



同济大学  
TONGJI UNIVERSITY



TONGJI UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF DESIGN  
AND INNOVATION  
同济大学设计创意学院



上海国际设计创新学院

# Master of Design: Design Thinking and Sustainable Future

English-Taught Program

Open for application | 2026 Fall



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<b>Tongji University, Shanghai, CHINA</b>	<b>1</b>
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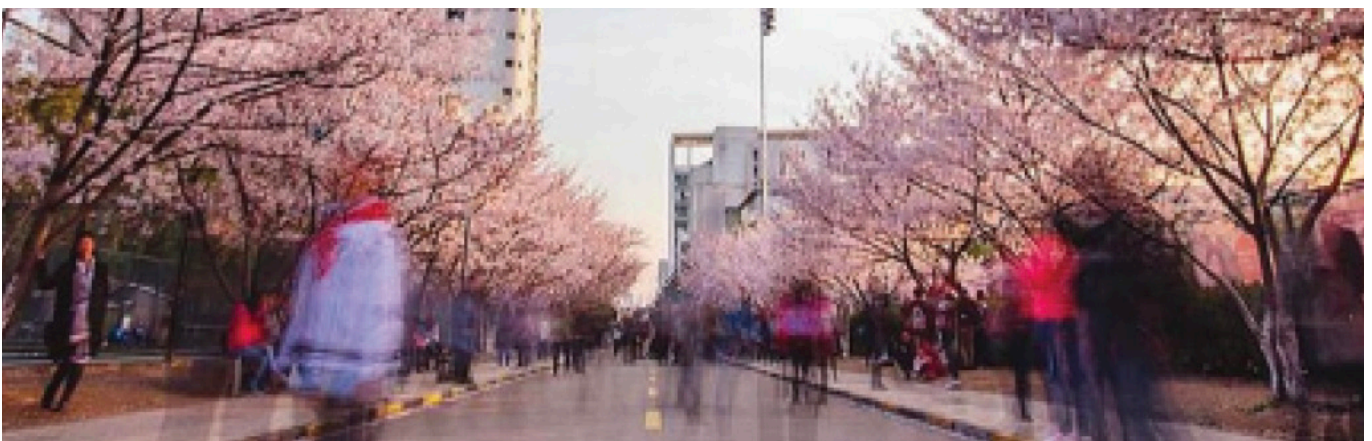
## Tongji University, Shanghai, CHINA

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Established in 1907, Tongji University is one of the leading universities in China under the direct administration of the Ministry of Education, is listed on Project 985 and Project 211, and is one of the Class A universities in the World-leading University Construction Program of China. With over a century of history, Tongji University has always valued the balanced development of five functions, namely the nurturing of talents, scientific research, community service, cultural inheritance and innovation, and international exchange. These have propelled the University to become a top-ranking university in the country.



The University now covers 11 broad categories of academic disciplines, including: Engineering, Science, Medicine, Management, Economics, Philosophy, Literature, Law, Education, and Fine Arts. Tongji is home to 2797 full-time faculty members, of which 1032 hold senior professional titles, 17 are members of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (including those double employed), 28 are members of the Chinese Academy of Engineering (including those double employed). There are 37 foreign members of the World Academy of Sciences and Academies of either Sciences or Engineering in the United States, Germany, and Sweden. The University now has 18727 full-time undergraduate students, 11988 Master's students, and 9112 doctoral candidates, with 4239 international students pursuing degrees here.



## D&I: College of Design and Innovation

College of Design and Innovation at Tongji University is a leading design institution recognized internationally for its openness, global network, industry connections, and much more. D&I is an interdisciplinary platform, serves as a hub to cope with problems related to climate change, global poverty, social and economic inequality, population explosion, demographic shift, etc.

