
Taryn L. Mead, PhD

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RESEARCH INTERESTS

My research explores how materials, products, spaces, and systems can be designed in ways that support regenerative relationships between humans and ecosystems. Grounded in an understanding of design as a relational and ecologically entangled practice, I draw on nature-inspired approaches such as biomimicry, biodesign, biophilic and regenerative design, and circular economy frameworks as ways of learning from living systems rather than optimizing them. I am particularly interested in bioregional scales of design and rural ways of knowing, where local ecologies, materials, and cultural practices inform responsive and place-based design strategies. Through this work, I engage epistemological and ontological questions to examine how ways of knowing shape design outcomes, using design research to develop cultural narratives and practices that foster reciprocity, interdependence, and integrated human and ecological flourishing.

EDUCATION

- PhD in Management Studies, "Factors Influencing the Adoption of Nature Inspired Innovation in Multinational Corporations", School of Business, University of Exeter, UK (2017)
- Bachelor of Arts, Environmental Biology and Environmental Studies Cum Laude, Western Colorado University, Gunnison, CO (2006)

CONTINUING EDUCATION & TRAINING

- Biodesign Summer Course: Basque Center for Biodesign
- Biomaterials Workshop: Making Futures Conference, Arts University Plymouth
- 3D Clay Printing: IE University
- 3D Biomaterials Printing: IE University
- Biomimicry Certified Professional: Biomimicry 3.8 (Grandfathered)
- Biologist at the Design Table: Biomimicry Institute

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

School of Architecture and Design, IE University Assistant Professor, Sustainable Design, www.ie.edu (8/23-present)

Tenure-track faculty in the Design bachelor's degree program, focused on curriculum development and research on bioinspired design, regenerative innovation, sustainable systems of production and consumption, biodesign, and biomaterials. Led coordination of Sustainability across the Bachelors in Design and coordinated the Undergraduate Thesis course.

Symbiosis, Founder & Biomimicry Strategist, www.thesymbiosisgroup.com (6/12-present)

Proprietor of independent consulting, facilitation and education. Assisted clients with business and organizational strategy, built environment design, product and material development. Emphasis on innovation process and business strategy for sustainability-oriented innovation.

Walton College of Business, Strategy, Entrepreneurship and Venture Innovation, University of Arkansas, Teaching Assistant Professor Product Design, Innovation, & Mgmt. mspi.uark.edu (8/22-5/23)

Led the development of a new MS in Product Innovation. As the founding faculty member, efforts included faculty recruitment, course development, student recruitment, program positioning and branding, new stakeholder relationships, and development of a new prototyping lab for students.

School of Business, Western Colorado University (WCU), Assistant Professor and Product Track Coordinator, Outdoor Industry MBA, western.edu (8/17-24)

Course design and teaching for low-residency MBA program, teaching courses in supply chain management, product development and management, and strategy. Product track coordination includes recruiting, mentoring, and program building specific to this area of focus. Also taught in the business management undergraduate program and in the School of Environment and Sustainability. Traditional classroom setting and online platforms (Blackboard/Canvas) to a globally distributed virtual classroom.

Minneapolis College of Art and Design (MCAD), Graduate Faculty, Sustainable Design, mcad.edu (8/17- 5/20)

Course content design and delivery of master's level course in biomimicry for sustainable design master's program and for continuing education. Sustainability-oriented innovation, nature-based innovation strategies, and organizational development. Content delivered asynchronously via Blackboard to a globally distributed virtual classroom.

ICELab@Western Colorado University, Accelerator Coordinator, icelab.co (7/17-12/17)

Launching the first cohort of Accelerator start-ups at the newly opened ICELab on the WCU campus. Responsibilities included program design and facilitation, mentorship of businesses, relationship building, and outreach on behalf of the ICELab. Temporary contract.

University of Exeter, Marie Curie Early Career Researcher, <http://business-school.exeter.ac.uk> (6/13-7/17)

Research on the use of biologically-inspired innovation for corporate sustainability at multiple levels of research and development. Emphasis on processes of innovation management and the impacts and effectiveness of corporate sustainability strategies.

