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Att. Eija Salmi
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Aalto University,
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Copenhagen, 16.5.2022

Object: Motivation letter, Application to the Cumulus Board 2022 - 2025

I would like to express my highest motivation to become a member of the Cumulus Executive Board (2022 - 2025). I have been following the work of this community for many years and I believe in its potential to impact on design culture, education and research, especially in moments, such as the present, in which humanity is facing crucial challenges and needs new projects and new ways of framing its future.

I have been perhaps one of the earliest PhD in Design, at Politecnico of Milano, back in 1996, and followed the evolution of design perspectives towards new disciplinary domains and towards new areas. I worked at Politecnico di Milano, at RMIT University in Australia and, in the last 20 years, I have been observing the development of the design landscape from Denmark, where I work as a professor at Aalborg University, in Copenhagen. Here, in Denmark, I am working in the Master of Service Systems Design at the Department of Architecture, Design and Media Technology. Together with my colleagues at Service Design Lab (which is also part of the DESIS community), I am also involved in several research projects, cooperating with a large network of international partners.

If elected, my contribution to the board will be based on an open attitude towards new geographical and disciplinary domains. **Geographically**, I see the expansion of Cumulus network towards new areas as an opportunity to open and learn from new cultures. This is an historical moment in which sustainability and other radical and global transformation of our society impose a radical review of the way the whole planet organizes its living and production processes. Design culture may have constructive proposals to such change, but it is important that such proposals take into account the valuable contribution from countries and social contexts that have been hardly considered by a mainstream design culture. This opening is not new, as it has already started by the past Cumulus boards, but I believe it should be emphasized in the coming years. **Conceptually**, the discipline of

Design is continuously expanding towards new domains. I have my own experience in starting a new master education in Service Design, back in 2012, and I see the need and the challenges of introducing new disciplinary domains that make the design discipline richer and more relevant in society. In both my teaching and research activities I continuously come in contact with new opportunities to use design as a way of contributing to crucial issues, such as social and technical innovation, to sustainability, to strategic thinking or to policy making.

In the last decade, Cumulus became a strong and large community, which is able to look at those challenges, to learn, to elaborate new knowledge and ideas, and to discuss the most crucial issues emerging from a changing society, including issues related to equality, de-colonisation of our design culture, gender and ethical issues. I will work for these continuous and constructive reflections to happen in an atmosphere of dialogue, harmony and open communication among the members.

For the reasons I just presented, I would be pleased to serve as a member of the Cumulus board for the coming mandate, and to participate actively and enthusiastically to the next steps in the development of the Cumulus community.

Sincerely

Nicola Morelli

