

## OFFICE OF DESIGN, INNOVATION & DEVELOPMENT

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA GRAPHIC DESIGN

SUMMARY OF PURPOSE AND ACTIVITIES: JANUARY 2009

### PHILOSOPHY

Design, in all of its many manifestations, can and should play an important role in fostering economic, cultural, and social development and change. To this end, we use design thinking, concepts, methods, processes, and products to engage its power and potential for the social good. We focus on projects that have rich opportunities for innovation, development, and a positive impact. Projects are interdisciplinary collaborations and partnerships with communities, institutions, and disciplinary experts – based on needs our partner communities themselves have identified or we identify in the project process.

### WHAT WE DO

We focus on creative, innovative, and sustainable solutions to social, cultural, economic, and environmental problems. These may involve strategy, product and communication design, design thinking workshops and other design-centered approaches that support development.

### HOW WE WORK

We work collaboratively in small, fluid, and flexible design teams and generally approach projects in six phases, with iterations in each phase: *discovery* » *definition* » *design* » *production* » *implementation* » *evaluation*. We begin each project with the discovery phase in the client community and with dialogue amongst all project participants in order to understand the problem in context. Grounded in ethnographic, design, and communication research methods, we gather information in order to better understand the context, partner needs, and aid in project definition. In dialogue with project participants, we assess our findings and define the project. The subsequent design and production phases may occur in Florida or in the project country. Regardless, a continuous communication flow allows for continuing dialogue and negotiation. Project calendars and funding are specific to each project, the latter determined at the onset of a project. In addition, we rely on a local liaison for each project from one of the participant groups.

### OBJECTIVES

- Develop an amplified worldview to support contemporary and future communication and design;
- Partner and learn through project experiences;
- Explore new paradigms in design by working with diverse populations in context;
- Expand the intellectual foundation and application of design for development and the social good;
- Exchange design and creative methods with partners to stimulate new or expanded approaches to creative thinking; and
- Empower project participants to make change.

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**PROJECTS TO DATE**

*Unión de Asociaciones de Apicultores del Estado de Yucatán*

**LOCATION** Mahas, Maxcanú, Santa Elena, and Valladolid, Yucatán  
**PROJECT** In addition to selling wholesale, members want to bring a percentage of their honey direct to market. The objective is to increase revenues from the sale of processed and packaged honey and provide viable economic opportunities in the community.  
**OUTCOME** What began as a project for one cooperative saw the design as a driving factor for four cooperatives to join together. The result is a brand identity, honey packaging labels, and a web site for Hach Kaab Maya Honey.

*Hach Ki'i Ka'ab 100% Natural Orange Juice*

**LOCATION** Cuauhtémoc, Quintana Roo, México  
**PROJECT** The profit margin for oranges is so low that farmers planned to cut down their orange groves to plant other crops that yield higher profits. However, selling fresh orange juice yields ten times more profit than whole oranges. This project focused on the development of a brand identity and product packaging with a newly formed cooperative "Hach Ki'i Ka'ab" 100% natural fresh squeezed orange juice.  
**OUTCOME** Identity, business system, and packaging for "Hach Ki'i Ka'ab" orange juice. Design phase completed. Orange groves and the local economy were virtually destroyed in Sept 2007 by a hurricane and this project is currently on hold.



*Cooperativa Xyaat*

**LOCATION** Señor, Quintana Roo, México  
**PROJECT** Develop promotional materials to attract visitors to Señor while responsibly representing Xyaat's community tourism programs.  
**OUTCOME** Competitive analysis, identity and stationery package, promotional materials, signage, a CMS driven web site that allows cooperative members to edit and add content along with relevant training.



*Ubelileik Kaxtil Kaxtal Maya Handicrafts*

**LOCATION** Tihosuco, Quintana Roo, México  
**PROJECT** Create a cohesive identity to help members increase consumer confidence in their offered products. Taking this step will allow the artisans to maintain and share their practices while also providing a more reliable source of income.  
**OUTCOME** Identity (logo, product identification materials, and packaging) for a network of Maya women artisans.

*Wixárika Calendar*

**LOCATION** San Miguel Huaixtita, Jalisco, México  
**PROJECT** Westernized Mexicans in central México know little about the Wixárika culture and the value placed on community. Misunderstandings occur in relationship to time. For example, many Wixárika must return to their community during the summer to plant, yet find it difficult to leave a 40-hour per week job because others perceive their actions as unnecessary or frivolous. How can this Wixárika concept of time be communicated in comparison to the western calendar?  
**OUTCOME** The design solution is a bi-cultural calendar that comparatively presents Wixárika and western concepts of time by visually documenting one Wixárika community's oral tradition of time, in their own words.

### *Yucatan Migrante*

LOCATION Yucatán state, México

PROJECT It is estimated that 153,000 Yucatecans immigrate. Many to the neighboring state of Quintana Roo to work in tourism and related industries. Most immigrate to the United States from rural towns and are of Maya heritage. The Yucatán state government offers services to support immigrants and their families. communicate INDEMAYA's services, are intended to invoke trust in a government organization, and humanize immigration.

OUTCOME Public billboards for families in rural communities and a web site for immigrants in the US on INDEMAYA's services.

### *University of Florida Global Health & Seminars in Global Health*

LOCATION Gainesville, Florida, USA

PROJECT The Seminars, organized by the five health science colleges at the University of Florida, explores global health and related issues that affect people, animals and the environment. As the first collaborative course and the initial offering of the Office of Global Health, we worked with college coordinators to develop a fluid mechanism to reach the diverse student population as well as preserve the videotaped seminars as a global health resource.

OUTCOME Identity for UF Global Health, and One Medicine, a CMS driven web site that allows seminar administrators to edit and add content, flash-based animations and design of the Global Health home page ([www.ufglobalhealth.org](http://www.ufglobalhealth.org)).



#### **ABOUT MARIA ROGAL**

Associate Professor of Graphic Design and affiliate faculty of the Center for Latin American Studies at the University of Florida, Maria developed and teaches the Design for Development course. She spent her formative years living in the US and internationally – traveling widely in South East Asia, Latin America, and West Africa – and living in Laos, Peru, and Liberia. Her trans-cultural experiences in emerging countries is the foundational influence of her work, which focuses on the relationship between culture and design and how we can leverage the potential of design, broadly defined, to positively shape the human experience. Rogal was awarded a Fulbright-García Robles Scholar grant (2006–2007) and a Fulbright-Hays Faculty Research Abroad grant (2007) to conduct research in the Yucatán region of México and teach in the Social Communication program at the Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán ([www.uady.mx](http://www.uady.mx)). During this time she led the development of the identity, information design projects, and comprehensive web site for the department of immigration for INDEMAYA (Instituto para el Desarrollo de la Cultura Maya) for the Yucatán state government. Through these projects she began building relationships with people in rural communities in the region and the design for development initiative in the Yucatán peninsula. As collaborations with other designers, design students, communities, institutions, and disciplinary experts, these projects are intended to explore the use design as a means to foster economic, social, and cultural development and empower participants.

For more information about the Office for Design, Innovation & Development, contact Maria Rogal at [mrugal@ufl.edu](mailto:mrugal@ufl.edu).