

## Advisory Committee Structures of Chinese Design Schools Research From the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Perspective

Fan Chen, Lin Li and Jing-Yi Yang  
[https://doi.org/10.21606/drs\\_lxd2021.13.176](https://doi.org/10.21606/drs_lxd2021.13.176)

The design and education fields have been starting to pay attention to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) ever since 2019, and the following two events would affirm this tendency. Firstly, the committee of the iF Design Award triggered to adopt SDGs as their evaluation standard. Secondly, the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings began to assess the performance of 768 universities from 85 countries against SDGs. This reflects a broader consideration towards sustainability has been establishing. Based on the context, this study inquired about the sustainable quality of nine educational institutions of design in China under an advisory committee perspective, which has worked to suggest the future direction of the institution. The researchers made use of comparative methodology to explore each institution's developing trend and their specialties. After qualitative and quantitative analysis, the researchers have found the limitations involving the diversity, the scale, and the sustainability of these objects, then recommended the corresponding suggestions expecting to create an environment, which would lead design education to a more sustainable future.

Keywords: design education; advisory committee; Sustainable Development Goals; future trend

### Background

The advisory committee is a strategic consulting system set up to improve performance in the process of corporate management. It is composed of experts or scholars from inside and outside the industry with varying numbers of experts or scholars, and through regular gatherings, they can make suggestions for the future development of the company. Corporate governance is the mission of the advisory committee, which refers to the relationship between various stakeholders used to make and control an organization's strategic direction and corporate performance. Its core is to seek ways to ensure the effectiveness of strategic decisions. The system stipulates that the term of committee members is limited. After expiration, a new member will be elected through voting or internal appointment. After several years of development, the advisory committee system has spilled from commercial institutions to other social fields, such as medical care, education, leisure and entertainment. Among them, with the in-depth integration of government, industry, education, and research, higher education institutions have increasingly coordinated development with commerce, accelerating the efficiency of knowledge transformation. In this process, universities gradually iterated from passive dependence on external investment to actively profitable 'academic enterprises', which further broke the barrier between higher education and the external society, and made academic research activities more sustainable and serve the real world. An important step to achieve this leap is the establishment of a university advisory committee system.

Although the titles of the advisory committees of universities are slightly different, such as academic committees, advisory committees, and education fund councils, of which they are essential to find a way out for future development. On the other hand, with the advancement of social technology, the connotation of sustainable development has been extended from the pure protection of the natural environment to the concern for the future development of human beings. In 2015, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals were promulgated. It can be seen as an iteration of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. It covers 17 goals related to the development of human society, from natural ecological protection to personal



This work is licensed under a  
[Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-Share Alike 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/).  
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>

future development (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, n.d.). This will further expand the scope of sustainable development.

Interdisciplinarity is one of the most important features of design education today, which brings new opportunities for design education and the suggestions of industry professionals will also bring new development momentum. This study took the composition of the advisory committees of nine design schools in China as the research objects, and referred to SDGs to analyze the diversity from the perspective of sustainable development, so as to explore its future tendency. With the expansion of the scale of the advisory committee and the diversification of its members, it can obtain key resources, and these resources will inevitably expand the scope of business activities and bring new strategic information (Pearce & Zahra, 1991). With the further opening of higher education, the operation of the design schools will be more closely connected with the real world, and the diverse backgrounds of its committee members will help this process.

## Literature Review

In papers related to sustainable design education research, the authors affirmed the importance of sustainable design education. However, they had different definitions of the concept of sustainable design, so different perspectives for analyzing the current situation of sustainable design education assisted this study to view a wider picture of this field.

Zhang & Gibson (2021) regarded studying abroad (exchange) as a mean of sustainable education, and studied how short-term study programs abroad with the theme of sustainable development affect students' attitudes and behaviors. Using qualitative analysis tools, the authors interviewed 31 students studying abroad to identify and discuss the behavior changes of the participants. Among them, the behavioral changes recognized by the participants mainly related to lifestyle, professional development, and responsible travel behavior. Effective project design elements include: emotion, cognition, and action. In addition, the research results suggested revising the value-belief-norm model to add more motivation, and the weight of responsibility may need to be reassessed.

Zhou (2020) explained the widespread dissemination of art and design education through the interpretation of environmental ethics, the social responsibilities of contemporary art and design teachers, and the misunderstandings about sustainable design in current art and design education. Then the author suggested the importance of popularizing environmental ethics, and the main way to eliminate these misunderstandings: strengthening environmental ethics education and integrating sustainable design principles into professional design education and practice. Zhou listed three passive sustainable cognition: 1. People-oriented may be the opposition between man and nature; 2. Sustainable design should not be a new style or genre; 3. Sustainable design does not necessarily save money.

Xiong (2015) regarded ecological sustainability as an evaluation criterion for the sustainability of design education, and conducted a comparative study on the current situation of sustainable design education in art design majors in Chinese and American universities. The study mainly analyzes the system, strategy, and practice of sustainable design education in the United States, and horizontally compares the status quo and limitations of Chinese sustainable design education. The paper puts forward three characteristics of sustainable design education in American universities: 1. Sustainable design education was professional and multi-level; 2. Environmental education was necessary and common in sustainable design education; 3. Multi-party support for sustainable design education had a driving force in college education. The main form was the main body of the school, government laws, industry guidance, expert, and business participation to meet the educational needs of students and practitioners. China was rich in various sustainable design education activities, and there were many forums, competitions, exhibitions, and societies related to sustainable design. Many universities had established academic research institutions such as sustainable design institutes and laboratories. The limitation was that these were all design research institutions and temporary activity organizations settled in well-known colleges and universities. They were not long-term education mechanisms. The popular education research on sustainable design was rarely mentioned. The sustainable design education in the art and design of Chinese colleges and universities appeared to be very weak in terms of content, form, means, methods, and ultimate educational goals. The sustainable design education system had not yet been formed. The main problems comprised six parts: 1. Its status had not been promoted; 2. Its ideas had not penetrated into the entire educational concept; 3. Teachers were lacking; 4. Its standards were almost blank; 5. There was no typical case of school-enterprise integration, enterprises were either eager for quick success and short-term profit without long-term development, or neglected environmental protection policy constraints, resulting in sustainable design education unable to have a benign communication with the production process; 6. Lack of comprehensive popularization and promotion, which was mainly manifested in

the differences in regional and economic levels.

