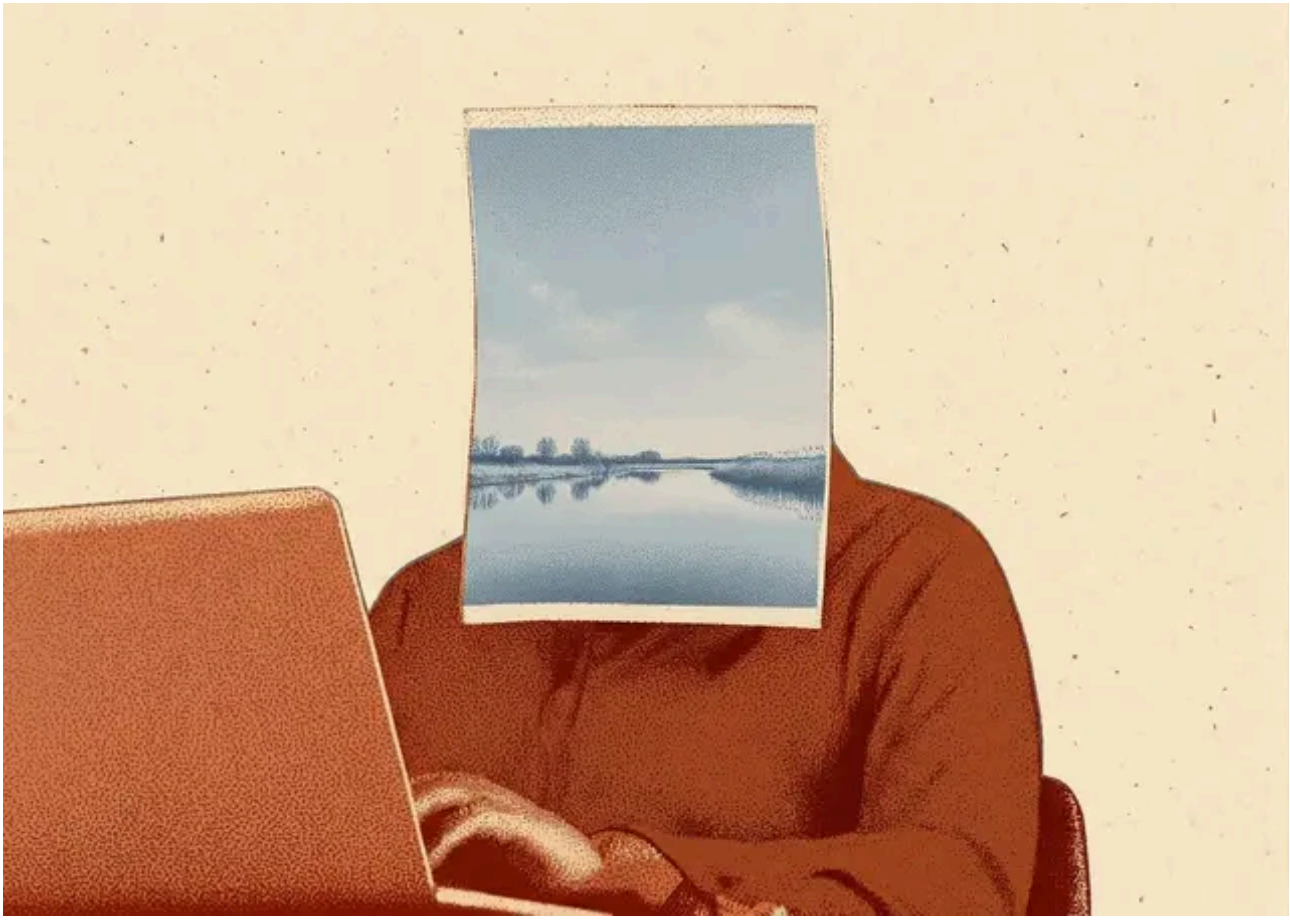
The Future of Design Work

The part someone still has to decide



A research report, 5 October 2026, updated 12 November 2026
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Summary

Latest update — This update adds job market data from November 2026. It changes finding 1, the market section, the research direction and the product designer direction. The rest of the report is unchanged.

Design is splitting in two: the part a machine can produce, and the part someone still has to decide. This report looks at what labour data, practitioners, researchers and design schools say about it. Six findings stand out.

