D2.5 DFA Tools and Guidelines (d)

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Revision History

Version	Date	Created / modified by	Comments
1.0	23/07/2025	Marita Canina	First draft
1.1	29/07/2025	Aoife O'Gorman	Some suggested edits, overall well written
1.2	27/08/2025	Carmen Bruno	Final review

Executive summary

.Deliverable 2.5, "DFA Tools and Guidelines (d)," represents the fourth and final milestone in the development of the Design Futures Art-Driven (DFA) method, a core methodological pillar of the MUSAE Factory Model Pack and the overall MUSAE Project. The progression of this method has been documented across a series of key deliverables:

- **The first deliverable**, submitted in **M9 (May 2023)**, introduced the initial proposal for the DFA method, laying the foundation for its conceptual framework.
- **The second deliverable**, submitted in **January 2024**, detailed the integration of two digital platforms (Figma and the MIRO board) designed to complement the DFA method and provide practical tools for artists and companies.
- **The third deliverable**, submitted in **March 2025**, incorporated critical updates to the **EXPLORE** phase based on insights from the first residency, and introduced the **GENERATE** phase, which was applied during the second residency with collaborating artists and companies.

This fourth deliverable consolidates all previous iterations and presents the final, refined version of the DFA method as part of the MUSAE Factory Model Pack. In this version, the **GENERATE phase** has been further enhanced following feedback gathered during the second residency, ensuring that the method is fully optimized for its intended use in fostering innovation across art, design, and industry.

The DFA Method is an **innovative approach** developed within the MUSAE project. A significant recognition for the DFA Method is its **selection for inclusion in the ADI (Industrial Design Association) Design Index 2025**. This makes it eligible for the prestigious **Compasso d'Oro Award**, one of the world's most distinguished design awards, ensuring **high visibility** for the method and its results.

The method uniquely combines **Futures Thinking, Design Thinking, and Art Thinking** to empower companies to navigate uncertainty, anticipate change, envision more sustainable, inclusive, and interconnected futures, and design transformative solutions. This method was created to address the insufficiency of traditional design methods in confronting complex global challenges, such as climate change and digital transition, by enabling businesses to **design the future**. All tools and activities are **open-source** and accessible via a dedicated web platform, forming part of the Factory Model Pack. The DFA Method has been **successfully tested within the MUSAE Project on the topic of Food as Medicine**, proving its potential for driving business transformation. Through a collaborative model, it engaged **23 artists and 11 SMEs** in the co-creation of **12 future scenarios and 11 AI-, robotics-, and wearable-based prototypes.** The DFA Method facilitates digital and sustainable transitions, yielding positive impacts on companies and local communities. It serves as a powerful instrument for anticipating technology impacts, fostering inclusive narratives, and enhancing societal acceptance of innovation.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the document

This report works as a Demo deliverable and focuses on the description of the final version of the Design Futures Art-Driven (DFA) method. The complete structure - comprising the process, video, and step-by-step guidelines - is accessible via the Figma prototype. A detailed description of the EXPLORE and GENERATE Phases of the DFA process is available in the previous Deliverables 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4.

The document is structured according to the DFA method's implementation process:

- **Section 2** presents a comprehensive look at the DFA method, discussing why it is innovative, its validation and impact, and its role as a method for business transformation
- **Section 3** describes how users can access the DFA method and its associated tools via the Factory Model Pack, including details on the website, orientation guide, and introductory course for European Digital Innovation Hubs (EDIHs) and educators.
- **Section 4** highlights the prestigious awards and recognitions received by the DFA method, including its selection for the ADI Design Index 2025
- **Section 5** summarizes the core values and tangible benefits that the DFA method offers to a wide range of stakeholders

1.2 Terms and acronyms

Acronym	Description
DFA	Design Futures Art-driven (method)
EDIH	European Digital Innovation Hub
AI	Artificial Intelligence

1.3. D2.5 and its relation to previous Deliverables (D2.2, D2.3 and D2.4)

Deliverable 2.5 "DFA tools and guidelines" is the fourth report provided on the development of the DFA method, which is one of the main components of the MUSAE Factory Model Pack and overall MUSAE project. This deliverable presents the final refinement of the DFA tools and guidelines, following the second Art-Tech residency and prototyping phase (M33).