Xiao (2015) believed that sustainable design aimed to provide a creative overall solution. This creativity was based on a systematic perspective, re-integrating existing raw materials, technology, funds, resources, and represents a sustainable way that takes into account economic development, environmental protection, social harmony, and cultural inheritance. The paper's rethinking of China's sustainable fashion design education is firstly based on the re-cognition and reflection of traditional Chinese culture in the context of globalization; secondly, it is the source of modern design concepts in the context of sustainability. Then the author analyzed the theoretical model of design education in Sri Lanka. Finally, by re-understanding the essence of design under the background of sustainable development, the author rethought the problems that may be faced by sustainable design education in the context of modern design. The author believed that today's research on sustainable design was often out of touch with teaching practice. To narrow these gaps, colleges and universities should promote the connection between research and teaching. On the other hand, since the practical requirements contained in sustainable design were more than previous design concepts, it is particularly important to strengthen the cooperative relationship between education and enterprises.

Xie (2015) took the architectural design engineering subject as an example and divided the sustainable design course into four parts: professional courses (design courses/studio), other core courses, sustainable knowledge and theory, and methods and skills training. Based on the specific analysis of the architectural design courses of the University of Nottingham and Hunan University, it was recommended that China's sustainable design education learns from the European teaching model, emphasizing the professional relevance and practicality of educational methods, interdisciplinary uniformity, lifelong continuity, strengthened teamwork training, and research capabilities.

Long et al. (2014) noted that the conceptual connection between studying abroad and sustainable development education was a good match. Given that sustainability is a global issue, cultivating global awareness through studying abroad may help students have a more comprehensive understanding of sustainability. In addition, travel enables people to learn about other cultures, develop local attachments, and support the local economy, which may contribute to the sustainable development of the destination. Through literature research, it was found that sustainable education in most universities was limited to the teaching level, and just implemented their educational goals through a series of activities. In this case, this study intended to propose an administrative perspective, the diversification of advisory committee, to look into sustainable education.

## **Methodology**

This study utilized a mixed methodology to inquire about the system of advisory committees in Chinese design schools. In detail, the researchers investigated the members of nine advisory committees against SDGs, which were affiliated to Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA), Hunan University (HNU), Jiangnan University (JNU), Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST), Shanghai University (SHU), Shanghai Jiao Tong University (SJTU), Suzhou University (SU), Tongji University (TJU), and Wuhan University of Technology (WHUT) respectively. The above step was intended to explore the diversity of the Industry-University-Research partnership among higher education institutions. Firstly, the researchers identified the definitions of sustainable design education and its latest progress, this was to recognize the gaps within the field. Then, the academic or professional backgrounds of advisors were scrutinized qualitatively and corresponded to the 17 items of the SDGs (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, n.d.), with which to produce nine tables and pie charts of outcomes. This quantitative analysis process was to visualize the emphasis of the educational strategy of each institution. Therefore, their future trend of design education would be clearly expressed by comparative observation. It was noted that all of the titles of SDGs were replaced by their order numbers, such as 'Goal 1. No Poverty' was replaced by '1' in the tables, which was for type settings. After data analysis, the researchers conducted a series of interviews with the related professionals, which aimed to critically review the research outcomes and adjust the future direction of this study.

## **Analysis and Discussion**

According to the SDGs system, the professional fields of advisors have been represented in pie charts. Next, the researchers will comparatively explain the situation.

## Central Academy of Fine Arts

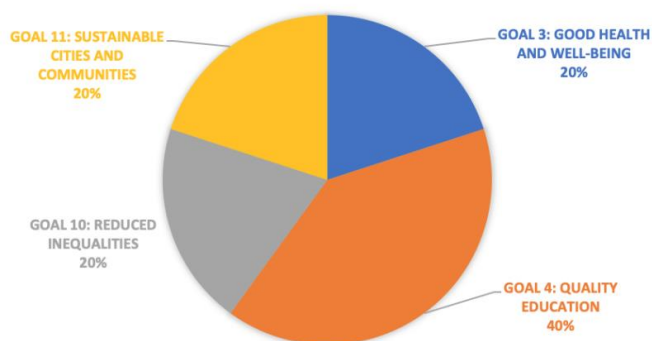


Figure 1. Pie chart of the constitution of design advisors in CAFA, made by the authors.

The academic committee is the highest academic institution of CAFA. It generates and exercises its functions and powers in accordance with regulations, and coordinates the decision-making, deliberation, evaluation, and consultation of academic affairs on the school's discipline construction, academic evaluation, and academic development. It also promotes the training of professional talents in various disciplines and the continuous improvement of academic research levels in the academy. The academic committee serves the CAFA's development strategy, adheres to the principles of fairness, justice, and openness, advocates academic freedom, encourages academic innovation, and maintains the academic reputation (Central Academy of Fine Arts, 2018). The academic committee of CAFA consists of ten members, all of them are affiliated with the academy. Their professional fields related to SDGs can be summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. SDGs professional fields of CAFA academic committee members, made by the authors.

1 Member	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Member 1																	
Member 2																	
Member 3																	
Member 4																	
Member 5										•							
Member 6			•	•													
Member 7											•						
Member 8				•													
Member 9																	
Member 10																	

It is indicated in the pie chart that most members have contributed in the Quality Education area, which may result from their faculty status. Besides, there are three advisors focus on Goals 3, 10, and 11 respectively according to the Table 1. In general, as an art academy, CAFA tends to engage art-related professionals in their think tank, such as fine art and art history.