1. The market is shrinking, and unevenly. Open product design roles at tech companies fell 28% in a year, to the lowest level on record, while most other tech roles grew[20]. Hiring managers say they want senior and AI-capable designers most, while junior hiring is under the most pressure[17, 26].
2. Junior work is getting thinner. At US firms that adopted generative AI, junior employment fell by about 9% within six quarters compared with firms that did not, mostly because they hired fewer juniors[31]. The economy still explains more of the slump than AI does[2].
3. The work pays for judgement. Practitioners who hire describe the same person: someone who frames the problem, ships, and can say why[33]. Job postings asking for AI literacy grew 71% in a year[3].
4. New roles are forming around how systems behave, not how screens look. Titles like AI model designer and agent experience designer now appear in real job ads[32].
5. Design schools are adding, not closing. Where AI enters a bachelor's programme, it usually arrives as a single small course[9, 15]. Only one course I found treats AI as a design material[16].
6. Estonia has almost no data. The last official forecast for design is from 2019[4].

The rest of the report goes through the evidence, then turns it into something you can use: the skills that matter, six directions, and how people get into them.

1 The work

The market right now

Design hiring is shrinking. In the year to 28 October 2026, open product design roles at tech companies worldwide fell 28%, to about 1,900, the lowest since tracking began. Over the same year, most other tech roles grew: hardware engineering roughly doubled, and product management grew 8%. In the US, about 12,600 product designers were hired in the past twelve months, compared with 27,600 in 2022. Only 19% of open design roles are remote, down from 34%, and there are now 3.8 product management openings for every design opening[20].

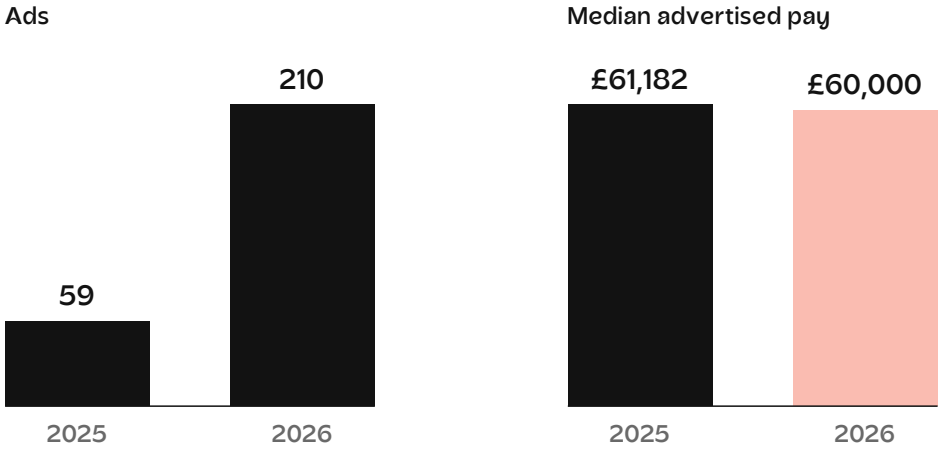
Earlier in the year the picture looked steadier. In a global survey of design hiring managers published in February 2026, 82% said their need for designers had grown or held steady[26]. That survey measured intentions; the job data above counts actual openings and hires.

Where demand remains, it sits with senior people. The same survey found 56% saw growing demand for senior designers, while only 25% were hiring juniors, and 79% said they increasingly need designers who can design AI products[26].

The UK points in a different direction. In the six months to 11 November 2026 there were 210 permanent UX designer ads, compared with 59 in the same period a year earlier, while the median advertised salary fell slightly, from £61,182 to £60,000[17]. These are advertised vacancies, not hires, in a different market from the global tech company data, so the two cannot be compared directly.

In the US the long view is modestly positive: official projections expect web developer and digital designer jobs, counted together, to grow 5% from 2025 to 2035[19]. For the rest of Europe, including the Nordics and the Baltics, I found no public data that separates design from other work.

UK UX designer roles, 2025 vs 2026



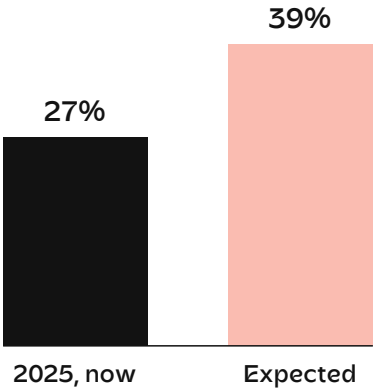
IT Jobs Watch, permanent UX designer ads, six months to 11 November 2026 vs the same period in 2025.