Previously developed D2.4 "DFA tools and Guidelines (c)" provides a detailed description of the latest developments in the Design Futures Art-Driven (DFA) method, focusing on its implementation, refinement, and integration of digital tools to enhance collaboration between artists and companies. It expanded on the EXPLORE phase and introduced key modifications based on feedback from the first residency. Additionally, it describes the GENERATE phase of the method provided to the artists and companies collaborating in the second residency.

2. General overview of the final DFA method

The **Design Futures Art-driven (DFA) Method** is the innovative approach created by MUSAE that combines **Futures Thinking**, **Design Thinking**, and **Art Thinking** to help companies navigate uncertainty, anticipate change, envision more sustainable, inclusive, and interconnected futures, and design transformative solutions.

In an era of accelerated transformations, traditional design methods are no longer sufficient to address global challenges such as climate change, digital transition, evolving consumption patterns, and the growing interdependence between humans, technology, and other species. Businesses must move beyond responding to the present — they must learn to design the future.
The DFA Method was developed precisely to address this need, offering a **structured yet flexible process** that integrates tools from both design and the arts, enabling synergistic collaboration between artists, designers, technologists, and enterprises. It supports the anticipation of innovation impacts and the design of **ethical, equitable, and regenerative** solutions.

Unlike classical Design Thinking, the DFA Method introduces a **first, expanded diamond phase**, inspired by the **Futures Cone** (Voros, 2001), broadening the design perspective toward the future. This allows exploration of multiple futures - not only from a human-centred perspective but also from a **more-than-human** one, recognising the interconnectedness between ecosystems, artificial intelligence, and interspecies collaboration.

The method unfolds in **four key phases**, powered by **GenAI** (deeply explained in D2.2 and D2.3) that enhances creative thinking and accelerates the generation of transformative ideas:

- **Horizon Scanning**: Exploring macro-trends, emerging signals, and STEEP (Social, Technological, Economic, Environmental, Political) drivers to identify innovation opportunities.
- **Visioning**: Building alternative future scenarios to explore strategic implications and inform design decisions.
- **Ideating**: Translating scenarios into speculative artefacts (personas, objects, future narratives) to make innovation opportunities tangible.
- **Prototyping**: Developing and validating technological prototypes through an iterative process to ensure effectiveness and real-world impact.

To generate scenarios, concepts and develop the final prototype, each step of the DFA method includes sequential activities with specific objectives and instructions. The DFA method categorises activities into three main types (Fig. 1):

- **Co-design Sessions** – Collaborative workshops where artists and companies work together. These are “Emotions exploration”, “Futures exploration”, “Challenge exploration”, “Ideas exploration”.
- **Individual and Iterative Activities** – Tasks that artists and companies can complete independently or with the support of AI tools. These are “Research iteration”, “Domain

building", "Scenario building", "Inspirational research", "Concept(s) development", "Concept feasibility", "Prototype development iteration"

- **Assessment Meetings** – Checkpoints where artists and companies review progress, validate advancements, and make collective decisions on the next steps. These are: "Domain assessment", "Scenarios assessment", "Concept(s) assessment", "Prototype assessment"

In the DFA method, artists, companies, and AI-powered tools collaborate to envision and shape potential futures. This synergy is visually represented by the **wave** in the DFA model, symbolizing the fluid and dynamic interaction among all participants throughout the process.