Extra-curricular pedagogy can be regarded as a supplement toward schooling education, which facilitates the transfer between knowledge and empirical practice. Until now, CAFA possesses 71 education bases out of the campus, they involved 18 provinces and two province-level municipalities (Central Academy of Fine Arts, n.d.). The partnership assembles a cohort of artists, designers, engineers, educators, and politicians, who contribute ideas to the extra-curricular teaching as a think tank by the approach of conducting projects. This can be an advantage compared to comprehensive universities. Yet, these suggestion-providers have not engaged in the advisory committee. To some extent, the diversification and inclusion of this committee have been decreased, then its status quo just like a decision-making body for administrative demands.

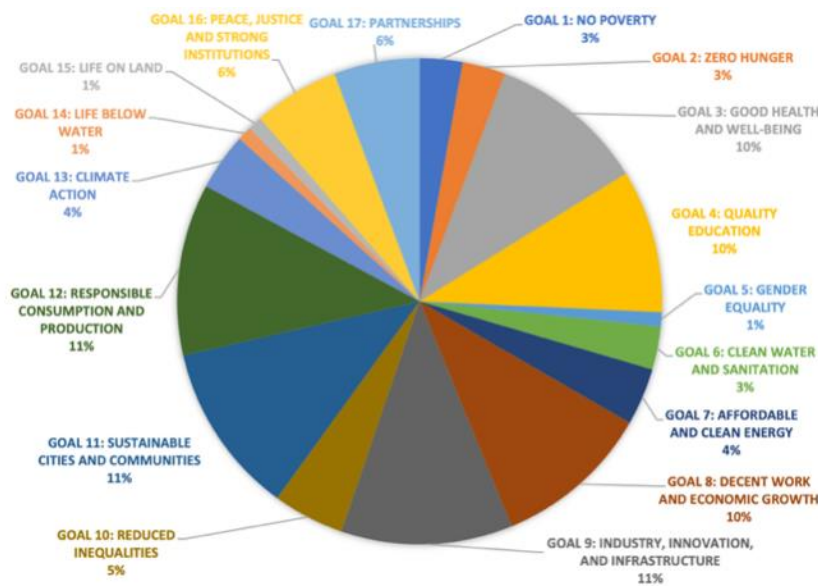


Figure 2. Pie chart of the constitution of design advisors in HNU, made by the authors.

As is shown in the pie chart (Figure 2), advisors of HNU are involved in all seventeen areas of SDGs, which basically reflects the inclusive characteristic of a comprehensive university. Among the goals, all of the twelve advisors have focused on Goals 9, 11, and 12, which relate to industrial design and environmental design (Table 2). They are two of the most advanced subjects in the HNU design field and even in the local educational field.

Table 2. SDGs professional fields of HNU academic committee members, made by the authors.

Member	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Member 1			•	•			•		•	•	•	•				•	•
Member 2	•	•	•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•				•	•
Member 3			•	•	•			•	•	•	•	•				•	•
Member 4			•					•	•		•	•					
Member 5			•		•			•	•		•	•	•				
Member 6	•	•	•	•				•	•	•	•	•					
Member 7			•	•				•	•		•	•					
Member 8	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•
Member 9			•	•				•	•		•	•					
Member 10			•	•		•	•	•	•		•	•	•			•	•
Member 11				•				•	•		•	•					
Member 12			•	•				•	•		•	•	•		•	•	•

The administrative management structure of The HNU School of Design is composed of five parts: party committee, academic committee, teaching committee, monitoring group, and labor union (School of Design, Hunan University, 2017). It is interesting to find that the members of the three parts with most members, academic committee, teaching committee, and monitoring group, belong to the same cohort. Under this situation, works like the administration will be easy to handle, for they share the same ideas. Yet, working on innovation probably decreases due to the lack of diversification in the teams, especially in the field of academic and design practice.

Since 2009, HNU design school launched the New Channel project to explore the path of transforming local cultural resources into an industrial value with residents in Hunan, Chongqing, Sichuan, Xinjiang, Qinghai, Inner Mongolia, and Yunnan (Hunan Industrial Design Association, n.d.). This initiative has been supported by their

government and enterprises as well. More than ten years' cultivation enables the project with an increasing influence worldwide. In addition, it will be more diversified if the school involves the local stakeholders in the advisory committee, and customizes a rational term of office against the lean management thinking (Dennis, 2015).

### Jiangnan University

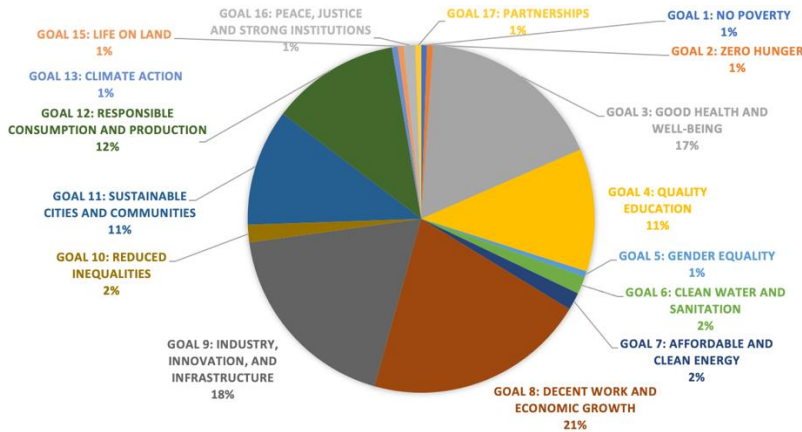


Figure 3. Pie chart of the constitution of design advisors in JNU, made by the authors.