The bottom of the ladder

The tasks AI does well are the same ones juniors used to learn on: first drafts, wireframes, assets, the first pass of research synthesis[1, 43]. Agencies surveyed in August 2025 expected AI to take over 39% of junior designer tasks, up from 27% at the time[24]. That is a small survey of 90 agencies, but it matches what recruiters describe: entry-level roles now ask for experience the entry level no longer gives[34, 40].

AI is not the only cause, and probably not the main one. In the US, the overall hiring rate in 2025 was 23% below pre-pandemic levels, and LinkedIn's own analysis puts most of that down to the economy[2]. Across all occupations, entry-level hiring has even held up slightly better than senior hiring[2]. The squeeze on design juniors is real, but it sits inside a wider slowdown.

What agencies expect AI to take from junior designers



ArtBound Initiative survey of 90 agencies, August 2025, via Composite, October 2025.

Some companies now train their own juniors instead of waiting for experienced hires. Shopify, for example, runs a six-month apprenticeship where apprentice designers work on real products with a mentor[41].

What hiring looks for

Across practitioner writing the description of a good hire is consistent: end-to-end ownership, visual craft, systems thinking, product sense, and AI used in the actual workflow[33, 38]. Product designers who ship, design engineers and brand designers are named as the most in-demand individual contributors[33]. In AI-specific job listings, design skills were the most requested skill category, ahead of coding[25].

The portfolio decides more than the degree. Design graduates compete with people from HCI, psychology, engineering and business, and what counts is evidence of real decisions[34, 42].

What is losing value

Practitioners name the same things: first-draft interface work, screen-by-screen design without thinking about how the system behaves, portfolios of polished screens without decisions, and tool skills without product judgement[33, 36, 38].

Research as an example

UX research shows the pattern clearly. Dedicated research roles are shrinking fastest. Open UX research roles at tech companies fell 45% in a year, to about 108, and US researcher hires are 66% below 2022[20]. Senior and generalist researchers have held up better than entry-level ones[45]. AI now does transcription, coding and pattern-finding. What stays with people is deciding what the findings mean[43], and catching the plausible but shallow conclusions AI synthesis produces[46].

2 New roles

The thing being designed is growing past the screen into how a system behaves: what it may do, when it should stop and ask, how it recovers from a mistake[32, 36, 37].

Titles in real job ads, 2025 to 2026

Title	Employer
AI Model Designer	Figma
Senior UX Model Designer	Google DeepMind
Principal Agent Experience (AX) Designer	OutSystems
Senior Conversation Designer	Spotify
Prompt Experience Designer	Anthropic
Principal Designer, AI Experience	Microsoft
Conversational AI UX Designer	Toast

Tom Scott, October 2026; AI Goodies, May 2026.

Practitioners disagree on what this is. Tom Scott argues AI behaviour is a distinct design surface and the role is real[32]. Fan Guo, quoted in the same piece, says there should not be a separate title at all: designers should work on whatever most

affects product quality. John Maeda frames it as a shift from UX to AX, agent experience[36]. Carmen Martínez sees it as conversation design growing up[37]. They agree on the direction and disagree on the label.

On code they disagree too. Maeda says designers no longer need to code but must "speak machine"[36]. Scott and others treat working prototypes and design engineering as a clear hiring advantage[33,38].

Research, strategy and futures are real paths, but not equally open. Research is the hardest-hit adjacent path[20]. Service and strategic design are mostly mid to senior. Service design is strongest in public-sector labs, such as the UK Policy Lab, and consultancies[47]. Futures and speculative design are a small, project-based niche; one well-known studio asked for five or more years of experience for a freelance role[7].

3 Design education

What researchers say

Design education research mostly agrees: keep the core of design (framing, critique, research, making, ethics, judgement) and add AI literacy, collaboration and adaptability[27, 28, 48]. A study of 2020 to 2024 graduates in Taiwan found gaps in communication, project management, interdisciplinary teamwork and AI, and found that interdisciplinary and digital skills went together with better jobs and pay[29].

Institutions are behind. A 2025 study found published generative AI policies from only six US and five European art universities[30].

The main disagreement is how far to go. One side adds AI to existing studio teaching. The other wants a deeper move towards strategy, entrepreneurship and hybrid disciplines. Under it sits an older tension between preparing for the job market and protecting design's cultural and speculative role[29]. I found no source arguing for closing design as a distinct degree.

What schools are doing

I looked at around twenty art and design schools in Europe, the UK and the US. None was closing a digital design programme. In the UK the course list is shrinking: between the 2024 and 2025 application cycles, 6,301 courses disappeared and 4,323 new ones appeared[12]. The art school closures confirmed so far are craft degrees, such as textiles, performance costume, and jewellery and silversmithing at Edinburgh College of Art, which close to new students from 2027[51].

