

## Synopsis of the ServDes 2016 project

Aalborg University, with the support of COWIfonden is organizing the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the ServDes conference, the Service Design and Innovation conference in Copenhagen, from the 24<sup>th</sup> to the 26<sup>th</sup> May 2016. ServDes is a cycle of conferences started in 2009. The conference is now well known internationally

Service design studies the activity of planning and organizing people, infrastructure, communication and material components of a service in order to improve its quality and the interaction between service provider and customers.

The complexity of our society is highlighting the need to rethink services and infrastructures that support our live and our economy. Innovation processes are focusing on customers' needs, on sustainability and on a systemic approach to value creation, which includes technical aspects, but also gives high value to organizational, user-related and human aspects of services and infrastructure. It is impossible to design a hospital or a train line without figuring out the services that will support it. This is also a central concern in COWI's activity, which is providing substantial service support to the definition of the future infrastructure system in Denmark and worldwide.

Service design is a relatively new discipline, but it is now recognized as a growing field of research, that collects contributions from different academic areas, including industrial design, interaction design, economics and management, service science, media technology and marketing.

Because of the broad interdisciplinary character of service design the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the conference will propose a sort of *mapping* exercise, that will possibly provide a better picture of the research landscape in this area. For this reason, the general theme for this edition is *Service Design Geographies*. The conference will discuss research as well as industry cases, which will link the academic and the empirical work on service design.

Approximately 180-200 participants are expected to this conference. Some relevant keynote speakers will bridge academic studies and design practice in the public sector (including healthcare, citizens' services, participatory services) and private sector.

The call for paper is already been issued; the deadline for the paper submission is on the 29 September 2015. Each paper will be peer reviewed by three reviewers. The proceedings will be published online and a selection of them will possibly be part of a special issue in an academic journal.

COWIfonden's support is for the conference organisers a very good sign of the increasing interest of big companies in Service Design.