D&I is a member the International Association of Universities and Colleges of Art, Design, and Media (CUMULUS); the World Design Organization (WDO, formerly the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design); the International Network of Design for Social Innovation & Sustainability (DESIS); the Fablab Network; the European Network of Living Labs (ENoLL); the City Science network of MIT Media Lab; and Ellen MacArthur Foundation Higher Education Program.



### Mission and Vision

D&I takes “to learn and create, for a meaningful life and a better world” as its motto, with an initiative seeking to respond to the challenges the world faces today by cultivating leaders of smart and sustainable design and innovation who pursue academic excellence while contributing to social development. Our goal is to be pioneering, inclusive and diverse, to learn and to practice, in order to pursue excellence and continue to “make substantial contributions to human progress”.



Tongji D&I-ArtCenter College of Design International Workshop



Course Presentation



New Year Party



World Design Capital Conference (WDCC)

## Master of Design: Design Thinking and Sustainable Future

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Design Thinking and Sustainable Future program aims to nurture creative leadership that cares and delivers. It is a two-year Master program offered by College of Design and Innovation (D&I) at Tongji University for international students (Non-Chinese Nationality) who are interested in exploring pathways to future leadership opportunities in private businesses, public services, non-profit organization, and etc.

Developing critical mind and skill sets of reading and framing wicked problems with respect to diversity and great good for all, and being able to apply design thinking as creative power in solving complex sociotechnical system problems.

### Learning outcomes

Being able to collaborate with people with different perspectives or talents to generate creative solutions that situated in concurrent sociotechnical contexts, while having a clear roadmap that leads to long-term positive changes of individual, social and natural lives.

Acquiring solid professional and academic skills that support both career pathways and long-term personal growth.

Learning about Chinese culture for the enrichment of self and applying Chinese wisdom for the betterment of all.

Using China as a gateway to explore global professional opportunities.



## Structure and Curriculum

Full-Time Candidature	
Minimum	Maximum
2 Academic Years (4 Semesters)	4 Academic Years (8 Semesters)
*Note: 1 Academic Year is equivalent to 2 Semesters	

Design Thinking and Sustainable Future is a two-year fulltime Master program, with total study time may extend to maximum 4 years. All students are required to complete 55 Tongji Credits (TJC) to be awarded the degree within the maximum length of study.

The program commences each year around the end of August to early September. The first year helps students develop a framework with themes that allow them digest, frame complex sociotechnical problems in relation to thinking and practices of design. The second-year program supports the development of students' own career interests and competence through independent studies, thesis project, integration with other master programs from D&I, professional placements, and more.



## Curriculum

The curriculum contains total 55 credits (see below) that is uniquely structured and different from any available existing curriculum internationally, with wide range of electives that support individual interests and goals, and cultural studies that give students a solid understanding of Chinese culture and use China as a gateway to professional opportunities internationally.

Year	Semester	Courses	Credits
<p><b><u>Year One</u></b></p> <p>Establishing a general framework of concepts, principles, strategies and methodologies.</p> <p>Understanding design thinking as an effective approach for interpreting and addressing challenges of individual, organizational, social, and nature lives.</p>	Fall	Seminar: Design Thinking	3
		Studio: Thinking in Action	4
		Storytelling & Visualizing	3
	Spring	Seminar: Civilization Designed	3
		Studio: Future Scenarios	4
		Ethics into Design	3
		Thesis Proposal	1
<p><b><u>Year Two</u></b></p> <p>Developing focused interests that may lead to individual professional pathways.</p> <p>A co-op experience is designed to enrich professional and cultural experiences.</p>	Fall	Technology Enabled Design (entry + advanced)	4 (2+2)
		Specialized Studio Elective ("Studio 1" course offered by other MDes programs)	3
		Research writing and ethical norm	2
		Mid-term Evaluation	/
	Spring	Thesis Project	6
		Specialized Field Practice (co-op)	6
<p><b>Cultural Studies</b></p>	Fall/Spring	A General View of China	3
	Fall/Spring	Chinese Language	3
<p><b>Lecture Series</b></p>	Fall/Spring	Tongji University Advanced Lectures for Graduate Students	2
<p><b>Additional Electives</b></p> <p>A wide range of elective courses are available to support individual interests and professional growth.</p> <p><b>Five additional elective credits</b> besides "Specialized Studio Elective" are needed for the completion of the master's degree.</p>			5

## Available Electives

Note: Not all courses listed will be provided in each semester. Courses offered are subject to the availability of instructors and resources.

