chair), Sarah E. Fox, PhD, and Noah Theriault, PhD

Funded doctoral student

Master of Arts (MA) in Social Design

2015 - 2016

Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) | Baltimore, MD (US)

Social Design Scholarship

Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) with concentrations in art theory and photography

2007 - 2010

School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) | Chicago, IL (US)

Merit Scholarship & Transfer Student Scholarship

Awards & Recognition

Nominated for a Diversity Award

"Patchwork: The Hidden, Human Labor of AI Integration within Essential Work." CSCW '23

DIS Best Paper Honorable Mention Award

"Stories from the Frontline: Recuperating Essential Worker Accounts of AI Integration." DIS '22

Route Fifty Navigator Award

State Leadership Award with collaborators, 2020

NextGen10 Awardee

CSQ Magazine, 2019

Hack-a-thon Finalist

Social Innovation Fest in Washington DC, 2015

Social Design Scholarship

Maryland Institute College of Art, 2015 - 2016

Merit Scholarship

School of the Art Institute of Chicago, 2007 - 2010

Selected Professional Experience

Principal & Owner of studio e.y.k. | 2016 – Present

Projects focused on bringing participatory practices to historically hierarchical spaces and practices, such as policy making, urban planning, technology development, and service design

- Strategy Lead for Vera Institute of Justice's Innovation Team

- Design Research Lead for Governor Phil Murphy, Office of Innovation with Beth Noveck, PhD
- Design Research Lead for Bloomberg Philanthropies' What Works Cities with Clarence Wardell, PhD
- Research & Implementation Lead for State-level Project on Code Enforcement Innovation
- Deputy Research Lead for OpenGov Foundation with Mollie Ruskin

Designer-in-Residence (Inaugural One-Year Residence) | Jan. 2016 - Dec. 2016

(Obama administration) White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders

In-house creative strategist that supported projects across federal agencies and regional networks

Design Researcher & Strategist | 2015 - 2016

Center for Social Design at Maryland Institute College of Art

Developed place-based, equity-centered strategies for community based organizations in Baltimore

Manager, Program and Organizational Development | 2011 - 2015

The Durfee Foundation

Managed a \$2 million portfolio for a place-based family foundation

Publications

Book Chapter

Kang, E. 2024. The Politics of Place-based Design: An Inquiry into a Worldbuilding Practice. Urban Humanities 2: An (Un)Volume on Place, Pedagogy, and Practice. *Forthcoming*.

Textbook

Pontis, Sheila, and Michael Babwahsingh. Information Design Unbound: Key Concepts and Skills for Making Sense in a Changing World. UK, Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2023. *Forthcoming*.

Contributor of a case study to this textbook

Journal Article

Esther Y. Kang. 2024. *Detaching from Method: Designers (Re)orientation Praxis*. In Teme de Disseny. 40. x-x. *In preparation*.

Conference Paper

Esther Y. Kang. 2024. *Design Pedagogy for Applicable and Critical Anti-Capitalist Ethos and Praxis*. In Design Research Society (DRS '24). *In preparation*.

Sarah E. Fox, Samantha Shorey, **Esther Y. Kang**, Dominique Montiel Valle, and Estefania Rodriguez. 2023. Patchwork: The Hidden, Human Labor of AI Integration within Essential Work. In Computer-Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing (CSCW '23). **Nominated for a Diversity Award**.

Esther Y. Kang and Sarah E. Fox. 2022. Stories from the Frontline: Recuperating Essential Worker Accounts of AI Integration. In Designing Interactive Systems Conference (DIS '22). Association for Computing Machinery, New York, NY, USA, 58–70. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3532106.3533564>. **Best Paper Honorable Mention**.

Kang, E. 2021. Reverberations at the Edges: Politics of Designed Im/materiality. In Proceedings of Relating Systems Thinking and Design (RSD10) 2021 Symposium. November 6, 2021.

Conference Presentation

Kang, E. 2023. Developing a Critical and Sensitive Design Ethos: Detaching from Market Logic. For Humanities, Arts, Science, and Technology Alliance and Collaboratory (HASTAC), Pratt Institute.

Kang, E. 2023. Designerly Ways of Knowing. For the Inaugural Urban Humanities (Un)conference. The University of Arizona.

Invited Panels

Kang, E. 2022. Ethic of Imagination. HmntyCntrd Critical UX.

Kang, E. 2022. Transdisciplinary Design Assembly. Parsons at the New School.

Kang, E. 2020. Women in Politics Fostering Digital Inclusion. UN Commission on the Status of Women & The Konrad Adenauer Foundation's NY Office

Teaching Appointments

Undergraduate | Primary Instructor on Record

Design Studies: Place (51175)
School of Design (CMU)
Fall 2023

Undergraduate | Co-instructor on Record

Design Studies: Place (51175)
School of Design (CMU)
co-taught with Fas Lebbie
Fall 2022

Design Studies: Cultures (51279)
School of Design (CMU)
co-taught with Tricia Douglas
Spring 2022 & Fall 2022

Design Studies: Place (51175)
School of Design (CMU)
co-taught with Sofía Bosch Gómez & Charlee Brodsky
Fall 2021

Design Studies: Cultures (51279)
School of Design (CMU)
co-taught with Marysol Ortega Pallanez & Hajira Qazi
Spring 2021