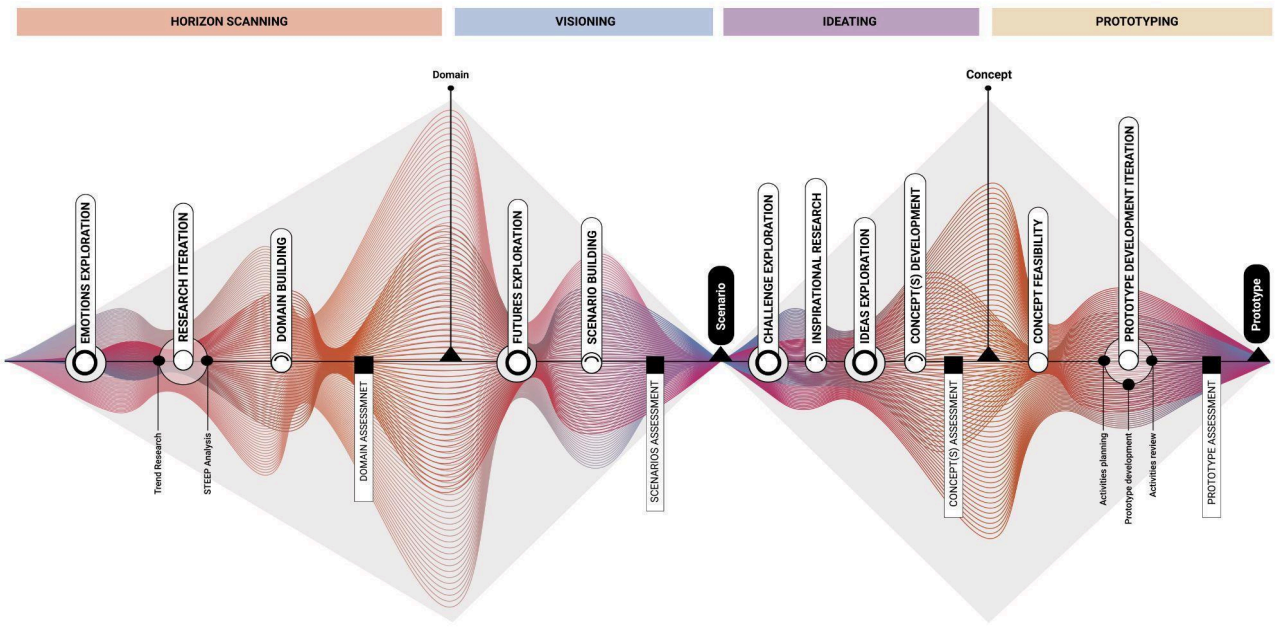

Fig 1. Visualization of the final version of the DFA method, highlighting the different activities included in each step

The method is composed of two essential elements:

- A **digital platform** that provides descriptions of each phase, tools, and guidelines.
- A **collaborative board hosted on Miroverse** to support co-creation and teamwork.

2.1 Why the method is Innovative

The Design Future Art-driven (DFA) method introduces a novel approach to innovation by integrating artistic sensitivity, design strategy, and futures literacy. Its innovation lies in how it reframes the role of creativity in tackling complex challenges, embedding imagination, ethics, and systems thinking at the core of transformative processes:

- **Design and Art-based**: Combines strategic and creative tools with artistic practices to unlock experiential, emotion-driven engagement and unconventional thinking..
- **Hybrid thinking**: Merges Design, Art, and Futures Thinking to shape inclusive, sustainable and participatory innovation pathways.

- **More-than-Human perspective**: Embraces human-tech-ecosystem interdependence to enable regenerative solutions that go beyond anthropocentric views.
- **Generative AI integration**: Enhances every phase—Horizon Scanning, Visioning, Ideating, Prototyping—by amplifying creative exploration and process efficiency.
- **People & Planet-centred**: Anchors innovation in ethical values with tangible impact on businesses and communities.
- **Scalable & open-source**: Ensures wide adoption through freely accessible, adaptable tools on an open online platform.