Some of the courses might be altered accordingly.

Fall	<b>Studio 1: Product Service System Design Studio</b>	3
	<b>Studio 1: Environmental Design Studio</b>	3
	<b>Studio 1: Media and Communication Design Studio</b>	3
	<b>Service design methods and tools</b>	2
	<b>Designing Affective AI Agents for Human Flourishing</b>	2
	<b>Design Research Studio 1: literature review on design strategy and management</b>	3
	<b>Design Studio 3: Co-creation Project</b>	3
	<b>Smart Experience Design for Product-Sense System</b>	2
	<b>Design and the Creation of Values</b>	2
Spring	<b>User Research</b>	2
	<b>Experience Design</b>	2
	<b>AI Art: A Theoretical and Applicative Perspective</b>	2
	<b>Design Studio 2: Co-design Project</b>	3
	<b>Design Research Studio 2: qualitative research on design strategy and management</b>	3
	<b>Business Modeling</b>	2
	<b>Information Design and Visualization</b>	2
	<b>Principles of AI Product Design</b>	2
	<b>Narrative Environment &amp; Placemaking</b>	2
	<b>Algorithmic Design</b>	2
	<b>Communication Design in Branding and Identity Systems</b>	2
	<b>Regenerative Design for Sustainability</b>	2



## Faculty Team

Master of Design: Design Thinking and Sustainable Future Program has full access to the faculty team of College of Design and Innovation at Tongji University, which consists international-renowned scholars and young professors with diverse backgrounds and expertise.

More info : <https://tjdi.tongji.edu.cn/TeacherLogo.do?lang=en>



Asso.Prof. Dr.  
Avril Accolla



Prof. Dr.  
Kaja Tooming  
Buchanan



Prof. Dr.  
Nan Cao



Dr. Eun Ji Cho  
Associate  
Research Fellow



Asso.Prof. Dr.  
Alice Comi



Prof. Dr.  
Filippo Fabrocini



Prof. Dr.  
Ling Fan



Dr. Daniel Graff  
Research Fellow



Asso.Prof. Dr.  
Weiwei Guo



Prof. Dr.  
Fei Hu



Prof. Dr.  
Yong Se Kim



Asso.Prof.  
Hyejin Lee



Asso.Prof. Dr.  
Chang Liu



Asso.Prof. Dr.  
Zhejun Liu



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Yongqi Lou



Dr. Jin Ma  
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Prof. Dr.  
Yunsheng Su