Different from the other schools, the advisory committee of JNU is organized according to the form of a fund council, Jiangnan University Design Education Development Foundation (DEDF), established in 2018 and involving 39 members (School of Design, Jiangnan University, n.d.). The board of DEDF directors is elected from the members of the foundation and serves a term of five years. The board consists of one chairman, several deputy directors, one secretary-general and several deputy secretaries-general. The board is the decision-making body that designs the collection, use, and management of the fund. The members of the board meet once a year. Events that have an important impact on the DEDF must be voted by all directors and approved by more than half of them. Besides, the establishment of the board will build an important platform for peer exchanges. It will not only promote the development of the school's discipline construction, talent training, and scientific research, but also benefit the corporate brand and reputation.

Table 3. SDGs professional fields of JNU academic committee members, made by the authors.

Member	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Member 1				•				•	•								
Member 2	•	•	•	•				•	•			•					
Member 3			•	•				•	•	•	•	•					
Member 4								•	•			•					
Member 5				•				•	•			•					
Member 6			•					•	•			•					
Member 7			•	•		•	•	•	•		•	•			•		
Member 8			•					•	•								
Member 9			•	•				•	•		•	•					
Member 10								•	•								
Member 11			•					•	•		•	•					
Member 12			•					•	•		•						
Member 13				•												•	
Member 14			•	•				•	•		•	•					
Member 15			•					•	•								
Member 16			•	•				•	•		•	•					
Member 17			•	•	•	•	•	•			•		•			•	•
Member 18								•	•								

Member 19			•					•	•										
Member 20			•					•	•										
Member 21			•					•	•										
Member 22			•	•				•	•			•	•						
Member 23			•					•	•			•							
Member 24			•	•				•	•	•		•	•						
Member 25			•					•	•			•	•						
Member 26			•	•				•	•				•						
Member 27			•					•											
Member 28			•					•	•			•	•						
Member 29			•	•				•	•			•	•						
Member 30			•					•	•										
Member 31			•					•											
Member 32			•	•				•	•				•						
Member 33			•	•		•	•	•	•	•		•	•						
Member 34			•	•				•	•			•	•						
Member 35			•	•				•	•			•							
Member 36			•	•				•	•			•	•						
Member 37			•					•	•			•	•						
Member 38				•				•											
Member 39			•	•				•	•			•	•						

The constitution of the fund council suggests a strong connection between the school and the industry: more than 60 percent of directors are CEOs or chairman of their companies. Apart from school faculties, most directors are committed to medical treatment, business, infrastructure, sustainable life, and responsible manufacturing, according to the statistics. Generally, JNU owns the largest number of advisors among the nine institutions.

Additionally, advisors mainly come from Wuxi, Hangzhou, and Shanghai, and belong to design consultancies or manufactures (School of Design, Jiangnan University, n.d.). Since Herman Schneider proposed the cooperative education model in 1906 (Wikipedia, n.d.), the Industry-University-Research (IUR) partnership has been iterated several times: later were added the parties of politics, finance, service, and application until the Shandong government launched the Implementation Opinions of the People's Government of Shandong Province on Building an Innovation and Entrepreneurship Community of Government, Industry, University, Research, Funding, Service, and Application (Shandong Provincial People's Government, 2019). This can be regarded as a tendency during the cooperation between fields, and a growing number of cases have proved that diversification and inclusion relate to the sustainable development of organizations.

## Macau University of Science and Technology

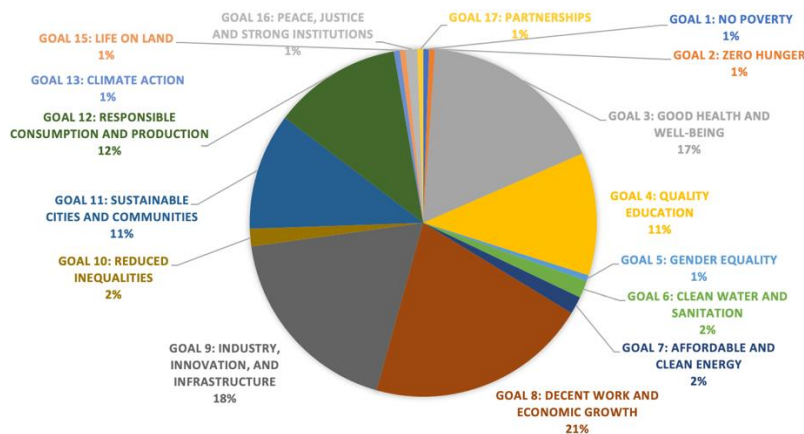


Figure 4. Pie chart of the constitution of design advisors in MUST, made by the authors.

As one of the special administrative regions of China, the MUST advisory committee is of reference for the future development of design disciplines in mainland China and the promotion of cross-strait cooperation. Benefiting from the leadership of Mr. Bo LU, the President of Macau Daily, the committee has engaged a number of professionals who come from the media and communication field. In addition, people who belonged to public or private organizations are also committed to this group, like the Dean of Macau Art Academy, the President of Macau Designers Association, the Dean of Chinese Culture International Communication Research Institute, and the President of China Industrial Design Association. Most of them focused on education, business, and infrastructure, this responds to the program settings of MUST (Macau University of Science and Technology, n.d.).

Table 4. SDGs professional fields of MUST academic committee members, made by the authors.

Member	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Member 1	•	•	•	•													
Member 2			•	•				•	•		•					•	
Member 3	•	•	•	•				•	•		•					•	•
Member 4									•								
Member 5								•	•		•	•					•
Member 6			•	•				•	•	•						•	•
Member 7				•				•	•		•					•	•
Member 8			•	•				•	•		•	•					
Member 9								•	•								
Member 10				•					•								
Member 11	•	•	•	•				•	•	•	•	•				•	•
Member 12				•				•	•	•	•					•	•

Benefitting from the geographic and political advantage, Macau has engaged a quantity of innovative and research talents for the design education field from Hongkong, Taiwan, mainland, and foreign. Developed industries of service and entertainment, such as gambling travel, endow Macau with advanced design news. Given this condition, a popular lifestyle can be strong support for the direction of MUST design education, which may provide strategic ideas for the committee.



