



The inaugural meeting for the Commission on Publicly Engaged Design (CoPED) was held at the Imagining America Conference 2014, Atlanta Georgia Saturday, October 11 (1:30pm - 3:00pm). The event was co-chaired by [James Fathers](#) and [Marc Norman](#)

The session took the form of a panel discussion including Dr. Fathers, Mr. Norman, James Wheeler from the University of Minnesota, Travis Hicks from UNC Greenboro and Marybeth Lima from LSU. The panel posed a series of questions around the role, support and mission of a design commission in the context of Imagining America. Key questions included:

What are the current best practices and/or resources? A number of organizations were mentioned including:

- [SEED](#)
- [Design Futures](#)
- [Association for Community Design](#)
- [Structures for Inclusion](#)
- [Alliance for the Arts in Research Universities](#)
- [American Society for Engineering Education](#)

Where are collaborative possibilities for the IA network?

- Tying Schools without design related fields to members in the network for initiatives
- IA currently is unique in that it is where design, humanities and arts have a home

Are there potential research agendas to explore?

- Potentially a call for white papers on the topics
- Experience – 4 dimensional ways of thinking
- Design Thinking and Leadership
- Human Centered Design
- Re-thinking practice – Frameworks for inclusion

A number of issues were brought up around the field of engaged design in universities which resulted in notes on the state of the field of engaged design which included the following insights:

- The field tends to be made up of small organizations or specific to a University, usually limited to one school if at all within wider Universities
- Certain Universities are contemplating degree programs and concentrations in engaged design
- Where there is curriculum or centers it is still a very small subsets of programs
- Key programs which should be aligned and engaged are in many instances not at the table or not well represented (engineering)
- We are at a good moment for an engaged design focus: ACSA's forthcoming guide to public interest design programs as one example
- Design Centers, as a model rely on supportive Deans or administrations that can change (can IA create stability and solidarity across Universities?)
- The concept of engaged design is gaining traction, but issues around incorporation into curriculum remain
- Instructors engaged in this work need publishing outlets and framework to advance tenure cases



Attendees of the session included a large subset who were interested in following up and participating:

Travis Hicks
Susan Melsop
Nils Gore
Shannon Criss
Marnie Benney
Younbok Hong
Jocelyn Zanzot
Lee Gray
Jon Winet
Michael Stauffer
Jack Toben
Bree Kessler
David Flores
Lorie Novak
Taylor Gibbs
James Wheeler

Next steps were identified and start with this web page which will solicit information, case studies, opinions and projects. Other follow up items included:

- Creating a portal where case studies can be shared using a common framework of questions.
- Finding Intersections with [PUBLIC](#) (Imagining America's Journal)
- Issuing a call for Design related events out in communities where IA regional meetings or conferences are taking place (and to start planning now for next year's annual conference)
- Creating a space for sharing syllabi, news on engaged design, projects and stories.