2.2 Validation

The DFA Method has been successfully tested in the MUSAE Project through **2 Art-Tech residencies** (Fig.2), demonstrating its potential to drive business transformation and translate vision into actionable outcomes. Through a collaborative model involving artists, designers, technologists, and SMEs, the method engaged **23 artists and 11 SMEs** in the co-creation of **12 future scenarios** and **11 AI-, robotics-, and wearable-based prototypes**, addressing three key trends:

- Reducing the carbon footprint of food habits
- The role of food in holistic wellbeing
- Rethinking the food value chain

All tools and activities are **open-source** and accessible via the dedicated web platform, enabling dissemination and future exploitation. The DFA Method is part of the **Factory Model Pack**.

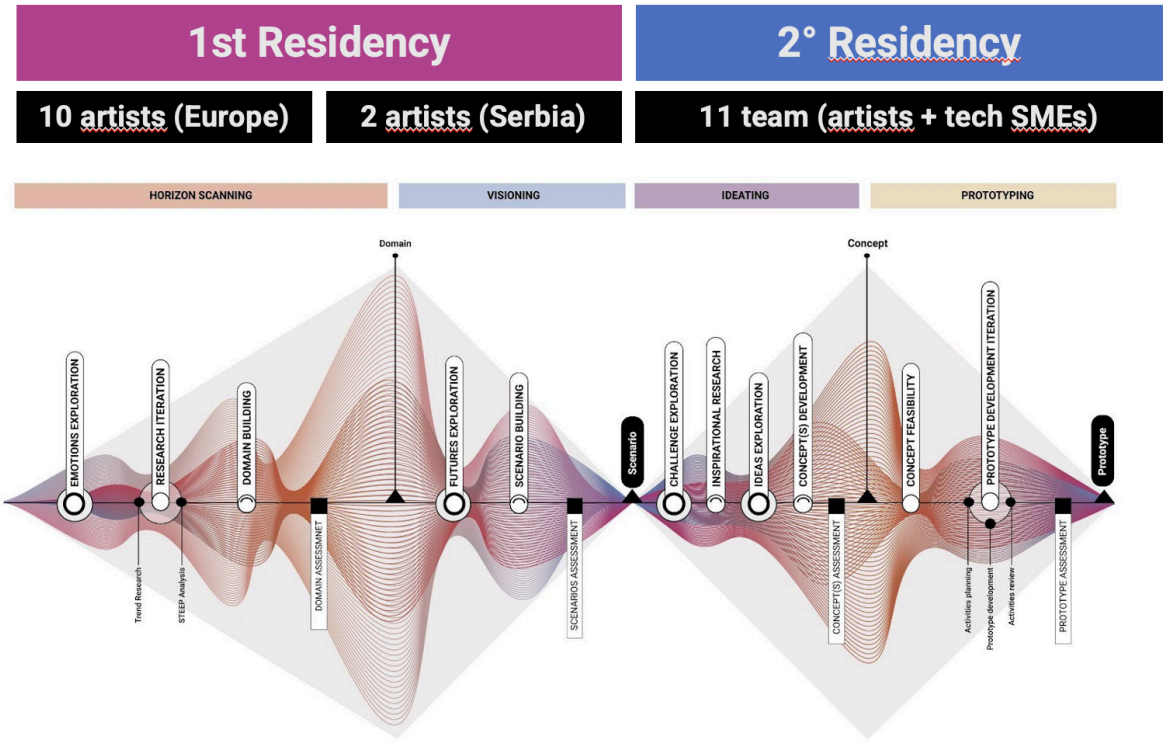

Fig 2.Visualization of the Art-Tech residencies organized to test the DFA method

2.3 A Method for Business Transformation

Adopting the DFA Method facilitates **digital and sustainable transition** through a **People & Planet-Centred** lens, generating positive territorial impact on companies and local communities. It is a powerful tool to **anticipate the impact of technologies** on people and the environment, fostering inclusive, future-oriented narratives and enhancing societal acceptance of innovation.

Thanks to its dissemination through **European Digital Innovation Hubs (EDIHs)** — initiated by the project partners **MADE** and **ETF** — the method is positioned as a **strategic service** for companies in their networks.

The DFA Method emerges as a forward-looking tool to foster **resilient, visionary innovation ecosystems**.