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Kostas Terzidis



Asso.Prof. Dr.  
Francesca Valsecchi



Asso.Prof. Dr.  
Qi Wang



Prof. Dr.  
Jie Wu



Prof. Dr.  
Xiangyang Xin  
**Program Leader**



Prof. Dr.  
Haian Xue



Prof. Dr.  
Li Zhang

## Application

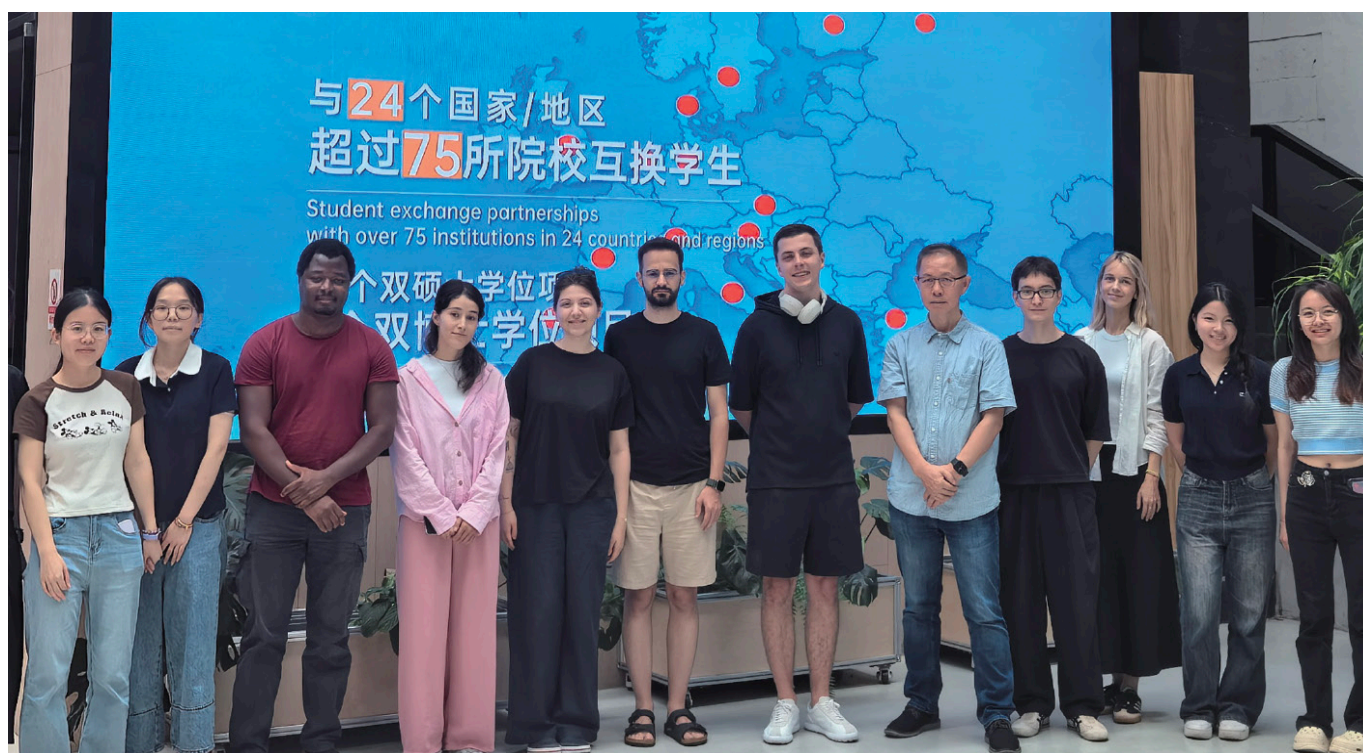
To apply to the Master of Design: Design Thinking and Sustainable Future program, the expected candidates are demanded to meet the following minimum requirements:

1. A Bachelor Degree in design or related areas.
2. Degree Classification second class lower / Honours (Merit) and above or equivalent.
3. Two-year professional experience is preferred.

## Timeline

There is only one intake in each Fall semester. Applications for Fall Admission will roll in two rounds and the outcome of application will be released onwards via online:

Round	Target	Application Period
1 <sup>st</sup>	Chinese Government Scholarship or Self-Funded:	October 25, 2025 - December 20, 2025
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Shanghai Municipal Government Scholarship or Self-Funded:	January 10, 2026 - March 20, 2026



## Requirement Materials

Note: You need to upload the electronic application materials in the application system. After admission, please bring the original paper application materials for verification when you report to the university. If you fail to submit the materials or they do not meet requirements, you will be rejected.