Biomimicry 3.8, Director of Consulting www.biomimicry.net (12/11-5/12)

Design and innovation consulting for clients in product design, engineering, materials manufacturing, architecture, and urban planning. Immersive workshop facilitation for design professionals. Support and leadership of consulting projects and staff. Client relationship management including business negotiation, contracts, billing oversight and ensuring client satisfaction.

Biomimicry Guild, Biologist at the Design Table, www.biomimicryguild.com (3/07-7/11)

Design and innovation consulting for clients in product design, engineering, materials manufacturing, architecture, and urban planning. Translation and application of biological theory and

principles to design applications in various industrial sectors. Workshop facilitation for design professionals. Biological literature research and interpretation for product innovation. Teaching and facilitation of hybrid online and in-person 1-year certificate program.

Lyle Center for Regenerative Studies, California Polytechnic University-Pomona, Student Assistant, <http://www.csupomona.edu/~crs/> (1/03-6/03)

Landscaping and maintenance of 12-acre regenerative research center and live-work community. Emphasis on sustainable and organic techniques. Design and construction of edible flower/medicinal herb garden.

PUBLICATIONS

- Mead, T., Dijkstra, H. & Godfrey, K. Mapping regenerative value network configurations of marine plastics in the global commons. *Environmental Management* 76, 32 (2026). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00267-025-02339-3>
- Mead, T. & A. DeMerchant (2023) Bureo's Approach to Addressing Ocean Plastic with Regenerative Innovation. Sage Business Cases: Sustainability Series. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781071928080>
- Borden, D. S., & Mead, T. (2023). Rural Small and Medium Enterprises: Maximising the Value of Benefit Corporation Certification. *International Journal of Rural Management*, 19(3), 456-472. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09730052221135942>
- Mead, T., Jeanrenaud, S. & J. Bessant (2022) Sustainability Oriented Innovation Narratives: Learning from Nature Inspired Innovation. *Journal of Cleaner Production*. 344, 130980 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2022.130980>
- Landrum, N.E., Mead, T. (2022). Sustainability in the Biom*. In: Palombini, F.L., Muthu, S.S. (eds) *Bionics and Sustainable Design. Environmental Footprints and Eco-design of Products and Processes*. Springer, Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-1812-4_1
- Mead, T., Pietsch, C., Matthew, V., Lipkin-Moore, S., Metzger, E., Avdeev, I. V., & Ruzycki, N. J. (2021). Leveraging a Community of Practice to Build Faculty Resilience and Support Innovations in Teaching during a Time of Crisis. *Sustainability*, 13(18), 10172. MDPI AG. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3390/su131810172>
- Mead, T.L., Jeanrenaud, S., and J. Bessant. (2020). Factors influencing the application of nature as inspiration for sustainability-oriented innovation in multinational corporations. *Business Strategy and the Environment*. 29(8) p.3162-317 <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/bse.2564>
- Mead, T., Borden, D.S., and D. Coley (2020) Navigating the Tower of Babel: The Epistemological Shift of Bioinspired Innovation. *Biomimetics*. 5(4), 60; <https://doi.org/10.3390/biomimetics5040060>
- Swor, J., Armstrong, M., Mead, T. & R. Whiteskunk. (2020) The Europocene: A Past, Present, and Future Narrative of Climate Change Beginning with the Disruption of Indigenous Relations. *Mapping Meaning*. 4.
- Mead, T. & Landrum, N. (2019) "Bioinspiration as a Guide for Responsible Management" in Laasch, O., Jamali, D., Freeman, E., & Suddaby, R. *The Research Handbook of Responsible Management*. p.212-228. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar. ISBN 9781788971959
- Mead, T. (2018). *Bioinspiration in Business and Management: Innovating for Sustainability*. Business Expert Press. <http://www.businessexpertpress.com/>