Website: https://musae.starts.eu/

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3. Access the DFA through the Factory Model Pack

The DFA method and the tools developed are available through the Factory Model Pack. The

Factory Model Pack is accessible via the interactive visual map (Fig. 3) on the MUSAE website at this link https://musae.starts.eu/factory-model-pack/

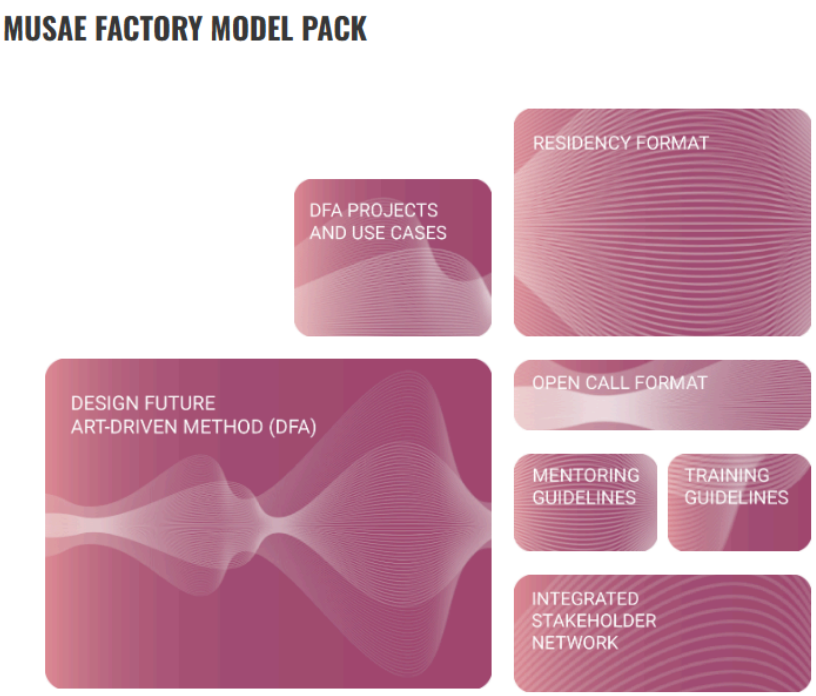

Fig. 3. Interactive visual map of the Factory Model Pack on the MUSAE website

The DFA indeed represents the **methodological resource** (Fig. 4) to help DIHs apply a future-oriented innovation process. The DFA method offers a structured process for innovation that is future-oriented and creativity driven. Through the interactive map of the MUSAE Factory model pack, you can access (Fig. 5).:

- the dedicated DFA platform, which includes all the guidelines, activities and tools to apply the method. The website is open and accessible to EDIHs, artists, and companies via a shared link. Link to the DFA platform: https://www.figma.com/proto/Aq1pAgjJL1aEdewDlcwgLt/DFA-platform---FINAL-VERSION?node-id=4435-2296&t=2pBoQ24nGEP2oiOp-1
- the Miro board, which is the organized workspace to facilitate Art-Tech collaboration throughout the process. It allows artists, companies, and EDIHs (acting as mentors) to actively engage with the DFA method, document their findings, and utilize the provided tools within a single, integrated workspace. Link to the Miro board on Miroverse: https://miro.com/miroverse/design-futures-artdriven-method/

The two platforms are seamlessly connected, with direct access to the Miro Board from the Figma platform. This integration ensures a smooth workflow, fostering efficient collaboration, streamlined processes, and a cohesive digital environment for successfully implementing the DFA method.

