

Ruiqi is a design researcher and practitioner exploring service design, social innovation, and participatory methods to address public challenges in rural and coastal communities. His work bridges research and implementation across policy, infrastructure, and user experience.

Fields of interest:

Service design, Social design, Digital Service, Participatory Design, Speculative design.

EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Cheung Kong School of Art & Design, Shantou University

Shantou, China

Master of Arts

Sept. 2017 - Jun. 2020

Service Design

GPA: 86/100 (Top: 5%)

Hochschule Anhalt University of Applied Sciences

Dessau, Germany

International exchange

April. 2019 - Nov. 2019

Design

Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts

Guangzhou, China

Bachelor

Sept. 2013 - Jun. 2017

Service Design

GPA: 77.9/100

PUBLICATIONS

Guangdong Administration for Market Regulation. (2025). *User Experience Design Standard for Age-Friendly Mobile E-Government Services* (DB44/T 2678—2025).
(Co-authored by Ruiqi Yao, contributing lead designer and primary drafter.)
<https://std.samr.gov.cn/db/search/stdDBDetailed?id=3A7F82B3DAABD54AE06397BE0A0AC7F8>

Wu, Y., & Yao, R. (2025). Supporting Sustainable Island Tourism through Infrastructuring Co-Design: A Case Study from Mayu Island. *Island Studies Journal*. (Co-first author)
<https://doi.org/10.24043/001c.142953>

Chen, M. X., Hu, H., Yao, R., Qiu, L., & Li, D. (2024). A Survey on the Design of Virtual Reality Interaction Interfaces. *Sensors*, 24(19), 6204.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/s24196204>

AWARDS & CERTIFICATIONS

Silver Award (Top 5%) – 2021 A' Design Award, Service Design Category

iF Design Award 2019 – Service Design Category

Certified Level-II Talent in Service Design, *Issued by the China Service Design Qualification System*

IELTS 7.0

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

1. Co-Designing Age-Friendly Digital Public Services

Sep. 2022 – Jun. 2025 / Guangdong Provincial Taxation Bureau, China / Funded: approx. €38,000

In 2022, we initiated a collaborative redesign of digital social security services with government agencies, developers, and older adults, aiming to enhance accessibility and inclusion. The resulting age-friendly version has since benefited nearly 500,000 users. Building on this pilot, we contributed to the drafting of Guangdong's first provincial design standard for age-friendly digital services (DB44/T 2678—2025), officially released in 2025, which institutionalizes user experience principles at the policy level.

[Project Detail](#)

2. Design Everyday Participation for Community Governance

Oct. 2024 – present / Chengdu City Government, China / Funded: approx. €43,000

Between 2024 and 2025, we worked with social workers and community staff in Pujiang County, Chengdu, to explore how participatory design can support community governance. Through the "Lakeside Conversations" and the "Community Growth Wall", we developed infrastructures that embedded care and everyday participation into local practices. These interventions sustained resident-led actions beyond the design team's presence, and informed the county's policy decision to expand the model to 16 sites with new funding.

[Project Detail](#)

3. Social Innovation Design for Mayu Island

Sep. 2022 – Jan. 2024 / Shantou Industrial Design Association / Funded: approx. €13,000

In 2022, we worked with residents, students, and local authorities on Mayu Island to explore new approaches to sustainable tourism and cultural preservation. Using ethnographic research, collaborative mapping, and co-design workshops, the project culminated in the Masu dérive exhibition and informed a published paper in Island Studies Journal (2025).

[Project Detail](#)

4. One-Stop Student Service System Design, Shantou University

Nov. 2021 – Oct. 2023 / Bank of China (Project Sponsor) / Funded: approx. €78,000

Led the design and implementation of a campus-wide student service hub, coordinating with stakeholders to ensure smooth integration into the university's digital system.

5. Orientation Service Design Research, Shantou University

July. 2021 – July. 2023 / Awarded: 2021 A' Design Award, Silver (Service Design Category)

Redesigned the orientation process to improve cross-department collaboration and student onboarding. The system has been in use since 2023.

6. Minishop Community Supermarket Service Design

Mar. 2019 – Jun. 2020 / Charoen Pokphand Group (Thailand) / 2019 iF Design Award

Commissioned by CP Group, I led the redesign of layouts and workflows for a university-based community supermarket, improving customer flow and reducing staffing costs. Operated successfully from 2020 to 2023.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Shantou University

Researcher ; Teaching Assistant; Project Manager

July. 2020 – present

Researcher (Rural Research Center): My job is doing field research and co-design projects focused on rural revitalization, social innovation, and participatory design. Contributed to city-funded initiatives in both island and rural communities, producing policy reports and participatory frameworks that continue to guide community initiatives and local governance.

Teaching Assistant (Cheung Kong School of Art & Design): Since 2021, I have been a Teaching Assistant at the School of Design, where I assisted in courses on service design, design research, and project-based learning, and mentored students conducting fieldwork related to community innovation and user experience.

Project Manager (IT Center): Drawing on my research in digital transformation and user experience, I took on the role of project monitor at our school's IT Center. In this capacity, I led service system innovation projects such as the One-Stop Student Service Hub and campus data visualization dashboard. Coordinated cross-functional teams including developers, designers, and administrative departments to ensure project delivery and implementation.

Touching Design Consulting Co., Ltd., Shantou, China

Co-Founder & Design Director

March. 2022 – present

Founded and managed a service design and social innovation consultancy focused on public sector and community development projects. Oversaw design research, stakeholder engagement, and project delivery. Clients include local governments and cultural organizations.

Chengdu GreenPu Tech & Innovation Co., Ltd., Chengdu, China

Design Consultant

Oct. 2024 – Mar. 2025

Advised the company on integrating participatory design strategies into community innovation projects under Chengdu’s governance reform. Provided design tools and frameworks for rural co-creation workshops and public engagement activities.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Postgraduate Courses

Design and Project Management, Spring 2023

Project Management, 2022–2023

Social Information and Creative Research, 2021–2022

Undergraduate Courses

Project Practice, 2022–2024

Cultural Inheritance and Innovation, Fall 2022

EXHIBITIONS

"Breach-Through-Taste": Service Design and Local Culture Exhibition

Co-curator

Jun. 28 – Jul. 3, 2025 / Shantou University Art Museum, Shantou, China

A practice-based research exhibition integrating service design theory (Breaching-through-Service) and local food culture, co-led with Dr. Yiying Wu and Dr. Kartikeya Acharya. Featured immersive performances, on-site cooking, and participatory installations by student teams.

"A Decade of South Coast" : Community Culture Retrospective

Curator

Oct. 12, 2021 – Mar. 2, 2022 / Haoyang Civic Center, Shantou, China

A locally embedded exhibition showcasing ten years of cultural memory and spatial transformation in the Nanbin neighborhood, co-produced with community members and local government.

Hebei International Industrial Design Week

Work Exhibited

Sep. 17 – Sep. 23, 2020 / Rongcheng Sports Center, Shandong, China

MOOD: Exhibition of Award-Winning Designs

Work Exhibited

Jun. 1 – Jun. 18, 2021 / Via Bellinzona, Como, Italy

40×40 Exhibition Istanbul

Work Exhibited

Oct. 18 – Nov. 1, 2021 // Usta Design Atelier, Istanbul, Turkey

Shenzhen International Industrial Design Week

Work Exhibited

Dec. 1 – Dec. 3, 2021 // Shenzhen Convention & Exhibition Center, China