- Mead, T. and Jeanrenaud, S. (2017). The Elephant in the Room: Biomimetics and Sustainability? Bioinspired, Biomimetic and Nanobiomaterials. 6 (2), 113-121. <http://www.icevirtuallibrary.com/toc/jbibrn/current>
- Hoeller, N., Farnsworth, M., Jacobs, S., Chirazi, J., Mead, T., Goel, A., & Salustri, F. (2016). A Systems View of Bio-Inspiration: Bridging the Gaps. INSIGHT, 19(1), 36–40. <http://doi.org/10.1002/inst.12071>
- Mead, T. (2014). Biologically-inspired innovation in large companies: A path for corporate participation in biophysical systems? International Journal of Design & Nature and Ecodynamics, 9(3) 216-29. <http://www.witpress.com/elibrary/dne-volumes/9/3/876>
- Mead, T., & Hoeller, N. (2014). The ISO/TC 266 Biomimetics Standard Initiative. Zygote Quarterly, 10, 72-85, from http://issuu.com/eggermont/docs/zq_issue_10_final/72

RECENT CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS AND WORKING PAPERS

- Conference Presentation: “Technocentric Sustainability and the Digitized Designer: Recentering Design Education as an Embodied and Relational Endeavor” What Was Sustainability? The Past, Present, and Future of Sustainability in Design and its Education. SiDE Symposium, TU Delft March 26-27 2025.
- Conference Presentation: “Creating Materials for the Symbiocene – A Proposed Nomenclature” Making Futures 2024
- Working Paper: “Theory and Praxis: Exploring Regeneration in Materials Through a Lived Experience with the Literature”
- Working Paper: “Nature-Entangled Design of Secular Ritual Objects: An Autoethnographic Inquiry”
- Working Paper: “Paradigms in Biological Science and the Influence on Dominant Narratives of Design”

TEACHING, LECTURES, AND WORKSHOPS

Bachelor of Comprehensive Design, IE University, Spain

- Sustainability (Fall 2023, Spring 2024, Fall 2024, Fall 2025)
- Biomaterials Elective (Spring 2024)
- Intro to Design Studio 1 (Fall 2024, Fall 2025, 2 sections)
- Undergraduate Thesis Coordination and Tutoring (2024, 2025)

Master of Science International Sustainability Management, ESPC Business School, Germany

- Regenerative Leadership & Biomimicry: Immersion & Elective (2024, 2025)

Master of Business Administration in the Outdoor Industry, Western Colorado University, USA

- Capstone Project Advising (2019-2024) Outdoor Industry MBA
- Capstone Project Course (2021, 2022) Outdoor Industry MBA
- Supply Chain and Logistics in the Outdoor Industry (2020, 2021, 2022)
- Competitive Dynamics in the Athletic and Outdoor Industry (2021),
- Sustainable Outdoor Product Develop. and Material Sourcing (2021, 2022, 2023)
- Strategic Mgmt. Business Models for the Outdoor Industry (2020)

Dual Bachelor of Business and Environment & Sustainability: Western Colorado University, USA

- Business and the Environment (2019, 2020, 2021, 2022) School of Business, WCU
- Science of Sustainability and Resilience (2018, 2019, 2020) School of Env. & Sustainability

- Special Topics: Science Driven Innovation for the Circular Economy (2020)

Master of Environmental Management, Western Colorado University, USA

- Capstone Project Advising (2019, 2020, 2021)
- Environmental Organization Management (2019, 2020)
- Nature Inspired Innovation and Design (2018, 2019)

Master of Sustainable Design, Minneapolis College of Art and Design, USA

- Biomimetic Design (2019)
- Biomimicry for Designers (2017, 2018, 2019) Continuing Ed.