The methodological resources of the pack also includes a collection of use cases and project examples, showcasing the future scenarios, concepts, and prototypes resulted from the application of the DFA method. In particular this Project refers to the results of the art-tech

residencies performed during the MUSAE Project on the topic of "Food as Medicine". Link to "Future scenarios & Prototypes in Food as Medicine": https://musae.starts.eu/activities-dfa-projects/

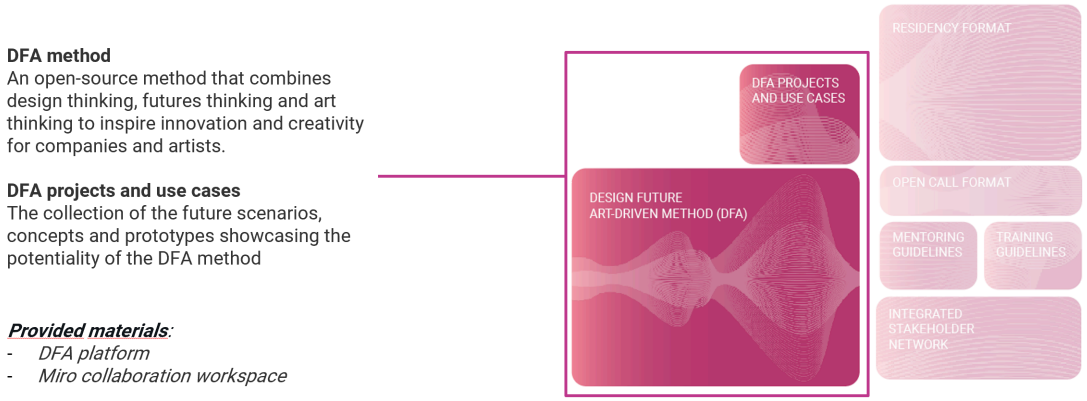

Fig. 4. Visualization of the methodological resources included in the MUSAE Factory model pack

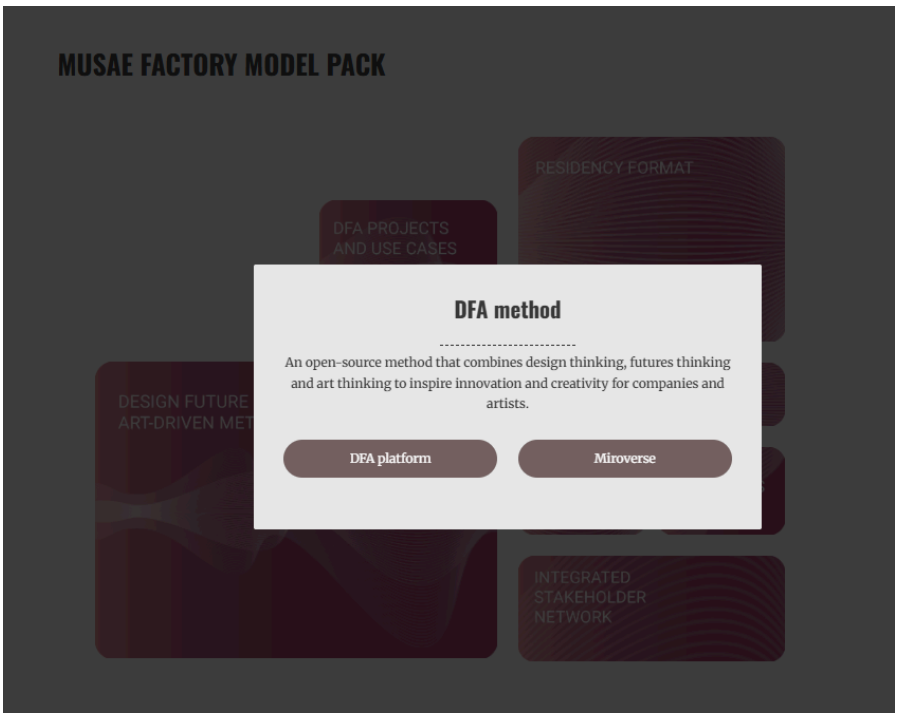

Fig. 5. Resources to apply the DFA method

3.1 Website, orientation Guide and Introductory course for EDIH and educators

EDIH that approach the DFA method and the pack, can learn about its potential and uses thanks to different sources, all available through the MUSAE website.