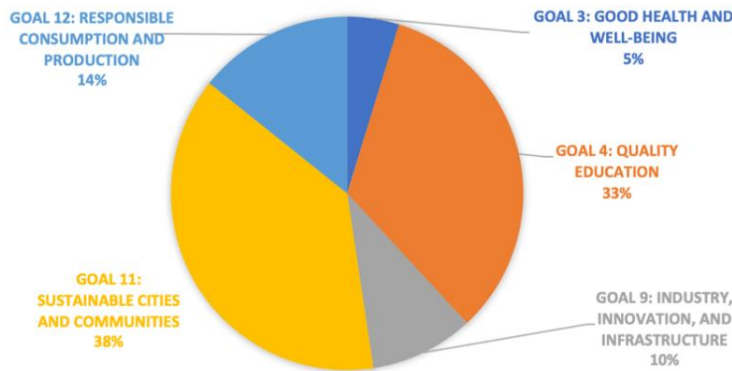


Figure 5. Pie chart of the constitution of design advisors in SJTU, made by the authors.

There is a distinguishment between the SJTU advisory committee and others: the committee is not settled in the design school, but in an independent organization International Center of Innovation and Design (ICID). The ICID of SJTU has established in 2017, which relies on the traditional advantages of the design discipline groups of SJTU and the industrial vitality of the Zero Bay Global Innovation and Entrepreneurship Cluster. The center aims to become a platform of multi-disciplinary cross-integration, in-depth international cooperation, and IUR partnership oriented to the development needs of national creativity and emerging industries (International Center for Innovation and Design, SJTU, n.d.). At the same time, based on the school of design, ICID shared a quantity of design-related professionals, and its advisory committee also serves the school. All of the advisors come from higher educational institutions such as academician Xu Zhilei, who was committed to the Chinese Academy of Engineering. Because of this, 33 percent of advisors are engaged in education. Moreover, most of them have focused on the sustainable life field, which probably results from the SJTU’s quality of natural science and engineering (International Center for Innovation and Design, SJTU, n.d.).

Table 5. SDGs professional fields of SJTU academic committee members, made by the authors.

Member	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Member 1			•								•						
Member 2											•						
Member 3												•					
Member 4				•													
Member 5											•						
Member 6																	
Member 7											•						
Member 8											•						
Member 9				•								•					
Member 10									•								
Member 11									•		•						
Member 12				•							•						
Member 13				•								•					
Member 14				•													
Member 15				•													
Member 16				•													
Member 17																	

Most of the ICID advisors come from SJTU, others come from universities of Shanghai, Hangzhou, and Wuxi, and two from enterprise and China Academy of Engineering. This construction ensures higher education

faculties to suggest their ideas in a formal approach, but will be short of voices from other societal fields like business, industry, and management. SJTU design school has organized a series of seminars, such as Hudec lectures, to involve professionals and scholars to share working experience, which to some degree strengthens the design education in a period as well as other design schools (Youfang, 2020). However, a long-term partnership ought to be considered in order to foster an in-depth intelligence in the field of design education, otherwise the impact of lectures or seminars cannot be sustained, for education needs time to produce its influence.

### Shanghai University

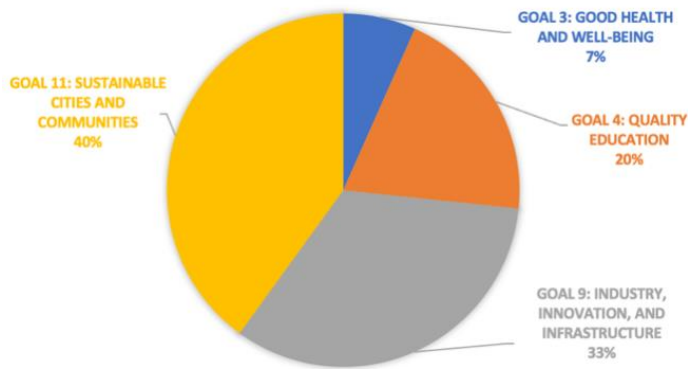


Figure 6. Pie chart of the constitution of design advisors in SHU, made by the authors.

In 2018, the Shanghai Academy of Fine Arts (SAFA) separated from Shanghai University and started its independent enrolment and pedagogy activities since then. The title of SAFA identifies its quality, the advisors of which mainly belonging to fields of fine arts and sculpture. Therefore, there are a few advisors whose areas belonged to the SDGs system, except for city sculpture and environmental design. SAFA owns a large group of advisors, but many of them focus on fine arts. This homogenization of professional fields leads SAFA to a qualification of practical arts.

Table 6. SDGs professional fields of SHU academic committee members, made by the authors.

Member	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Member 1				•							•						
Member 2									•								
Member 3				•													
Member 4																	
Member 5				•													
Member 6											•						
Member 7																	
Member 8											•						
Member 9																	
Member 10			•						•		•						
Member 11																	
Member 12																	
Member 13																	
Member 14																	
Member 15																	
Member 16									•		•						
Member 17																	
Member 18									•		•						
Member 19																	
Member 20									•								

Ever since the initiation in 2017, SAFA has been planning the SAFA Forum to act as its academic branding. The forum will continue to invite renowned designers and artists to give lectures and seminars to the younger generation, which is to progress the development of Chinese design and art education (Shangmei Lecture Hall, 2021). Apart from lectures, the forum calls for visiting tours out of campus in order to enrich students' liberal arts knowledge. It is noted that these tours also welcome students who do not belong to SAFA, which benefits to nurture a larger exchange platform toward design study.

In addition, SAFA launched the International Studies in SAFA project since 2020. This project establishes teaching cooperation with art and design colleges and universities from the United Kingdom, the United States, Japan, France, etc., and invites their teachers to introduce the courses, so that students can experience the local culture without going abroad (Study abroad, 2021). The courses adopt an intensive workshop model to be conducted within one month, which is to efficiently iterate the international design and research resources for those who want to study abroad but are limited by the pandemic situation.