Graduate | Primary Instructor on Record

Pre-thesis & Research Methods for Master's students (DM-GY 9963)
Tandon School of Engineering & Integrated Design and Media (NYU)
Spring 2024, Spring 2023 & Spring 2022

Design's Reverberations: Ripple Effects of Innovative Ideas (51419 & 51619)
School of Design (CMU)
Designed, Developed, and Taught Graduate-level Elective Course
Fall 2022

Design Thinking: A Creative Approach to Problem Solving (PADM-GP 2145)
Wagner Graduate School of Public Service (NYU)
Summer 2020, Spring 2020, Spring 2019 & Summer 2018

Undergraduate & Graduate | Primary Advisor on Record

Independent Study for Undergraduate Senior Capstone Project (51499)
School of Design (CMU)

Fall 2023

MFA Design for Social Innovation Thesis I & II
Design for Social Innovation (SVA)
Fall 2019 & Spring 2020

Undergraduate | Primary Teaching Assistant on Record

Electric Media and Culture
Professor Mina Cheon, PhD
Department of First Year Experience
Fall 2015

Invited Guest Lectures

Design Principles & Practice (Master's students)
Carnegie Mellon University (CMU), Fall 2023, Instructor: Bruce Hanington

City Lab Talks
University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), Spring 2023, Instructor: Rayne Laborde Ruiz

Reformers, Revolutionaries, and Revanchists: Histories of Social Movements
Carnegie Mellon University (CMU), Fall 2022, Instructor: Noah Theriault, PhD

Research Methods in Design and Media (PhD students)
Northeastern University, Fall 2022, Instructor: Michael Mages, PhD

Design Minds, Master's Seminar; Module on Design and Social Justice
Carnegie Mellon University (CMU), Fall 2021, Instructor: Jonathan Chapman, PhD

Vision & Change (Master's Students)
Politecnico di Milano (Italy), Fall 2021, Instructor: Brian Joseph Press

Strategy & Management in Public Organizations (Master's Students)
Colin Powell School for Civic & Global Leadership at City College of New York. Fall 2021.
Instructor: Betsy MacLean

Design Minds, Master's Seminar; Module on Design and Social Justice
Carnegie Mellon University (CMU), Fall 2020, Instructor: Jonathan Chapman, PhD

Master's Year One Seminar; Module on Critical Race and Design
Carnegie Mellon University (CMU), Fall 2020, Instructor: Molly Wright Steenson, PhD

User Research for UX – Design
UC Berkeley Extension School, Fall 2020, Instructor: Sarah Fathallah

Academic Research Experience

Graduate Research Assistant at Tech Solidarity Lab (**NSF Funded Project. Grant # 2037348**)
Human Computer Interaction Institute. Carnegie Mellon University. (primary)
Department of Communications. University of Texas, Austin. (secondary) 2021 – 2022
"Transformation of Essential Work: Managing the Introduction of AI in Response to COVID-19"
PI: Sarah E. Fox, PhD. Co-PI: Samantha Shorey, PhD.

Academic Service

University Academic Review (UAR), Board Member

Carnegie Mellon University (2020 – Present)

University Disciplinary Committee (UDC), Board Member
Carnegie Mellon University (2020 – Present)

Ryan Award for Meritorious Teaching
Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence and Educational Innovation
Carnegie Mellon University (2023)

Teaching Fellows Program, Advisor
School of Design, PhD Program
Carnegie Mellon University (2022)

Teaching Innovation Award Committee
Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence and Educational Innovation
Carnegie Mellon University (2022)

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee
School of Design, PhD Program
Carnegie Mellon University (2020 – 2021)

Peer Reviewing
DISCERN, International Journal for Design for Social Change, Sustainable Innovation and Entrepreneurship, 2023
OzCHI (Australia Computer-Human Interaction) 2023
HASTAC, Humanities, Arts, Science, and Technology Alliance and Collaboratory, 2023
International Associations of Societies of Design Research 2023

Community Leadership

Mentor, NEW Inc, 2021 – Present
Grant Panelist, National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), 2021
Grant Panelist, The Strange Foundation, 2020
Community Grant Committee Member, The Korean American Community Foundation, 2020
Board Member, Restorative Justice NYC, 2018 – 2019
Grant Panelist, Maryland (MD) Legislative District 46, Delegate Robbyn Lewis. 2017
Grant Panelist, The Durfee Foundation, 2012 - 2015
Co-Chair, Emerging Practitioners in Philanthropy (EPIP), Los Angeles Chapter, 2012 - 2015
Founder, EPIP LA's Mentorship Program, 2012 - 2015
Judge, University of Southern California Annual Nonprofit Challenge, 2014
Advisory Council Member, Youth Speak Collective, 2012 - 2014

Selected Trainings

Future Faculty Program (2020 – 2024)
Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence & Educational Innovation

Asian American Women Leaders Training (2021)
Hyeon-Ju Rho Coaching & Consulting (Los Angeles, CA)

Fundamentals of Effective Grantmaking (2011)
Southern California Grantmakers (SCG)

Professional Memberships

Design Research Society (DRS)
American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA)
National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity (NCFDD)
Society for Social Studies of Science (4S)

Press

Office of NY Attorney General Letitia James Press Release; WENY News; WIVB News;
WIRED Magazine; Government Technology