

COLLABORATIVE TYPE DESIGN

The arrival of open-source fonts allows typefaces to be considered as open-ended objects, with a potential to evolve, be taken on, shared, and modified. How does this change the "life" of a font? What processes can designers implement to facilitate collaboration? How do they maintain their fonts and distribute updates? What does it mean when fonts stop being finished packages and start to be living works-in-progress? This workshop will invite its participants to contribute to open-source font projects and explore the various ways by which one might adapt existing fonts.

Assignment:

Make groups of three to five people.
Choose an open-source font.

Analyse the state of the font in relation to its history:

- Does the font have (technical) limitations? Are they inherent to its concept, its history?
- Does the font invite new versions/styles/alternates?
- When is it a question of taste? When is it a question of correctness?

Choose an action/process to perform on the font:

- Add a glyph where none exists.
- Add a variant design for an existing glyph (alternate).
- Modify a glyph.
- Change the kerning.
- Design a new style (italic, etc.).
- Create a new style with a script (combined with manual fine-tuning?).
- Adjust the font's metadata.
- Alter the font's README file.

Choose a protocol for collaboration and a corresponding tool. For example:

- Real-time on FontForge.
- Discuss the actions together around one computer.
- Check the font with Font Bakery.
- Generate the font and adapt the font's README file to describe your modifications.
- Do you want to refer your changes back to the original typeface ("pull request") or start your own version ("fork")?