The dedicated webpage "DFA method" on the MUSAE website: provides an overall description of the method through a video and description of the different steps and its value in starting to

know and understand the method. Link: https://musae.starts.eu/dfa-method/:

- The *orientation guide* (Fig. 17) which is a document explaining what is included in the pack and the role of each resource. Here is explained the role of the DFA as a methodological resource. The guide is available at this link https://starts.eu/wp-content/uploads/Factory-Model_Orientation-guidelines.pdf
- An *Introductory course* composed by four videos that will give an explanation of the following topics, one of which is fully dedicated to explaining the DFA method, how to access the tools and methods through the pack, how to navigate the DFA platform and all the tools available, and how to navigate inside the MIRO board. The video is available at this link *The DFA method*

Other videos are about the MUSAE Factory Model Pack , Open call guidelines, Facilitation and Mentoring guidelines

A key secondary target group of the MUSAE Project consists of Art&Design educators and Higher Education Institutes, which could play a crucial role in integrating the DFA method into academic curricula. By equipping educators with these tools, students gain the ability to anticipate and design for future challenges, strengthening competencies that will be essential for tomorrow's job market.

POLIMI and UB-Art have already take the lead by integrating the DFA method into their programs, training several educators within their institutions. Building on this experience, the project will extend its outreach through targeted initiatives. For example, a dedicated workshop will be organized during **Creative Skills Week 2025**, engaging an international community of educators and practitioners from the Creative and Cultural Industries, in collaboration with the **ELIA network**.

Additionally, a structured dissemination strategy is underway to reach educators and schools through major academic and creative networks such as **Cumulus** and **ELIA**, ensuring that the DFA method is widely accessible and adopted in design education across Europe and beyond.

Therefore, a dedicated orientation guide has been built for supporting educators and facilitators who wish to apply the Design Futures Art-driven (DFA) Method in their teaching or collaborative activities. It provides a clear overview of the available resources about the DFA available on both the website and the Factory Pack, and how to integrate them into their design-led futures learning paths. The guide is available at this link https://starts.eu/wp-content/uploads/DFA-Orientation-Guide-for-EDU.pdf

4. Awards

The Design Futures Art-Driven Method has been selected for inclusion in the ADI Design Index 2025, one of the most prestigious design awards in the world https://www.adi-design.org/adi-design-index.html.

Public communication of the award is under embargo until Oct 15, 2025.

This will ensure a high visibility of the method and its results as they will be featured across ADI's official channels, events, and exhibitions, and is now eligible for the Compasso d'Oro Award. ADI (Associazione per il Disegno Industriale) adi-design.org is the Industrial Design Association and has managed the Compasso d'Oro, Europe's oldest and most respected design award, since 1956. The ADI Foundation, Compasso d'Oro Collection, preserves and curates the awarded objects and documentation, supports historical research, and organises in-depth exhibitions.

ANNEX I present the official notification letter received by ADI that as been translated here below as this recognition involves the European Commission.

Translated Email received by ADI to notify the award

Dear all,

We are pleased to inform you that the ADI Permanent Design Observatory has selected your project for publication in the ADI Design Index 2025.

We kindly ask you to keep this news confidential until the official presentation, which will take place in Milan on October 15, 2025. Therefore, we recommend an embargo on any external communication of any kind until that date. If you have any questions or need further information, please contact the ADI secretariat.

As in previous years, in order to enhance the visibility of the selected companies and products, ADI has decided to offer the opportunity to take part in a broader communication system. A traveling exhibition will involve the general public and international stakeholders. We will send you detailed information in the coming days.

Congratulations on your achievement.

Best regards,
ADI Design Index and Compasso d'Oro Organization Office

Translated e-mail attachement

ADI – Association for Industrial Design
Milan, May 29, 2025

Dear all,

We are pleased to inform you that the ADI Permanent Design Observatory has selected your product for publication in the ADI Design Index 2025:

Design Futures Art-Driven Method

The ADI Design Index 2025 represents the first volume in the biennial cycle that selects and collects the products eligible for the Compasso d'Oro ADI Award 2026. Therefore, your achievement is of great significance.

