OS OPEN SOURCE TOOLS FOR AUTONOMOUS MAKING

DESIGN THINKING / PROPRIOCEPTIC PLANNING
[FOR PRINT:DOCUMENTATION and SPECULATIVE EXPLORATION ACROSS MEDIA]

Please use this doc in tandem with the OS Design Criteria Doc (especially if you and/or your team are autonomously designing your project) and the Extended Colophon / Instructions for Use / Accessibility Guidelines Doc.

Name:
Project:

An essential part of the OS design process is to involve our collaborators in engaging with both visual/aesthetic as well as somatic / proprioceptic thinking about their work in document/print form as an *object* in the world, moving away from the automated processes of word-processing software and left-to-right handwritten documents, as well as seeing your work as single-page scrolls. This is also an essential step in the editorial process, as thinking about the object may mean that more concrete work / pagebreaks / etc needs to change as a result.

We invite you to begin this thinking process on your end in a specific book-object-oriented way, through the following prompts, exercises, and other strategies. We also invite you to expand your speculative understanding of what this work can do in the world and translated across mediums, and to consider what, if any, additional material or media might serve your vision for what this project can do and be, now and in the future.

We may ultimately present additional suggestions to you in response to your initial instincts as developed here, but the OS believes it is essential for all creators to work through this process, empowering their creation of future projects at all stages of production.

This document and the others as linked above are essential steps of the design process for working with the OS and we also hope you use them for your other projects, communities, in the classroom, and share them with anyone else who could use them (with attribution). They are intended to demystify and make increasingly horizontal and autonomous all aspects of project production for documentation / print and extended archival / other media forms.

If using this document as a member of an OS cohort, please create a separate document with your responses and submit this to your project folder for peer and team review so we can incorporate your ideas as we move forward in this process!!! Ping us when you're done :)

1) space and time: how long is your book? How much longer or shorter will it be as a book-object if your pages are bigger and/or smaller? How much additional white space or "time" or "breathing room" do you want to have around your work and/or between sections?

- Experiment with your project in your word-processing program by changing the sizes of the pages you are working on as well as the margins both of the sides as well as the top and bottom of your pages.

- Print pages from your work out in these different formats and/or cut paper to sizes you might be interested in working at (see below).

- Play with the spine and think about left and right alignment. Make sure you are looking at and considering SPREADS of left and right facing pages. (OS standard is mirrored alignment for broken line poems, justified for prose)

2) weights and measures: how do you want your book to FEEL in your hand? How do other books feel in your hand, and what do you like (or not like) about them? How can the size and scale and heft, the portability, the ungainliness, the ease of holding the book open, etc., effect the reader's experience? What does your book FEEL like? How can scale and weight and proprioceptic experience make your book more (or less) itself?

- Hold books from your collection, at the library, at bookstores, in public, in private, and think about how the experience of holding them feels. What books FEEL like themselves? Do any alter the experience of the work inside significantly? How?

- Measure the books above and note down the sizes that feel like they might be the size and feel of your book.

- How long are those books? Be careful to see if you are drawn to books that are much shorter or longer than your book and/or that

have much less (or more) text per page.

- Check out this [list of standard printing trim sizes](#) and make sure to write down below what sizes feel good to you.

3) typography : typography is hugely important for the Operating System. Typefaces come with historical and political, as well as aesthetic and disciplinary associations and baggage (and some take less energy/ink to print!) If you're not thinking about how typography changes not only the titles but even the body of your text, please take the time to play! And: look at other books, both from the OS and other presses, to see what books use type in ways that you like. The [OS Project Design Criteria Doc](#), for those working on design independently, has much more information about this and links to articles about supporting BIPOC designers and the issues inherent in typography's lineage.

- SERIF OR SANS SERIF? How does your work read differently in different type faces? Does it change the tone or feeling of the work? What do you prefer, and why? Our house fonts for interior text are Minion Pro for serif and Freight Neo or Europa for sans serif, at 10 point, if you want to play with your interiors using those. Consider showing them to friends and collaborators you trust, without telling them what you think. Do their opinions differ?

- TITLE FONTS: when we pick title fonts for each book we do so thinking about all of the above: what references do we want to bring into the work, more or less obviously, and/or more or less obliquely? Do we want to bring in connections based on place, visual history, time period, design or other connotations to the style of the work? What does it mean to use a font that is obviously connected in some way, vs. one that signifies something quite different? Try your title, your section or other titles in different fonts on [velvetyne](#) (an amazing open source / libre font foundry started by a rad BIPOC designer) or explore the huge number of options on [dafont](#) and see how it changes your reaction to them. Are there any you like? Why?