The schools keep the studio and critique at the centre and add around them: code and computation, AI, sustainability, futures[8, 10, 13, 14]. Parsons requires a sustainable systems course in the first year and critical computation in the second[13]. Carnegie Mellon's final-year studios design for social systems and futures[14].

AI usually arrives as a single small course[9]. FH Salzburg is the only programme I found that spreads it over several small courses, something like a thread[15]. Treating AI as a design material, designing how it behaves, appears in one course

I found, a 15-credit elective at the University of Gothenburg[16].

Where education meets the work

Skill	What the work asks	What schools usually do	The distance
Framing	central to the work now	studio and critique teach it	close
Judgement	what teams hire for	critique culture builds it	close
Visual craft	still ranks near the top	strong foundation courses	close
End-to-end product work	expected even of juniors	projects, often with invented briefs	real shipping is thin
Systems thinking	needed for design systems, services and AI	partly, in interface and service courses	growing
AI literacy	fast-growing in job postings	usually a single small course	thin
Behaviour design	new roles are forming around it	one course found	wide
A position of your own	decides who gets hired	portfolio courses and the thesis	rarely taught on purpose
Foresight and innovation	a strategic edge	some schools, for example futures courses	uneven
Business: making a living from your work	graduates name it as a gap	rarely, and not as its own track	wide

Sections 1 to 3 of this report.

Taken together, the picture is this. Design education still does the hard part well. Studio work and critique teach framing and judgement, which is exactly what the work now pays for, and a strong visual foundation still counts[27, 48].

It moves slower on the rest. AI usually arrives as one small course, and designing how systems behave is barely taught anywhere[9, 15, 16]. Shipping something real, which juniors used to learn on the job, now has to be learned before the job[34]. Every junior has to build these in themselves, in school or outside it.

What already works should be strengthened too. Craft and systems thinking are the two skills that age slowest: someone still has to make things good, and almost everything a designer touches now behaves as a system[33, 36, 49]. And because the directions a designer can take are so many, a design education works best as a strong shared core with real room to choose: a common foundation in craft, systems and framing, then space to go deep in one direction or combine several. Some schools already build it this way, with a shared first year and pathways after it[13, 14].

Two more things belong next to the craft. The first is business, understood simply: I do what I love, so how do I make it work? Business here has nothing to do with a man in a suit with a briefcase. It means knowing how to position yourself, how to explain what your work is worth, and how to shape a professional identity that is your own. The authors of a graduate survey recommend adding entrepreneurship to the curriculum[29]. A salaried job is a version of the same thing, because people are chosen for what they can show and say about their own contribution[27].

The second is foresight and innovation. Anticipating change gives a designer an edge that reacting to it never will. Futurists and forward-looking organisations scan for early signals, read them into trends, build scenarios that question what everyone assumes, and use systems thinking to test today's decisions against several possible tomorrows[53]. Brands use these methods to plan products and strategy, and international organisations use them to plan under uncertainty[53]. Some design schools already teach futures as part of the degree[8, 14]. AI extends what already exists. Imagining what does not exist yet, and deciding which futures are worth building towards, is design work, and it belongs at the centre of a design education, not at its edges.

Both are learned best close to practice: real projects, people from the field in the room, and real cases instead of invented briefs.

4 Estonia

Estonia has almost no public data on design work. There is no current forecast for digital product designers, no split between junior and senior demand, and no published data on where design graduates end up.

What exists:

- The last official forecast for design and creative industries is from 2019. It saw a need for about 650 additional designers and found that training supply for designers as a whole exceeded demand[4]. It cannot tell us anything about AI-era product design. OSKA's newer outlook to 2035 covers the labour market as a whole and makes no forecast for design[5].
- The national design mapping states plainly that Estonia does not know how many designers it has, in which fields, or at what age[6].

5 The skills that matter now

Eight skills come up again and again in what employers, practitioners and educators write. For each: what it is, why the work asks for it, how to practise it, how to show it. The practice suggestions are mine, from teaching and from years of product work.

Framing

Deciding what the problem actually is before anyone designs for it.

Why

When making things is cheap, choosing the right thing to make is the scarce part. Practitioners describe the shift as moving from making to deciding[35, 36].

Practise

Framing is mostly a habit of not accepting the first version of a question. Briefs, tickets and strategy decks usually arrive with the answer already built in: "we need an app", "users want more features". Before working on any of them, ask who decided this was the problem, who actually has it, and what would be different if it went away. It is the same move for a student with a course brief, a designer with a ticket and a lead with a roadmap. The more senior the work, the more of your value sits here, because the cost of

solving the wrong problem grows with every person working on it. Write the problem in one sentence and test it on someone who was not in the room.