Thirdly, one of the missions of SAFA Global, the international exchange center of SAFA, is to engage out-of-campus professionals and researchers to supervise doctoral students in arts theory, fine arts, and design field (SAFA Global, 2019). These supervisors who have diversified backgrounds in design and arts come from leading institutions. At the same time, SAFA actively disseminates summer short courses hosted by foreign schools like Royal College of Art and Universidad Nacional Autonoma de México, these courses are fee-based services. Based on the projects mentioned above, SAFA has earned a growing reputation within the design education field. These human resources may produce more influence if they are introduced into the advisory committee.

### Suzhou University

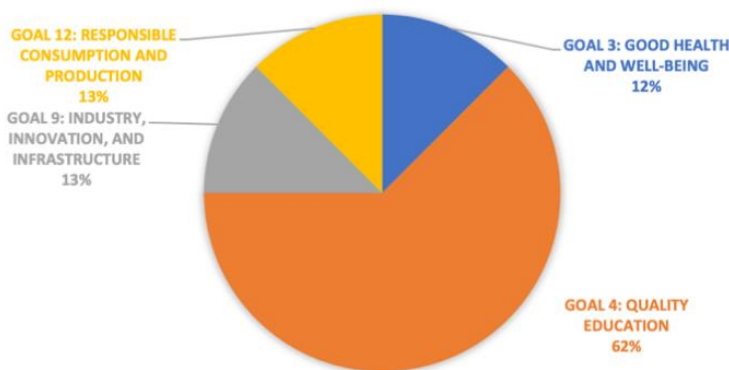


Figure 7. Pie chart of the constitution of design advisors in SU, made by the authors.

Advisors in SU account for the least number among the nine institutions, all of them belong to the SU School of Arts. In this respect, it is not as strategic as an advisory committee but an administrative agency. According to the pie chart, most advisors involve education as a result of holding faculty positions.

Table 7. SDGs professional fields of SU academic committee members, made by the authors.

Member	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Member 1			•														
Member 2																	
Member 3				•					•			•					
Member 4				•													
Member 5				•													
Member 6				•													
Member 7				•													

Actually, the structure of SU advisory committee represents a common condition in most design and art colleges in China: a group of faculties coming from the same institution regularly discuss and decide the future

teaching affairs. They decisively implement the regulations published by the superior departments and seldom do much beyond the rule. Although SU has been approved to build a doctoral project of arts in 2009, there are few exchange partnerships with foreign institutions (School of Art, Soochow University, n.d.). This cuts the diversification of the design education inevitably.

### Tongji University

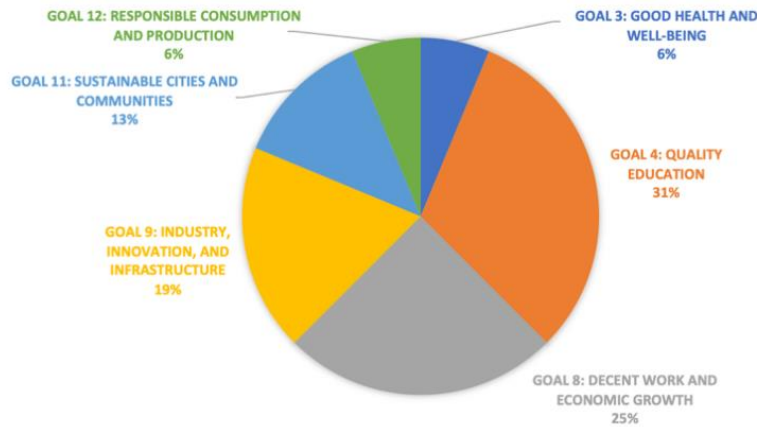


Figure 8. Pie chart of the constitution of design advisors in TJU, made by the authors.

The Tongji University College of Design and Innovation has established an international strategic advisory committee. The committee is composed of well-known experts in the field of design, such as Don Norman, Ken Friedman, and Naren Barfield. These experts are well-versed in theory and practice, have insights into the frontiers of subject development, academic styles, and industry trends. They have rich design research and education experience. Advisors include the chief professors of the world's top design schools, the editors or editorial committees of renowned design journals, the leaders of major interdisciplinary research projects, the senior consultants in the national innovation strategies, and the design industry giants. The members of the committee are nominated by the dean of The College of Design and Innovation and approved by the academic committee. The committee is responsible for providing strategic consulting for teaching and research, and ensuring that the development strategy of the college is internationally advanced. These advisors adopt a three-year term of office (College of Design and Innovation, Tongji University, 2019).

Table 8. SDGs professional fields of TJU academic committee members, made by the authors.

Member	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Member 1				•				•									
Member 2								•	•								
Member 3								•									
Member 4			•					•	•								
Member 5				•													
Member 6																	
Member 7			•	•							•	•					
Member 8				•													
Member 9									•								
Member 10				•													
Member 11											•						

It is worth noting that all of the advisors in TJU are foreigners who have both served in higher educational institutions and other organizations. This condition has facilitated TJU to head for a more international education platform connecting design and strategy. As is shown in the pie chart, Goals 4, 8, and 9 account for the top three items, responding to the educational preference of the college (College of Design and Innovation, Tongji University, 2021).

## Wuhan University of Technology

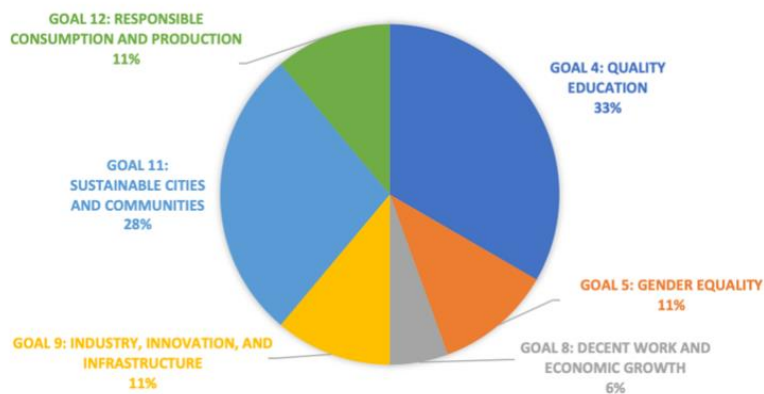


Figure 9. Pie chart of the constitution of design advisors in WHUT, made by the authors.