Master of Business Administration: University of Exeter, UK

- Biomimicry and Business (2016) One Planet MBA, University of Exeter, UK
- Innovation and Sustainability (2016) One Planet MBA, University of Exeter, UK
- Business and Society (2016) University of Exeter, UK

Project Supervision: Master of Business Administration in the Outdoor Industry, Western Colorado University, USA

- Textile Performance and User Perception - Brandon Morton (2023)
- Regenerative Innovation - Alyson DeMerchant (2023)
- Weston Snowboards Carbon Accounting - Galen Koon (2023)
- Fishing Line Innovation - Nick Staples (2022)
- Blank Outside Inclusive Gear - Sydney Elliot (2022)
- Koup Closed Loop and Life Cycle Analysis - Parker VanLandingham (2022)
- Koup B-Corp Certification - Dylan Turner (2022)
- Sustainability In Ski Manufacturing with REI - Megan Zeeb (2022)
- Regenerative Supply Networks - Byron Schultz (2021)
- Weston Backcountry Sustainable Softgoods - Kenny Middleton (2021)
- Building the RECREATE Institute - Robby Brower (2021)
- Building Entrepreneurial Ecosystems - Melissa Lally (2021)
- Fishpond Product Development – Richard Yates (2021)
- Johnsteen Seedlings as Outdoor Industry Product – Conor Farley (2021)
- Corporate Wellness Integration with USA Triathlon – Crisman Jones (2021)

Project Supervision: Bachelor in Comprehensive Design, IE University, Spain

- Natural Splendour: Reducing Ecological Impacts through Bioluminescent Decoration - Ilona Liechtenstein (2024)
- Body Positivity: An Egyptian-based resort for a better you - Malak Ahmed Tawakol (2024)
- Understanding How Cultural Background Influences Waste Disposal Behavior: Insights from International Students at IE University (2025) – Stefanie Laredo Hurtado

Invited Lectures and Workshops

- Biomimicry Built Environment Workshop – Facilitator (2013) Savannah College of Art and Design
- Sustainability Through Biomimicry Conference – Invited Speaker (2012) Dammam, Saudi Arabia
- Invited Speaker (2010) University of Brunei Darussalam, Brunei
- Invited Speaker (2009) Columbia School of Architecture, University of Missouri
- Fall Lecture Series - Invited Speaker (2008) School of the Art Institute of Chicago, IL
- Environmental Applications – Teaching Assistant (2005) School of Env. & Sustainability, WCU

- SW@6 Series, University of Exeter: 2016 (Exeter, UK)
- Urban Ecology Center: 2014 (Milwaukee, WI)
- Forum Studios Lunch and Learn Series: 2014 (St. Louis, MO)
- American Society for Landscape Architects Central States Conference: 2013 (Kansas City, MO)
- Plain Green Conference: 2012 (Sioux Falls, SD)
- Biomimicry Specialist Certification: 2012 9-Month Program (Arizona, USA)
- Ball State University: School of Architecture: 2011 (Indiana, USA)
- USGBC Greenbuild LDB Project Presentation: 2011 (Toronto, Canada)
- Cannon Design: Environmental Awareness Week Series: 2011 (Los Angeles, CA)
- Hitachi Environmental Conference: 2011 (Singapore)
- HOK St. Louis, Chicago, New York City and Hong Kong Offices: Lunch and Learn Series: 2009-11
- Corenet Global Conference: 2010 (New Orleans, Phoenix)
- Helena Audubon Society: 2010 (Montana, USA)
- AIA-COTE Biomimicry and Design Workshop: 2007-09 (Houston, Seattle, San Jose, Atlanta, NYC)
- Biomimicry Workshop for Lavasa Employees: 2009 (Lavasa, India)
- Biomimicry Workshop for HOK Sustainable Design: 2009 (Arizona, USA)
- Biologist at the Design Table Workshop: 2009 (Montana, USA)
- Northern Rockies Bioneers Biomimicry Workshop: 2008 (Montana, USA)
- Biomimicry and Design Workshop: 2007 (La Cusinga, Costa Rica)

