Call for Papers for Special Issue of the *Journal of Design History*:

**Administering Design: Politics, Power and Agency in Global Perspective**

**Guest Editors:** Leah Armstrong, University of Applied Arts Vienna, Austria and Katarzyna Jeżowska, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia

This Special Issue of the *Journal of Design History* is dedicated to exploring design work, questions of agency and political power in design from a global perspective. Following the ‘postcolonial turn’ in design history, the issue foregrounds unequal power relations in design by examining a variety of administrative practices that enabled and promoted particular modes of design production and consumption and obstructed others.

The Special Issue responds to recent efforts to ‘decentralise’ the role of the designer and the design object, by exploring the work of secretaries, administrators, managers, publicists, policy-makers, bureaucrats and diplomats in the delivery and performance of design work. These roles, we argue, represent an *éminence grise* of design as they have operated behind the scenes as a ‘backroom service’ in the design profession. Unseen and frequently gendered, their work has slipped into the margins of archival documentation and historicization. In some cases, the ‘hidden’ nature of this work has conspired to conceal the ‘hidden power’ of design as a strategic tool in governance. The papers in this Special Issue will demonstrate that these roles were not ‘marginal’, but indeed central to positioning design as a tool in cultural diplomacy, a driver of commercial success and a vehicle of social change.

By identifying this broader constituent of actors that have animated and given meaning to the practice and profession of design, the Special Issue serves as a reflective space to re-consider the parameters of design praxis. *What constitutes design work? Where does it take place? How has the profession been shaped by its relationship with adjacent fields? How is the work of design constitutively different when performed by ‘non-designers’? How does design work as an instrument of (post/colonial) governance? What are the politics of collaboration within administrative work in design?* It also addresses questions of methodological significance, including: *What are the epistemological challenges of researching these largely hidden spaces, practices and communities? How do questions of anonymity and invisibility in design work bring fresh perspectives to debates around hagiography and biographical writing in design?*

We particularly encourage submissions from authors whose voices are significantly underrepresented within contemporary scholarship, including Global Majority scholars. Please submit an abstract of 300 words along with a working title, your name and institutional affiliation to both editors Leah Armstrong leah.armstrong@uni-ak.ac.at and Katarzyna Jeżowska k.jezowska@unsw.edu.au by 4 December 2023. Authors of accepted submissions will be notified by 15th January. The full articles are expected by August 2024. Papers for the Special Issue are subject to double-blind refereeing.