Similar to the above institutions, advisors of WHUT School of Art and Design also come from the home university. However, apart from the HNU and JNU, some advisors focused on gender equality in WHUT (School of Art and Design, Wuhan University of Technology, 2018). Although the number is small, it has attracted people's attention. Inclusion and human factors have always been considered as essential elements during a design process, yet the significance of gender equality has not been notified by a wider group of audience. The respect towards varied genders will lead design to a more inclusive future and play a key role when cultivating humanization.

Table 9. SDGs professional fields of WHUT academic committee members, made by the authors.

Member	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Member 1				•	•				•		•	•					
Member 2									•								
Member 3																	
Member 4				•							•	•					
Member 5				•													
Member 6				•	•												
Member 7				•													
Member 8																	
Member 9																	
Member 10											•						
Member 11											•						
Member 12																	
Member 13								•			•						

## Conclusion

Through investigating the selected objectives, the researchers have found the following findings. Afterwards, suggestions towards the variety and the cooperation will be given based on the current situation. Firstly, the scale and the diversity of an advisory committee have a great impact on its organization, and even the scale has a positive effect on the diversity. With the expansion of the board of directors and the diversification of board members, it can obtain key resources, and these resources will inevitably expand the scope of the company's activities and bring new strategic information (Zhou, 2008). Taking JNU and HNU as examples, the two universities can be regarded as the earliest institutions establishing modern design programs in China. The professional background and the vision drive them to engage a diversified think tank in order to keep advanced. In terms of inclusion, students, as the main body of design education, should have the privilege of expressing their opinions and suggestions in the advisory committee. For example, a group of

students (involving undergraduates and graduates) participate in the events decision-making process with alternative members. This will drive students to experience the democracy of design and enable them to be responsible toward the real world and sustainability. On the other hand, there are more than two thousand higher educational institutions that have settled the design disciplines in China. Nevertheless, most of them do not have an advisory committee yet, and their teaching faculties have similar educational backgrounds. Also, the regulations of these committees are uniformly distributed by the Ministry of Education, this makes them similar at the political and administrative levels. Nevertheless, the unified guidance has inevitably limited the activeness of conducting an educational exchange, such as engaging a diversified teaching and academic group. Although this condition might lead to a highly school-level working efficiency, it cannot be sustainable for design research and pedagogy in the future. It can be believed that heterogeneity will bring up prosperity, but homogeneity may not. This has already been confirmed by the tendency of inter-discipline, national integration, and globalization.

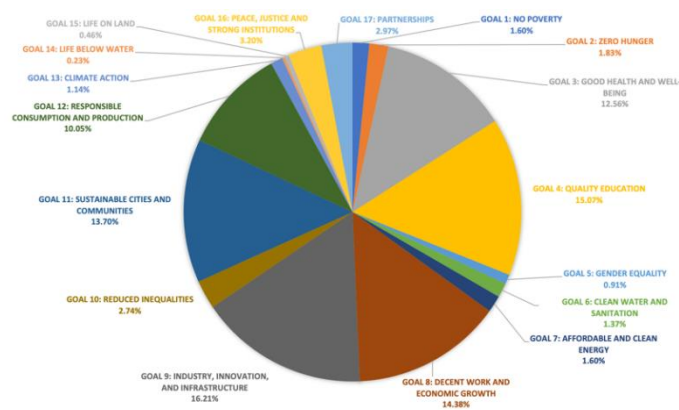


Figure 10. Pie chart of the constitution of the nine advisory committees.

In detail, the above statistics suggest that more than 80 percent of advisors are involved in Goals 3, 4, 8, 9, 11, and 12. Commonly, these goals are highly relevant to the traditional design subjects all over the world, and they tackle problems by means of industrial design, environmental design, design management, and urban planning. However, with an awakening consideration of stakeholders and the growing necessity of sustainability, an increasing requirement has linked with design fields from other societal issues, such as food supply, sufficient educational resources, equal rights, clean energy, a healthy environment, and a fair society. Design has been gradually expected to satisfy an extended spectrum of worldwide concerns. Therefore, we may start to think it over by establishing a varied and expanded advisory group in a design school, which probably improves the condition by cultivating far-sighted leaders.

The rapid urbanization of modern China provides numerous opportunities for design research and practice. An increasing tendency of building connections is emerging between the fields. But a quantity of disposable deals ignores the value of sustainable coordination, bringing the risk of losing the occasion of cultivating a vital career. For example, many faculties in design schools usually have business cooperations with out-of-campus enterprises, and they engage students in the projects as interns. Nevertheless, this kind of employment relationship sometimes can be fragile as students are short of stable schedules and income. It is recommended that the IUR system be iterated to be an integrated one with a quality assurance system, which involves the aspects of government, industry, university, research, finance, service, and application. In fact, the latter indicates a more integrated situation networking the diversification to face the complex societal context. Besides, the advisory committee can be seen as an ideal experimental platform to activate this transform.

