Regional Design: Dimensions of Geographies in the Context of Regional Governance.

**Keywords:** Regional design, spatial planning, spatial representations, planning concepts, governance.

**Department of Urbanism, Chair of Spatial Planning & Strategy**

**Area of Research:** Regional Planning, Governance and Design

**Research Summary:** Over recent decades, the Dutch national government has opened up regional planning processes to the involvement of de-central governments, coalitions among these and coalitions among these and private agencies. That processes became open to interpretations has spurred the emergence of collaborative decision making practices, among them a range that were commonly labeled ‘regional design’. These practices employed spatial representations of regions in argumentations about not only spatial transformation but also territorial and political change. Despite often being government-funded only few of these practices have been assessed on their performance from a planning perspective tough. In this research I distinguish types of regional design practices based on their references to spatial development, organizational reform and political visions. This framework is used to investigate the performance of regional design in distinct cases. The research aims at an improved understanding of the variety of practices that have emerged in the Netherlands over recent decades. More broadly it seeks to contribute to a better understanding of the production and use of conceptions of geographies in regional governance processes.

**Research Methodology:** The main components of this research are in-depth case studies. The research also incorporates several literature reviews. Reviews conceptualize regional design from a planning perspective, underpin the methodology applied in case studies and clarify the context of case studies by distinguishing governance episodes in the Netherlands.