

DOMUS ACADEMY AI MANIFESTO

For a Responsible and Critical Design Culture



DOMUS ACADEMY MILANO
Think further, Design beyond

PREAMBLE

Artificial Intelligence is reshaping the landscape of design, education, and culture.

At Domus Academy, we approach this transformation with curiosity, responsibility, and care. We understand AI as a design material, a situated partner, and cultural force, something to interrogate, configure, and transform rather than simply apply.

AI is not neutral. It embodies systems of knowledge, biases, and power that must be understood, questioned, and reimaged through design.

We believe that learning to engage with AI is not simply about mastering tools but about cultivating literacy: the ability to read, interpret, and reshape the logics behind AI systems.

AI can enhance processes and connect collective intelligence, yet it must always remain under human judgment, critical control, and ethical responsibility.

Our mission is to nurture a community capable of designing for, within, and around AI systems, ensuring that emergent technologies serve human and societal values, and that the principles of empathy, accountability, and inclusivity guide every act of design.

PRINCIPLES

AI as Context

The AI is not an add-on but part of the ecosystem we inhabit. Designers must understand how it operates, where it fails, and how it shapes society. Engaging with AI means cultivating literacy, the ability to read, question, and redesign the systems and logics behind it.

Design as Inquiry

AI is a design material to be explored, questioned, and shaped, not a substitute for creative thought. Every act of design remains a human act of interpretation and sense-making.

Human in Control

AI may accelerate some processes, but designers remain accountable for meaning, direction, and final decisions. Human oversight safeguards integrity, authorship, and ethical coherence.

Ethical Responsibility

All AI-driven actions must respect transparency, fairness, and the dignity of individuals and communities. Designers hold moral responsibility for outcomes, not the machine. Ethical reflection must accompany every stage of design, ensuring that technology aligns with human and ecological values.

Design Accountability

Creative control belongs to the designer, who must also take responsibility for the integrity, impact, and potential errors in the work produced. Using AI does not absolve responsibility but it reinforces the need for responsible authorship.

Creative Authorship

AI can support creativity, but authorship belongs to those who question, contextualize, and transform its outputs. True originality arises from dialogue between critical minds and technological systems.

Transparency and Trust

We commit to clarity in how AI informs design decisions and learning processes, ensuring that its influence is visible, traceable, and accountable. All uses of AI must be explicitly acknowledged, documented, or cited, so that the role of AI is transparent in both the creative process and its outcomes. Trust arises from openness, not automation.

Plurality and Inclusion

AI should amplify multiplicity, cultures, voices, and visions, rather than narrowing them to dominant narratives. Diversity in datasets, teams, and perspectives strengthens the ethical and social quality of design.

Critical awareness

We engage with AI through inquiry, not imitation. Critical reflection prevents dependency, de-skilling, and the illusion of neutrality. Awareness turns use into understanding and control into responsibility.

Collective intelligence

AI can connect diverse perspectives and enable cooperation across disciplines. We harness this capacity to foster collaboration, knowledge exchange, and shared responsibility while keeping human intent at the center.

Interdisciplinary Collaboration

AI encourages cross-fertilization among design, technology, business, and culture. We promote collaboration that integrates multiple perspectives while maintaining ethical coherence and design depth.

Learning and Mastery

Design education must ensure that students can design both with and without AI, maintaining proficiency in craft, research, and critical thinking. Strong foundations enable responsible experimentation and innovation.

Sustainability of Systems

We recognize the environmental cost of AI infrastructures and advocate for responsible, low-impact, and energy-conscious practices that align technological innovation with ecological care.

Designing Futures

Our mission is to shape futures where technology serves humanity. We design for societies guided by empathy, accountability, inclusivity, and care for the planet.