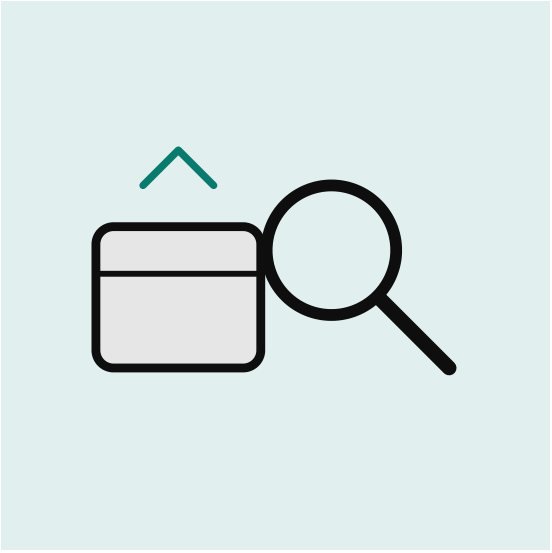
Approach

Research through design

A way of doing research in which designing is the method: prototypes and artifacts are created to produce knowledge about a problem, not just to solve it.



In Spanish
Investigación a través del diseño

Origin
Frayling (1993); Zimmerman, Forlizzi, and Evenson (2007)

What it's for

It answers questions that can only be answered by making something new and seeing what happens.

Principles

Documented process
It explains how it was designed and why, so others can follow it.

Invention
The artifact contributes something new.

Relevance
It argues why the future the artifact proposes is better than the present one.

Extensible
Others can build on what was learned.

How it's done

1 

Pose a question that cannot be answered by observation alone.

2 

Design and build an artifact that explores it.

3 

Document what was learned so it is useful beyond the project.

Applications in design

When to use it

In research, when you want to explore what something that doesn't exist yet could be like.

Avoid

Calling any design project research without documenting what was learned.

Don't fall for it

Write down what you want to learn before prototyping: the result is knowledge, not just an object, and it has to be shared.

Connections

Builds on

- Design studies
- Reflective practice

Used by

- Speculative design
- Design research

Related to

- Cultural probes
- Design speed dating

Authors and works

1993	**Christopher Frayling**	Distinguished research into, for, and through art and design.
2007	**John Zimmerman, Jodi Forlizzi, and Shelley Evenson**	Proposed how to carry out and evaluate this kind of research in interaction design.

Sources

Original sources

- Frayling, C. (1993). Research in art and design. Royal College of Art Research Papers, 1(1), 1–5. View source (https://researchonline.rca.ac.uk/id/eprint/384)
- Zimmerman, J., Forlizzi, J., & Evenson, S. (2007). Research through design as a method for interaction design research in HCI. In Proceedings of the SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI '07) (pp. 493–502). ACM. View source (https://doi.org/10.1145/1240624.1240704)

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