### **1. Personal information page of your passport (valid until March 1, 2027 and beyond)**

### **2. Bachelor's graduation certificate and degree certificate**

For a certificate in a language other than Chinese and English, the original notarized copy of the Chinese or English translation must be provided. The notarized copy must be issued by a Chinese embassy or consulate abroad, or a foreign embassy or consulate in China;

The original graduation certificate issued by the school of a new graduate needs to be provided. Upon admission, you need to bring the original graduation certificate for verification during registration;

### **3. Original or notarized transcripts of all courses in the bachelor's degree**

For a transcript in a language other than Chinese and English, the original notarized copy of the Chinese or English translation must be provided. The notarized copy must be issued by a Chinese embassy or consulate abroad, or a foreign embassy or consulate in China;

### **4. Proof of language proficiency**

A certificate of competence in English. (A score of 80 and above in TOEFL iBT; or a minimum overall band of 6.0 in IELTS; or materials that proves candidates have taken a degree program of which the medium of instruction or working language was English)

### **5. Personal statement (including Study Plan)**

Please write the introduction according to the personal statement template in the teaching language of the professional program (for example, the statement for a program taught in Chinese should be written in Chinese, and the statement for a program taught in English should be written in English).



## 6. Two letters of recommendation

Original letters of recommendation from two associate professors or scholars with corresponding titles or above (the contact information of the recommender must be given).

## 7. Physical examination form for foreigners (within six months) or a current valid Chinese visa

To download the reference "Foreigner Physical Examination Form," please use the following link:

[https://study.tongji.edu.cn/\\_\\_local/9/24/BA/A4518607CF4CC7026D165BE9C69\\_036F2181\\_18172.pdf?e=.pdf](https://study.tongji.edu.cn/__local/9/24/BA/A4518607CF4CC7026D165BE9C69_036F2181_18172.pdf?e=.pdf)

## 8. Certificate of payment of registration fee

When remitting through an offline bank or online bank, you need to submit a photo of the remittance voucher or a screenshot of online remittance.

This is not required for remittance through the online application system. Payment can be made in the system upon submission of the application.

Applicants who have not paid the registration fee will not be considered.

## 9. Other application materials

Examples include acceptance letter for international student, award certificates, and admission notices of other universities.

## 10. Supplementary materials for graduate students at D&I

Work portfolio or related achievements: limited to 20 pages, and each item must be marked with the time of creation, instructor, and owner of the work.

As the size of file uploads is limited, the applicant should fill in the relevant information according to the template of Supplementary Materials for College of Design and Innovation and upload the file to the "Supplementary Materials" column of the online application system.

We may require applicants to provide additional materials if necessary.

All application materials must be uploaded when applying online, and materials without corresponding items should be uploaded to the "Supplementary Materials" column.

Failure to submit application materials that meet the above requirements within the specified time frame will be considered as an unsuccessful application.

For more information on the admission procedures, online application, and other related assistance or clarification, please refer to the official website of International Student Office Tongji University.

How to apply: <https://study.tongji.edu.cn/info/1061/2638.htm>

## 11. Contacts

Ms. JIANG Dan, Mail: [jiangdan@tongji.edu.cn](mailto:jiangdan@tongji.edu.cn), Tel: (0086)21 65986693

Ms. YAN Siyi, Mail: [yansy3@tongji.edu.cn](mailto:yansy3@tongji.edu.cn), Tel: (0086) 21 65986693

D&I Web: [tjdi.tongji.edu.cn](http://tjdi.tongji.edu.cn)

International study web: [https://study.tongji.edu.cn/English/ADMISSION/Application\\_information\\_updates.htm](https://study.tongji.edu.cn/English/ADMISSION/Application_information_updates.htm)

## How to Apply

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<https://study.tongji.edu.cn/info/1061/2638.htm>

## Tongji D&I Website

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[tjdi.tongji.edu.cn](http://tjdi.tongji.edu.cn)

## Follow Us on Social Media:

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Instagram: DITONGJI

Linkedin: College of Design and Innovation,  
Tongji University (Coming Soon)

Wechat Official Account: 同济大学设计创意学院

Rednotes: 同济大学设计创意学院