3) imagery : the OS takes our book design, both interior and cover, very seriously. We never ask our authors to design covers, and actually this is a space where we have traditionally retained the most editorial control, but we do invite you to suggest artists you know and/or are interested in collaborating with, and/or send images you personally have in your collection and/or have permission to use and/or in the public domain that "feel" like the sort of imagery you'd like to see on your book. Also, please do note for us other book design that you really like that has perhaps the sort of feel or direction you could imagine your book going in.

Additional Material / Other Media / Backmatter / Process Notes & Other Archival Extensions

We want to encourage you to take a deep breath and recognize that despite what you may have been told or discouraged from doing previously in order to adapt to the whims and preferences of capital and/or academia, the weird and wonderful ideas you have about your project are likely brilliant and it's also potentially well within your means to make them happen, even if you aren't super familiar with the tools you might need to do so. Let's explore those things, and let's also think about what it means that this work will now be in the world in a future where we can't entirely be sure of who will have access to books in print and/or digital form, and what other forms, if any, this work can take, either as alternate versions or extensions of what we're starting with.

On the one hand, **let's consider what else you might include in the physical document**, and why this might be useful (ie, for the use of certain readers, scholars, etc.). Here's some prompts to help you think:

- Do you have archival or ephemeral materials that you drew from you which you might include?
- Would it be interesting to include field notes or other media to provide additional context for the framework within which you were producing this work?
- Are there images, charts, graphs, or other visual media that could be supportive?
- Are you interested in writing an essay or other critical / creative text to accompany the work?
- What about a teaching guide or other tools for using the work in the classroom or in community?
- Would you like to invite someone else to write about your work or is there an excerpt or piece of work of someone else's that can support your audience's experience through inclusion here?

Next, let's consider what other media you might or could be working with, to support a variety of applications and uses now and in the future. Here's some more prompts to encourage that exploration:

- All OS print projects also live in perpetuity on the OS Open Access Library as a digital download / pdf. Are there ways in which the digital version of this project can include additional resources and/or media? Might you add live links, color images, video or audio content?
- What other mediums might support ways you'd like this material to be engaged with, and for what audiences? What would video, audio, or other media offer? Would these offerings be straightforward readings of the material, or would they support / be in conversation with the work in another way?
- What teaching materials, programming, or other community materials might be produced or available in tandem with this print (or digital) document / project?
- What, if anything, changes about the above questions when thinking about this project's potential use in a variety of futures, for scholarly inquiry or other purposes?

From another perspective, consider if there's any ways that omission and/or inclusion of particular content could either make this work more or less legible to different audiences now and in the future. Is there information that could make aspects of your project more accessible to a wider public if included?

Extended Colophon / Production Instructions

Beginning in 2020, in addition to our longstanding commitment to the inclusion of archival process material / backmatter and interviews with collaborators, we will introduce the inclusion of an extended colophon and/or "instructions for use" alongside the produced materials for each project, with the understanding that speculative inquiry insists upon us reckoning with knowing very little about the future of print vs. digital, ownership, etc., for ecological and other reasons. We're interested in cataloging, for the archive, instructions for the production of print and other materials, included in all versions of the work, for potential future reproduction. We will work with you on producing this, using your answers to this document and other aspects of the project's design that emerge as we work on it together.

A document going into detail about what this extended colophon / instructions for use should include and some prompts to help you is available here. Note that these guidelines also include accessibility protocol for print (instructions for producing image descriptions, etc) as well as links to additional accessibility resources, guidelines, and strategies across media, which you can also find here.

Independent Design Guidelines:

You are invited / encouraged to work on your own layout and design, whether or not you are coming into this process with previous experience, and/or work with a friend or person in your network on the design of your project. (If you'd like to learn, we would happily help you get your bearings in InDesign, though if this is necessary it may affect the production timeline.)

Please consult the OS Project Design Criteria for Assistance in following our house standards and thinking through translating your project into physical form(s) using our methodology.

We have a Publication Design Assets & Templates folder, with basic style guides, assets, and InDesign files for previous projects collected for you to use and consult in putting together your project along our in-house standards and in keeping with our design thinking. These assets are always in the process of being updated -- we can also complete the final steps of adding standard assets and creating the copyright page / colophon after you (and/or your collaborator(s)) have finished the interior layout. You'd need to submit files as IDML (InDesign Markup Language) in the case that our programs are different versions and can't talk to each other. (You'll also need to provide packaged links, images, fonts, etc but we'll talk details when we get there!)

Other notes or questions? Feel free to add any additional links, ideas, comments, etc about design here.