Show it — Open every case study with the problem as you first understood it and how that changed.

Judgement

Telling good from bad, in work and in decisions, and being able to say why.

Why — AI produces many options fast. The person who chooses, and can defend the choice, is the one teams hire[33, 38].

Practise — Judgement is built from decisions and their consequences, so it needs both. Make calls wherever you can, about design but also about scope, priorities, pricing and who to build for. Then follow what happens. Most people only see the moment of deciding; the learning is in the months after it. Critique helps when it trains you to give reasons instead of reactions. Reading decisions outside design helps too: why a company dropped a product, why a service is priced the way it is, why a team said no. Write down what you would have done. With AI producing the options, this is the part of the work that stays yours.

Show it — Decisions you made, the options you turned down, and what happened next.

End-to-end product work

Taking a problem from research to something shipped.

Why — Teams are smaller and expect one designer to cover research, interface, systems and delivery support[33].

Practise — There is a kind of knowledge you only get by taking something all the way and staying with it after it ships. Scope changes, a deadline moves, a developer needs an answer today, users do something nobody planned for, the numbers come back and say something uncomfortable. Each of these teaches a different part of the job,

and none of them shows up in a concept. In school that means at least one project with real users or a real client. At work it means asking to stay on a project past handoff. On your own it means building something small that people actually use. The test is whether someone other than you depends on it.

Show it — Shipped or tested work, with what happened after launch.

Systems thinking

Seeing how the parts of a situation affect each other: people, incentives, organisations, technology and time.

Why — Services, organisations, design systems and AI products all behave as systems. A change in one place shows up somewhere else[33, 39].

Practise — Designers are trained to look closely at one user. Systems thinking widens the frame to everyone and everything around them: who pays, who maintains, who is affected without being asked, which incentives push people in which direction, what happens a year later. A checkout flow is a pricing decision, a support burden and a question of trust at once. Before you change any piece of work, draw what it connects to, and ask who carries the cost if it goes wrong. Fields that have thought about systems for much longer, such as ecology, economics, public health and urban planning, are good teachers. Their questions transfer directly.

Show it — The map of the system around your work, and how it changed what you designed.

AI literacy

Using AI in real work and understanding what it can and cannot do.

Why — Postings asking for AI literacy grew 71% in a year[3]. Claude is now the second most mentioned skill in design job postings, after Figma[20]. Hiring managers look for AI in the workflow, not the vocabulary[34].

Practise

AI literacy is less about tools than about knowing where to trust them. Use AI across your actual work, in research, writing, code, planning and critique, and pay attention to where it helps, where it is confidently wrong, and where it quietly makes your own thinking thinner. That last one is easy to miss and costly over time. Learn enough about how these systems work to explain their limits to a client or a manager: what they learn from, why they make things up, whose experience they leave out. The tools will change every few months. Knowing how to judge them will not.

Show it

A project where you can show what AI did, what you did, and why you drew the line where you did.

Behaviour design

Designing what a system may do, when it should stop and ask, how it recovers from a mistake.

Why

In AI products, quality is decided more by behaviour than by the interface[32, 37]. It is rarely taught[16].

Practise

Every system that acts on its own follows rules someone designed, or forgot to design. The bank that freezes a card abroad, the chatbot that will not hand you to a person, the feed that decides who you are after three clicks. Start reading these as design decisions: what did the system decide, what should it have done, who was responsible for that rule? Then write the rules for a system you work on: what it may do alone, when it has to ask, how it admits it is unsure, how it recovers from a mistake. This work sits between design, product, policy and engineering, and few teams have anyone who owns it yet.

Show it

The rules, the test conversations, and what you would change.

Visual craft

Making things people recognise and trust.

Why

Visual craft still ranks near the top of what hiring managers ask for, and when anything can be generated, someone still has to make it good[33, 49].

Practise	Copy great work by hand to understand it, then put the references away. Keep making, and notice what you choose without being told: a typeface, a spacing, a colour. Push those choices further on purpose. That is how a hand of your own forms, and it is the one thing a generator cannot give you.
Show it	A small number of pieces, finished to a high standard.

A position of your own

Knowing what you stand for as a designer and being able to say it.

