

# Stand #WithRefugees: Workshop on Fieldwork and Design Methods for Forced Migration

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## Abstract

To date over 65 million people are forcibly displaced by war and persecution worldwide, over half of whom are children, marking the worst humanitarian crisis since World War II. The UNHCR reports that the majority of refugees (86%) remain in low to middle income countries close to situations of conflict. The everyday contexts comprising the information worlds of refugees are vast and complex. Sophisticated methods supported by extended engagement with refugees and stakeholders are required to understand subtleties across populations, and the hidden roles played by different people. In this workshop, participants will learn basic principles and methods for carrying out fieldwork and participatory design in settings such as camps that are sensitive to gender, culture, time, place, and stakeholders; and how using co-design methods—storyboards, maps, narrative drawings, and personas can enrich standard fieldwork methods. Participants will receive critical advice on their research engagements.

**Keywords:** refugees; displaced persons; information seeking; design; research methods; #standwithrefugees

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## 1 Purpose and Intended Audience

The purpose of this workshop is to bring together and facilitate ALL members of the iSchool Community with an interest in research and design in aid of forced migration. To date over 65 million people are forcibly displaced by war and persecution worldwide, over half of whom are children, marking the worst global humanitarian crisis since World War II. The refugee crisis in Europe hit new challenges in 2015 when the number of asylum seekers rose to 1 million during the first 10 months of the year, which was twice the number of the same period the year before. A much more efficient integration process was now needed as well as more frequent collaboration between key actors in society. The role of public libraries is evident, a public space where services to meet refugees' information needs are then important to develop. The UN Agency for Refugees reports that the majority of refugees (86%) remain in low to middle income countries close to situations of conflict. The everyday contexts comprising the information worlds of refugees are vast and complex. Sophisticated methods supported by extended engagement with refugees and stakeholders are required to understand subtleties across populations, and the hidden roles played by different people such as youth, elders, and mentors in refugees' social networks and their effects across wider society. Such understandings can be linked to broader economic, education the following topline field and design insights for engaging in with displaced people by conflict zones—need for humanitarian research; the disruption of social fabric; closed, low resource environments; building capacity for all; the differing ubiquity of time, place and gender; iterative long-term, social engagement; universal design archetypes; youth as ICT wayfarers; connected learning; and innovating futures.

## 2 Proposed Format

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Call for Participation posted on Workshop, Organizers' and Schools' websites, social media, and listservs. CfP will require participants to submit a brief statement of their interest/objective in attending the workshop, background/interest in carrying

out research and/or design with refugees, and publications, services or technologies. These items, along with key readings (see references) will be posted on the Workshop website for engagement and discussion prior to the workshop.

- 22 March 2017 Half-day workshop (4 hour) will be organized as follows (arbitrary 9am start):
- 9am Welcome, Overview and Introductions  
Human BINGO: participants interact, find people who have researched, designed, faced/solved challenges in different domains
  - 9:45 Mini Keynote: Doing Fieldwork with Refugees by Conflict Zones: Karen Fisher
  - 10:15 Break
  - 10:30 Mini Keynote: Co-Designing with Rebels and Refugees: Volker Wulf
  - 11am Co-Design for Information Services and Technology Session facilitated by Workshop Organizers
  - 11:45 Presentations of Group Designs
  - 12:30 Community Next Steps: Charting research and design program, impact
  - 12:45 Evaluation and Thank You
  - 1pm End

### 3 Goals or Expected Outcomes

Participants will learn (a) basic principles for carrying out fieldwork and participatory design in settings such as camps by conflict zones that are sensitive to gender, culture, time, place, and stakeholders, including agencies, governments, and factions; (b) key field methods and note keeping, working with IRBs and agency protocols, accessing sites and participants, entering the field/networking, collecting and managing field data, data cleaning and analysis, reciprocity and relationships, and reporting with impact + sensitivity; and (c) how using participatory, co-design methods—storyboards, maps, narrative drawings, and personas can enrich standard fieldwork methods. Participants will receive critical feedback and advice on their research and receive Certificates of iConference Workshop Completion. The organizers and participants will prepare a paper about the multi-faceted, international outcomes of the Workshop for iConference 2018 and cognate venues. Most humbly, we seek indelible, untraceable impact on scores of lives.

### 4 Relevance to the iConference

Since its inception in 2005, the iConference has been about people-information-and technology. Never have iSchools and the iConference been more socially relevant than in 2016 with UNHCR's call for Stand #WithRefugees and helping design solutions for displaced people. iSchools can help solve the world's most severe humanitarian problems of forced displacement and we wish to make a stand in Wuhan. Please join us.

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