ACADEMIC SERVICE

- Biomimetics: Reviewer (2024-present)
- Design Research Society Conference: Reviewer (2025-present)
- Cumulus Conference: Reviewer (2024-present)
- ICELab: Business Mentor (2019-2022)
- RECREATE Institute: Co-Founder + Director (2019-2022)
- Journal of Cleaner Production: Reviewer (2022-present)
- She Ji - The Journal of Design, Economics, and Innovation: Reviewer (2022-present)
- Ecological Economics: Reviewer (2022-present)
- Modern Mountaineer Innovation Challenge: Co-Founder (2021)
- Sustainability Action Committee, Western Colorado University: Member (2019-2022)
- Academy of Management: Member and Reviewer (2016-2020)
- Journal of Biomimetic, Bio-inspired and Nanobiomaterials: Reviewer (2016-2025)
- Environmental Values: Reviewer (2018-2022)
- Editorial Board Member: Journal of Biomimetics in Engineering (2016-2018)
- International Society for Industrial Ecology: Member (2009-2010)

INNOVATION PROJECT EXPERIENCES

- VF Corporation: Product Innovation
- Levi's Strauss: Product Innovation
- Kraft Foods: Package Design Ideation
- Kohler Co: Product Innovation

- Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge Visitors Center, Armagosa Valley, NV: Site Plan Design
- Khed Special Economic Zone, Maharashtra, India: Concept Master Plan Design
- Lavasa, India: Landscape Master Plan
- San Luis National Wildlife Refuge Visitors Center, Los Banos, CA: Building Design
- Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei: Development Master Plan
- Chicago O'Hare Airport, Chicago, IL: Terminal Design Visioning Series
- Natura: Innovation in the Cosmetics Industry; New Product Development
- HOK: Creation of FIT (Fully Integrated Thinking) Planning and Building Framework
- Seek Research: Design Research for Multinational Consumer Products Company
- Forum Studios: Hospital Campus Design

RELATED PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

- Canvas and Blackboard Course Development and Delivery
- NVivo Qualitative Data Analysis: ESPCR Summer School
- Interview Techniques: ESPCR Summer School
- Experience with field and laboratory-based research techniques
- Moderate Portuguese and Spanish language proficiency
- Crisis Prevention Institute: Nonviolent Crisis Intervention
- Nonviolent Communication Training

FUNDING, AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

- ACSUCYL (Agencia para la Calidad del Sistema Universitario de Castilla y Leon) Profesora Contratada Doctora y Prof. Universidad Privada Doctora and Profesora Ayudante Doctora (2025)
- Entrepreneurial Policy Academy, Silicon Flatirons (2020)
- Americorps VISTA Organizational Sponsorship (2021, 2022)
- VentureWell Faculty Grant, \$20,160 (2019-2022)
- One Planet Education Network (OPEN) Fellow, oneplanetbusiness.org (2017-present)
- Marie Curie Early Career Researcher Fellowship, Innovation for Sustainability ~\$125,000 (2013-2016)
- Outstanding contribution for innovation passion & commitment, XXV ISPIIM Innovation Conference - Innovation for Sustainable Economy & Society (2014)
- Alumni Award for Excellence, Western Colorado University (2006)
- Award for Meritorious Service to the Campus, Western Colorado University (2006)
- Rotary International: One-year study abroad in Campos dos Goytacazes, Brazil (1997)

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Wonderland Nature School: Founding Board President (2021-22)
- Seasons Schoolhouse: Board Member, Treasurer, and President (2018-21)
- Exeter Grower's Cooperative: Member (2013-16)
- Exeter Green Drinks Networking Event: Co-founder (2013-15)
- Western Sustainability Coalition: Cofounder and Steering Committee Member (2003-06)
- Recycling Expansion Initiative: Project Coordinator (2003-06)
- Student Government Association, Western State College: Senator & President (2004-06)
- Sierra Student Coalition: Colorado State Coordinator (2004-2006)

RELEVANT EXPERIENCES

- National Student Exchange: One academic year at California Polytechnic University, Pomona (2002-03)
 - Colorado Trail Expedition: Hiked 500 miles across the Rocky Mountains in 40 days (2011)
 - Cross-Cultural Professional Experiences in Various Countries: India, Brunei, Singapore, Thailand, Hong Kong, Saudi Arabia, UK, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Belgium, Croatia, Slovenia, Canada, Ireland, France, South Africa, Denmark, Netherlands, Austria, Brazil, Costa Rica, Spain (2007-Present)
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