Why	When AI-made work is everywhere, graduates have to say what their own contribution is[27]. Schools describe the graduate they want as someone with an independent position[11].
Practise	A position forms slowly, out of what you keep returning to when nobody asks: problems, people, kinds of work, things that make you angry. Write down what you believe about design and what it is for, then test it in conversation with people who disagree. Revisit it when your work changes. Choose projects, jobs and clients partly by whether they test it. Over time a position shows less in what you say about yourself than in what you say yes to and what you turn down. In a field where anyone can generate competent work, that is a large part of what people hire you for.
Show it	That paragraph at the top of your portfolio, and work that fits it.

Four more, in short

Critical thinking	Questioning the brief, the data and the tool[48, 50].
Research literacy	Running and reading research, and checking what AI synthesis gets wrong[43, 46].
Building in code	Prototypes that run. Design engineers are among the most wanted hires[33].
Foresight	Reading signals and building scenarios. A skill for everyone, rarely a first job[7].

6 Six directions

Six kinds of design work that employers and practitioners describe right now. None of them needs a specific degree.

01 Product designer who ships largest, shrinking

Takes a problem from research to something live and owns the decisions on the way. Still the largest category, though shrinking, and the role most other directions grow out of.

What is changing

Still the largest category, but openings are falling. The growing version combines design with product management: owning scope, delivery and the roadmap[33, 52]. Product management openings grew while product design fell, and there are now 3.8 product management openings for every design opening[20]. A customer-facing version has appeared too: the forward deployed designer, who works directly with clients from the first call to launch[21, 22].

Also called

product designer, UX designer, digital product designer, forward deployed designer

Builds on

End-to-end product work, Judgement, Research literacy

How people get in

A portfolio that shows decisions and shipped work, not only polished screens. Some companies now run apprenticeships for this.

Put in your portfolio

two or three projects from problem to result, with the decisions and trade-offs.

Read

Tom Scott, Verified Insider[33]; Ileana Marcut with Lena Kul on getting hired[42].

02 Design engineer in demand

Designs in code and builds prototypes that run, instead of pictures of them. The line between design and front-end keeps getting thinner.

What is changing
Named among the most in-demand roles by recruiters. Practitioners disagree on whether every designer should code, but agree that working prototypes beat static ones[33, 36].

Also called
design technologist, creative technologist, prototyper

Builds on
Building in code, Systems thinking

How people get in
A portfolio with working code matters more than the degree title.

Put in your portfolio
working prototypes people can open, and the code behind them.

Read
AI Goodies on design job requirements[38].

03 AI and behaviour designer new role

Designs how a system acts: what it may do, when it should stop and ask, how it recovers from a mistake.

What is changing
The newest direction, with titles appearing at AI labs, large software companies and startups[32].

Also called
AI designer, conversation designer, agent experience designer, model designer

Builds on
Behaviour design, AI literacy, Systems thinking

How people get in
Curiosity about how a system works behind the screen. People often come from UX, HCI or computer science, but none of these is required.

Put in your portfolio
the rules and test conversations for an AI feature, and how they changed.

Read
Tom Scott, What is an AI Designer?[32]; Carmen Martínez on agentic AI[37]; John Maeda, Design in Tech[36].

04 Brand and visual craft still needed

Makes things people recognise and trust. When anything can be generated, someone still has to make it good.

What is changing

Generated visuals are cheap, so finished, intentional visual work stands out more. Teams building AI products pair visual designers with technical ones[32, 49].

Also called

brand designer, visual designer, art director

Builds on

Visual craft, Judgement

How people get in

A strong visual portfolio. Teams working on AI products often pair these designers with more technical ones.

Put in your portfolio

fewer pieces, finished well, with the thinking behind the form.

Read

Steven Heller on design education and AI[49].

05 Research and service design hardest hit

Finds out what is actually going on and designs across a whole service, beyond one product. Research is changing as AI takes over transcription and sorting, and the judgement about what it means stays with people.

What is changing

Dedicated UX research is the fastest-shrinking design role, with open roles down 45% in a year[20]. Research is spreading into other roles, and senior, mixed-method researchers keep their value[43, 44]. Service design was not measured separately and is strongest in public-sector labs and consultancies[47].

Also called

UX researcher, design researcher, service designer

Builds on

Research literacy, Framing, Systems thinking

How people get in

Research coordination, research operations or work with public-sector labs. Service design usually starts through project work.

Put in your portfolio

one study from question to decision, showing what changed because of it.

Read

Jess Holbrook on research in 2026[43]; Jyothi on the research job description[44].

06 Beyond the product smaller paths

Design does not end at the product. Some designers go into games and interactive installations, some into public services and policy, and a few into futures and speculative work.

What is changing

Games, installations, public services and futures work. Smaller and less documented paths, often entered through projects and placements[7, 47].