The Compasso d'Oro Award, conceived in 1954 by La Rinascente and subsequently entrusted to ADI - which has managed it continuously since 1956 - is the most prestigious recognition of quality in the production and design of goods, services, processes, and systems in Italian design. The award has resulted in the largest historical collection of design works, which was declared in 2004 a "national heritage of cultural interest" (Ministerial Decree of 22.04.2004).

Please remember that news of your selection in the ADI Design Index 2025 must remain strictly confidential and not be disclosed to the press or any third parties before the official presentation on October 15, 2025.

Since 2009, the ADI Design Index has also served as the annual selection basis for the National Innovation Award ("Award of Awards"), under the patronage of the President of the Republic. Every year, ADI identifies three products from those published in the Index that are particularly significant in terms of innovation. These receive the ADI Design Index Innovation Award and are then granted the prestigious "Award of Awards".

The ADI Executive Board and Territorial Delegation offer you their warmest congratulations on this achievement and thank you for the commitment and enthusiasm you bring every day to the challenging work of "building a culture of enterprise" in our country.

Warm regards,
Luciano Galimberti
President, ADI

5. Conclusion: values and benefits

Art-tech collaborations – where artists engage with scientists, companies, and technologists – are increasingly recognized as powerful enablers of digital, sustainable and societal transformation. These collaborations not only fuel innovation but also bring critical reflection on the ethical, social, and environmental implications of emerging technologies. The Design Future Art-driven (DFA) method offers a structured and replicable framework for integrating creativity, foresight, and strategic planning into innovation ecosystems. Through the DFA Method, stakeholders can access:

- Future-driven insights – by identifying emerging trends, scanning signals, and building future scenarios to anticipate and respond to upcoming challenges.
- Creative disruption – using artistic approaches to reframe problems, provoke new questions, and stimulate transformative ideas that go beyond conventional solutions.
- Strategic collaboration – enabling artists, technologists, SMEs, researchers, and public actors to co-create future-ready solutions aligned with ethical and sustainable goals.

The method brings tangible benefits to a wide range of stakeholders:

- SMEs and tech companies gain tools to develop future-proof products and services, improve user experience through artistic integration, and embed sustainability and foresight into their processes.
- European Digital Innovation Hubs (EDIHs) can differentiate their service offering, strengthen their support for SMEs, and foster new opportunities through art-driven innovation frameworks.
- Artists and designers gain access to cutting-edge AI, robotics, and tech environments, while influencing the direction of sustainable innovation.
- Academia and research institutions can apply the method in educational settings,

promote interdisciplinary collaboration, and equip students with critical design and foresight skills for future employability.

- **Public sector actors and policymakers** benefit from integrating design principles into digital transformation strategies, shaping future-oriented policies in areas such as food, health, and climate.

By enabling inclusive, more-than-human, and future-conscious innovation, the DFA Method supports the transition toward regenerative, ethical, and scalable solutions—empowering stakeholders to navigate complexity and co-create impactful futures.

The sustainability and wider adoption of the DFA method will be driven by the Model Transfer and Exploitation Plan (D6.6), which guarantees continued access, active promotion, and scalability beyond the project's duration. This plan will create a platform for ongoing innovation, enabling the DFA method to amplify its impact on key Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), such as **SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-Being** and **SDG 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production**, where the MUSAE project has already demonstrated positive outcomes.

Through the DFA approach, the **Factory Model** will continue exploring future scenarios related to **Food and Health**, generating industrial prototypes that enhance both physical and mental well-being. More broadly, the DFA method—embedded within the MUSAE Factory Model—aims to support **SMEs and public institutions** in remaining competitive by fostering new skills, innovative business models, and advanced design-driven methodologies.

Furthermore, the method will ensure **open access** to DFA tools and the knowledge developed through experimental activities, making them available to citizens and companies to promote a **fair and inclusive transition**. By doing so, the DFA method contributes to the overarching objectives of the **European Green Deal** while empowering SMEs to thrive in a market shaped by **green and digital technologies**.