## References

- Central Academy of Fine Arts. (2018, December 4). *Introduction to Academic Committee*. <https://www.cafa.edu.cn/st/2018/40119520.htm>
- Central Academy of Fine Arts. (n.d.). *Education and teaching*. <https://www.cafa.edu.cn/sp/2018oldjyjd/>
- College of Design and Innovation, Tongji University. (2019, November 12). *College International Strategic Advisory Committee*. <https://tjdi.tongji.edu.cn/about.do?ID=120&lang=>
- College of Design and Innovation, Tongji University. (2021, March 4). *Development Overview*. <https://tjdi.tongji.edu.cn/about.do?ID=56&lang=>
- Dennis, P. (2015). *Lean Production Simplified: A Plain-Language Guide to the World's Most Powerful Production*

- System. Productivity Press.
- Hunan Industrial Design Association. (n.d.). *New Channel*. <http://www.newchanneldesign.com/tongdao/>
- International Center for Innovation and Design, SJTU. (n.d.). *About Us*.  
<https://design.sjtu.edu.cn/index.php/About/aboutas>
- International Center for Innovation and Design, SJTU. (n.d.). *Academic Committee Charter*.  
<https://design.sjtu.edu.cn/index.php/About/xxjs.html>
- Long, J.; Vogelaar, A.; Hale, B. W. (2014). Toward Sustainable Educational Travel. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, (22), 421–439. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2013.819877>
- Macau University of Science and Technology. (n.d.). *List of members of the Advisory Committee of the School of Humanities and Arts*. <https://www.must.edu.mo/fa/about/advisory>
- Pearce, J.A., II and Zahra, S.A. (1991). The relative power of ceos and boards of directors: Associations with corporate performance. *Strat. Mgmt. J.*, 12(2), 135-153. <https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.4250120205>
- SAFA Global. (2019, June 29). *Waiting for you to tell us your story*.  
<https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/gmBMe98zYUoAH1wM8egL5w>
- School of Art and Design, Wuhan University of Technology. (2018, October 22). *Academic organization*.  
<http://a-d.whut.edu.cn/gy/xsjg/>
- School of Art, Soochow University. (n.d.). *Doctorate site*. <http://ysxy.suda.edu.cn/3226/list.htm>
- School of Design, Hunan University. (2017, October 11). *Organization*.  
<http://design.hnu.edu.cn/info/1066/3924.htm>
- School of Design, Jiangnan University. (n.d.). *Constitution of Jiangnan University Design Education Development Foundation*. <http://sodcn.jiangnan.edu.cn/info/1141/4464.htm>
- School of Design, Jiangnan University. (n.d.). *The list of composition of the Design Education Fund Council of the School of Design, Jiangnan University*. <http://sodcn.jiangnan.edu.cn/info/1141/4462.htm>
- Shandong Provincial People's Government. (2019, March 21). *Implementation Opinions on Building an Innovation and Entrepreneurship Community of "Government, Industry, University, Research, Financial Services and Use"*. [http://www.shandong.gov.cn/art/2019/3/21/art\\_2267\\_31149.html](http://www.shandong.gov.cn/art/2019/3/21/art_2267_31149.html)
- Shangmei Lecture Hall. (2021, May 24). *0521 Shang Hui Lecture Review: The Image Construction of Epic - The Creation of Historical Paintings in the History of the Party in the Past Century*.  
<https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/7Hfsny6Hdd7NmZw2-X7iRA>
- Study abroad. (2021, May 25). *INTERNATIONAL STUDIES IN SAFA: Preview of 2021 Local Study Abroad Courses*.  
<https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/BZTPZ7K4RyjHxGPrBf8Pjg>
- United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (n.d.). *THE 17 GOALS*. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>
- Wikipedia. (n.d.). *Herman Schneider*. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herman\\_Schneider#References](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herman_Schneider#References)
- Xiao, Y.X. (2015). 中国“可持续设计教育”的再思考 [Rethinking China's "Sustainable Design Education"]. *Art Education*, (03), 28-31. <https://doi.org/CNKI:SUN:YSJY.0.2015-03-013>
- Xie, F. (2015). Study on European Sustainable Design Educational Modes in Europe and their Implications for China. *University Education Science*, (01), 54-58. <https://doi.org/CNKI:SUN:JXGJ.0.2015-01-010>
- Xiong, T.T. (2015). 中美高校艺术设计专业“可持续设计教育”现状的比较研究 [A Comparative Study of the Status Quo of "Sustainable Design Education" in Art Design Majors in Chinese and American Universities]. *Designs*, (08), 104-107. <https://doi.org/10.16129/j.cnki.mysds.2015.08.035>
- Youfang. (2020, October 23). *Ruan Xin, Dean of the School of Design, Shanghai Jiaotong University: What is the "world-class" standard?* School of Design, Shanghai Jiaotong University.  
<https://designschool.sjtu.edu.cn/4a9f60211c74f45b7759ae08d3ee4d71/1596af94a80d838a21302d7ce9cb5925/cad7b924520779caf1e3a4ce9aefe997/detail/5f967aeaa4f2592c6e43282a>
- Zhang, H., & Gibson, H. J. (2021). Long-Term Impact of Study Abroad on Sustainability-Related Attitudes and Behaviors. *Sustainability*, 13(4), 1953. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13041953>
- Zhou, H.M. (2020). The Education of Sustainable Design based on the Environmental Ethics. *Design*, 33(11), 105-107. <https://doi.org/CNKI:SUN:SJTY.0.2020-11-037>
- Zhou, J., Liu, X.Y., Qin, Y.L., & Cao, S.C. (2008). Study on the Relationship between Strategic Committee of the Board and Firm Performance. *Journal of Shanxi University of Finance and Economics*, (08), 62-69. <https://doi.org/CNKI:SUN:SXCJ.0.2008-08-012>

**Fan Chen**

Tongji University, China

*chenfantj@foxmail.com*

Fan CHEN is a PhD candidate in Tongji University. His PhD research focuses on the doctoral education system under Chinese context. He has published several academic papers on design education and design practice on Cumulus, IASDR, DRS.

**Lin Li**

Tongji University, China

*941350914@qq.com*

Lin LI is a master student in Tongji University. Her main research direction is Environment and Habitat, and she integrates sustainable interdisciplinary thinking into the research of localization in this study area, also she focuses on environmental design education.

**Jing-Yi Yang**

Tongji University, China

*471787469@qq.com*

Jing-Yi YANG mainly focuses on the research of sustainable design, educational architecture design and design strategy and management. And she has published two papers related to the research of architecture in Tibetan areas of Sichuan.