Also called

game designer, creative technologist, policy designer, futures designer

Builds on

Visual craft, Systems thinking, Foresight

How people get in

Games and installations through projects you can show. Public-sector design through placements in innovation labs. Futures work usually comes later, after experience in research or interaction design.

Put in your portfolio

projects that show the field you want: games you can play, a service you mapped, a scenario you built.

Read

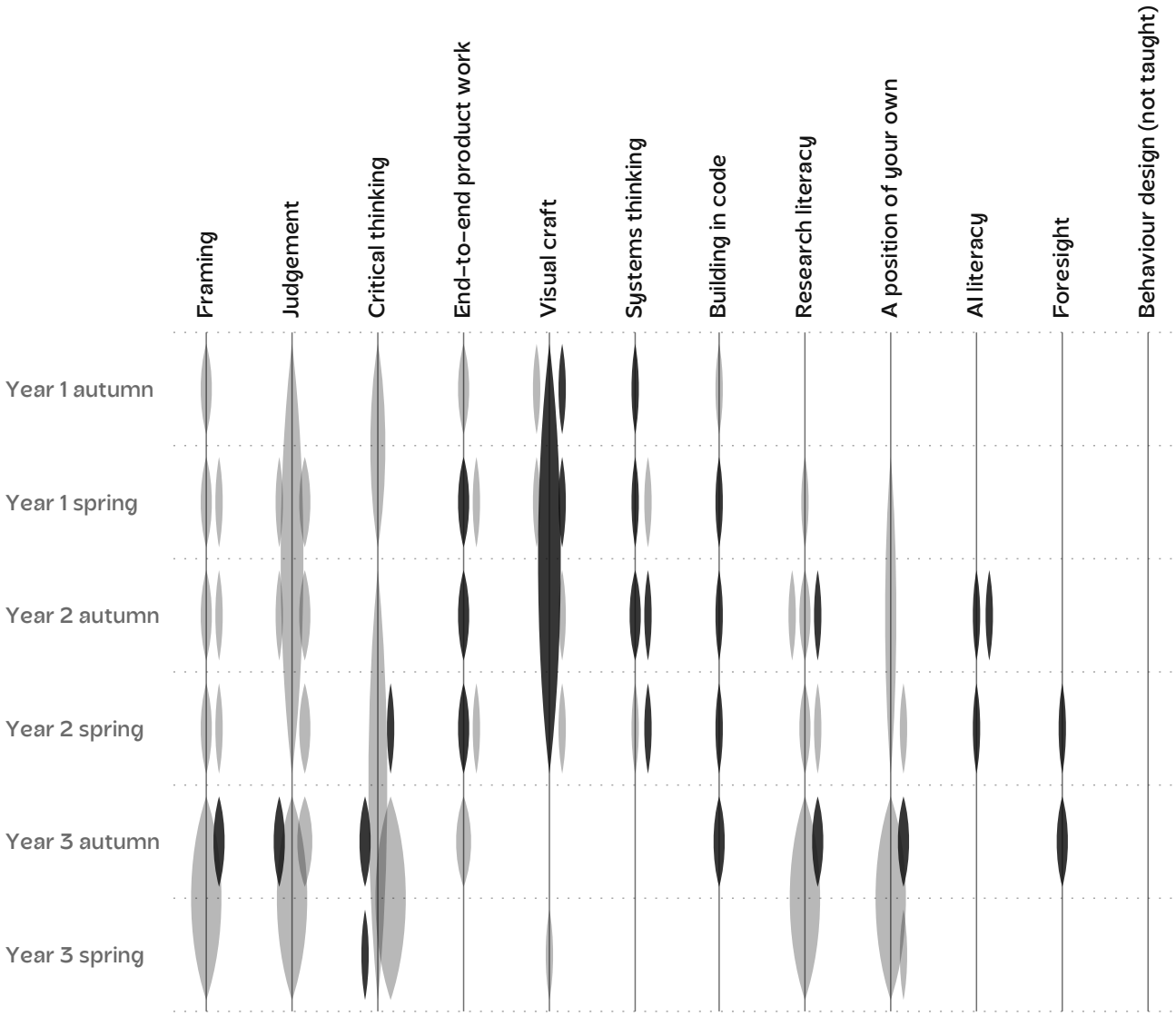
UK Policy Lab[47]; Superflux[7].

7 If you are in a programme, or not

In a programme: use your projects to build these skills on purpose. Ask for critique, finish things, keep your rejected options, write your position early.

