



## Functional activity and connectivity during creative ideation in product design engineers

Campbell, G., Duffy, A., Hay, L., Gilbert, S., McTeague, C., Coyle, D., & Grealy, M. (2020). *Functional activity and connectivity during creative ideation in product design engineers*. Abstract from 6th Meeting of the Society for the Neuroscience of Creativity, Boston, United States.

[Link to publication record in Ulster University Research Portal](#)

### Publication Status:

Published (in print/issue): 13/03/2020

### Document Version

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

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## Functional activity and connectivity during creative ideation in product design engineers

[Gerard Campbell](#), [Alex Duffy](#), [Laura Hay](#), [Sam Gilbert](#), [Chris McTeague](#), [Damien Coyle](#), [Madeleine Grealy](#)

[Design, Manufacturing And Engineering Management](#), [Psychology](#)

*Research output: Contribution to conference > Poster > peer-review*

**Overview**

Fingerprint

Projects (1)

Activities (1)

### Abstract

Product Design Engineering (PDE) ideation, the generation of ideas for functional products to address a given problem, is a complex creative behaviour with substantial technological and societal impact. While researchers have begun to examine the neural basis of PDE ideation, firm conclusions as to the cortical regions underlying this behaviour have yet to be made. Furthermore, no study has investigated which neural regions, if any, functionally interact during ideation. In the study 30 professional product design engineers were tasked with generating novel and feasible ideas for products in response to design briefs while undergoing fMRI. Contrasts between ideation and 3 control tasks (rest, 2-back and mental rotation) showed consistent activations in the left PFC including the middle, superior and inferior frontal gyrus. Significant left parahippocampal gyrus activity was also shown during ideation when compared with 2-back and rotation. Finally, PPI analysis revealed higher functional connectivity between the middle and superior frontal gyrus during ideation as compared with rest. The results align with previous studies highlighting the role of the left PFC in ideation, suggesting that the

generation of novel and feasible design ideas involves top-down executive processes such as inhibition and response monitoring. The observed left parahippocampal activations also indicate a role for episodic memory processing during ideation such as the retrieval of information from previously encountered design problems. Finally, this is the first study to examine functional connectivity in a PDE context, showing that key regions of the left PFC also interact to support ideation.

Original language English  
Publication status Published - 13 Mar 2020  
Event 6th Meeting of the Society for the Neuroscience of Creativity - Northeastern University, Boston, United States  
Duration: 13 Mar 2020 → 14 Mar 2020  
<https://www.tsfn.org/conference>

## Conference

Conference 6th Meeting of the Society for the Neuroscience of Creativity  
Country United States  
City Boston  
Period 13/03/20 → 14/03/20  
Internet address <https://www.tsfn.org/conference>

## Keywords

creativity cognition creative cognition design design cognition product design  
product design engineering psychology cognitive neuroscience neuroimaging fmri  
functional magnetic resonance imaging

## Fingerprint

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