On your own: none of the directions requires a design degree. What they require is evidence: finished work, the reasoning behind it, and a clear sense of what you bring. Small, complete projects with real people beat long courses.

Appendix A: one programme as an example



The digital product design specialisation at the Estonian Academy of Arts, within its Industrial and Digital Product Design programme, by skill. Each thread swells where a course builds that skill, by semester.

Skill	Courses that build it
Framing	Introduction to Product Design Year 1 autumn User Experience 1 Year 1 spring Digital Product 1 Year 1 spring Design Methods Year 2 autumn Digital Product 2 Year 2 autumn User Experience 2 Year 2 spring Digital Product 3 Year 2 spring Digital Product Project 4 Year 3 autumn Bachelor's Thesis and Seminars Year 3 autumn to Year 3 spring
Judgement	Line, Colour, Form and Space 1–5 Year 1 autumn to Year 2 spring User Interface Design 1 Year 1 spring Digital Product 1 Year 1 spring User Interface Design 2 Year 2 autumn Digital Product 2 Year 2 autumn Digital Product 3 Year 2 spring Digital Product Project 4 Year 3 autumn Internship Year 3 autumn Bachelor's Thesis and Seminars Year 3 autumn to Year 3 spring
Critical thinking	Art, Architecture, Design and Society 1–3 Year 1 autumn to Year 1 spring Design Theory 1–4 Year 2 autumn to Year 3 spring Future Technologies Year 2 spring Digital Product Project 4 Year 3 autumn Bachelor's Thesis and Seminars Year 3 autumn to Year 3 spring Philosophy and Critical Thinking Year 3 spring
End-to-end product work	Introduction to Product Design Year 1 autumn User Experience 1 Year 1 spring Digital Product 1 Year 1 spring Digital Product 2 Year 2 autumn User Experience 2 Year 2 spring Digital Product 3 Year 2 spring Internship Year 3 autumn
Visual craft	Drawing Year 1 autumn Introduction to UI Design Year 1 autumn Line, Colour, Form and Space 1–5 Year 1 autumn to Year 2 spring Graphic Design Basics Year 1 spring User Interface Design 1 Year 1 spring User Interface Design 2 Year 2 autumn Portfolio Year 2 spring Graduation Exhibition Year 3 spring

Skill	Courses that build it
Systems thinking	Introduction to UI Design Year 1 autumn User Interface Design 1 Year 1 spring Arduino Year 1 spring User Interface Design 2 Year 2 autumn Digital Product 2 Year 2 autumn User Experience 2 Year 2 spring Future Technologies Year 2 spring
Building in code	Introduction to IT Year 1 autumn Arduino Year 1 spring Web and Code Year 2 autumn Future Technologies Year 2 spring Digital Product Project 4 Year 3 autumn
Research literacy	User Experience 1 Year 1 spring User Research Year 2 autumn Design Methods Year 2 autumn Digital Product 2 Year 2 autumn User Experience 2 Year 2 spring Digital Product 3 Year 2 spring Digital Product Project 4 Year 3 autumn Bachelor's Thesis and Seminars Year 3 autumn to Year 3 spring
A position of your own	Self-management and Teamwork 1-2 Year 1 spring to Year 2 spring Portfolio Year 2 spring Digital Product Project 4 Year 3 autumn Bachelor's Thesis and Seminars Year 3 autumn to Year 3 spring Graduation Exhibition Year 3 spring
AI literacy	User Interface Design 2 Year 2 autumn Web and Code Year 2 autumn Future Technologies Year 2 spring
Foresight	Future Technologies Year 2 spring Digital Product Project 4 Year 3 autumn
Behaviour design	Not taught

In the Baltics, the Estonian Academy of Arts is one of the few places where digital product design is a bachelor's specialisation of its own, within the Industrial and Digital Product Design programme[23]. Most of the skills in this report are built somewhere in it, through studio projects, interface courses and a strong visual foundation. Future Technologies combines building with AI, futures and ethics in one course, a combination I did not find elsewhere.

Links are partly inferred from course names and descriptions, so read them as likely, not certain.

Appendix B: about the sources

Every claim in this report links to its source. The sources are sorted by the kind of evidence behind them:

- Data: government statistics, large platform data, official course catalogues.
- Survey: questionnaires, often small or run by an organisation with an interest in the answer.
- Research: peer-reviewed papers and conference proceedings.
- Position: practitioners, educators and associations saying what they think.

Figures that circulate without a method behind them were left out.

Update history

- 12 November 2026: market section updated with November job data; research direction relabelled; product designer direction updated; sources added.
- 5 October 2026: first published.

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