

Tencent 腾讯

2020 Chinese User Experience Industry Report on Design Talent Development

CDC



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The English version of this report
was translated by Southern University
of Science and Technology



Preface

- Digital economy as an development target has been written into the *Government Work Report of the State Council* for four consecutive years. The latest report delivered Premier Li Keqiang on 22 May 2020 highlighted “**advancing Internet Plus initiatives across industries and creating new competitive edges in digital economy**” & “promoting the development of industrial internet and smart manufacturing”.
- Aligned with the national strategy of “Internet Plus” and “smart manufacturing”, traditional corporates, apart from internet companies, are also embracing the digital economy, seeking for transformation. The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, in particular, is catalyzing and accelerating the scale-up of digital economy.
- The new digital-economy technologies represented by “ABC”, namely Artificial Intelligence, Big Data and Cloud Computing, have brought huge impact on existing business models in multiple ways, and are continuously pushing the transformation of design industry.
- Recruitment data and employee survey we collected and analyzed indicate that **emerging internet design has become the mainstream**, and the user experience industry is closely following the national strategy and embracing the trend of digital economy.

About Our Research

This research has three phases: qualitative interview, quantitative survey, and recruitment data analysis.

- Phase I: **Qualitative Interviews**: 17 experts/students/professionals in this sector joined the interviews, including 8 university faculty teachers in design disciplines, 2 corporate design specialists, 7 design majors/employees within two years of graduation.
- Phase II: **Quantitative Surveys**: 2,586 professionals and 312 students from user experience related jobs/disciplines participated in the survey.
 - Duration: 16 Sep. 2020 - 22 Oct. 2020
 - Survey Channel: Websites and WeChat public accounts of IXDC, Tencent CDC, Tencent Questionnaire, and other top design platforms.
 - Survey Platform: Tencent Questionnaire (<https://wj.qq.com>)
- Phase III: **Recruitment data analysis**: The data was sourced and analyzed in Sep. 2020 from public postings on major job search websites and recruitment sites of the China Top 500 Companies and Chinese affiliates of the Global Top 500 Companies, totaling more than 260 thousand data feeds.

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1.0 Overall Talent Demand

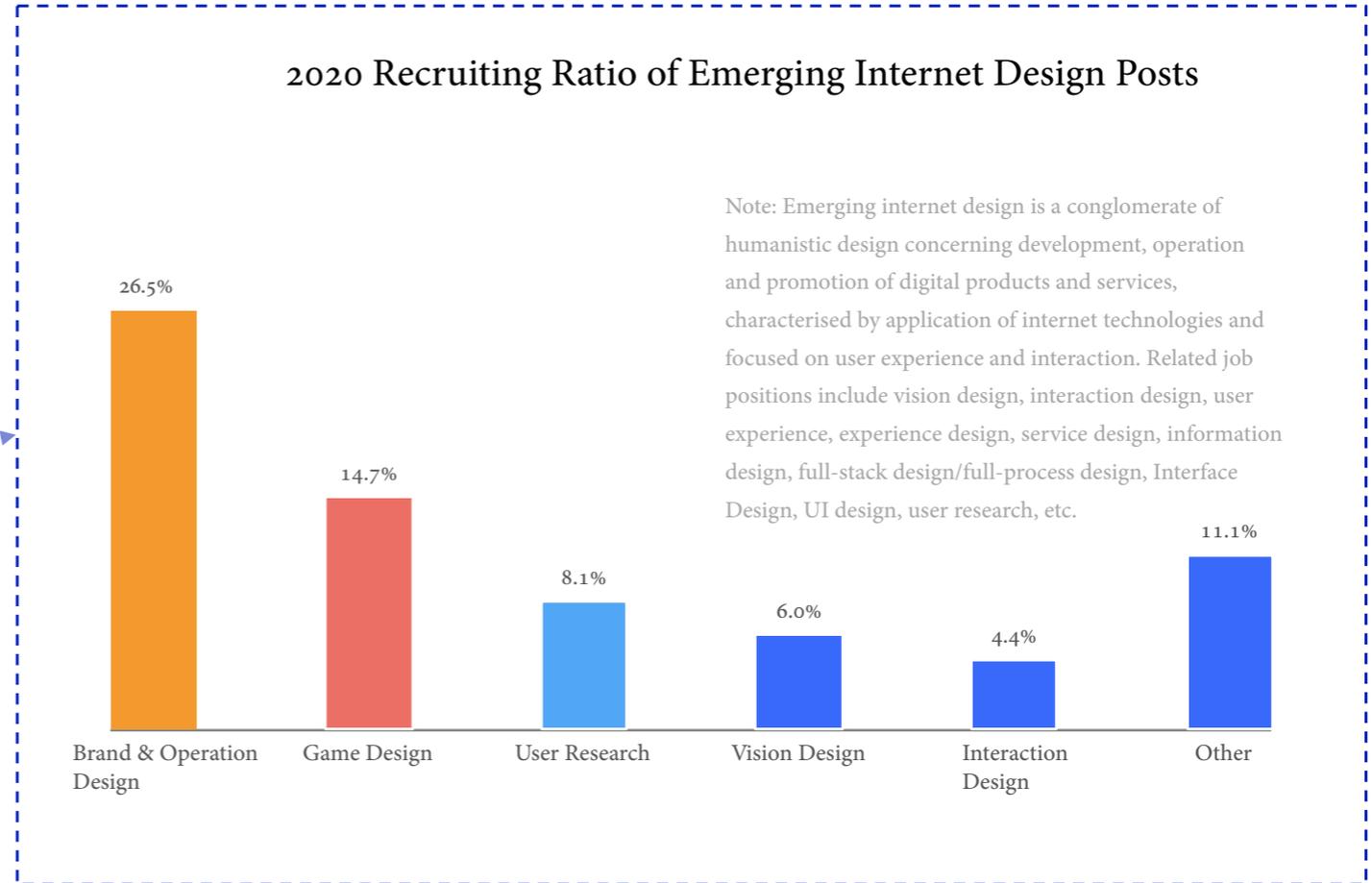
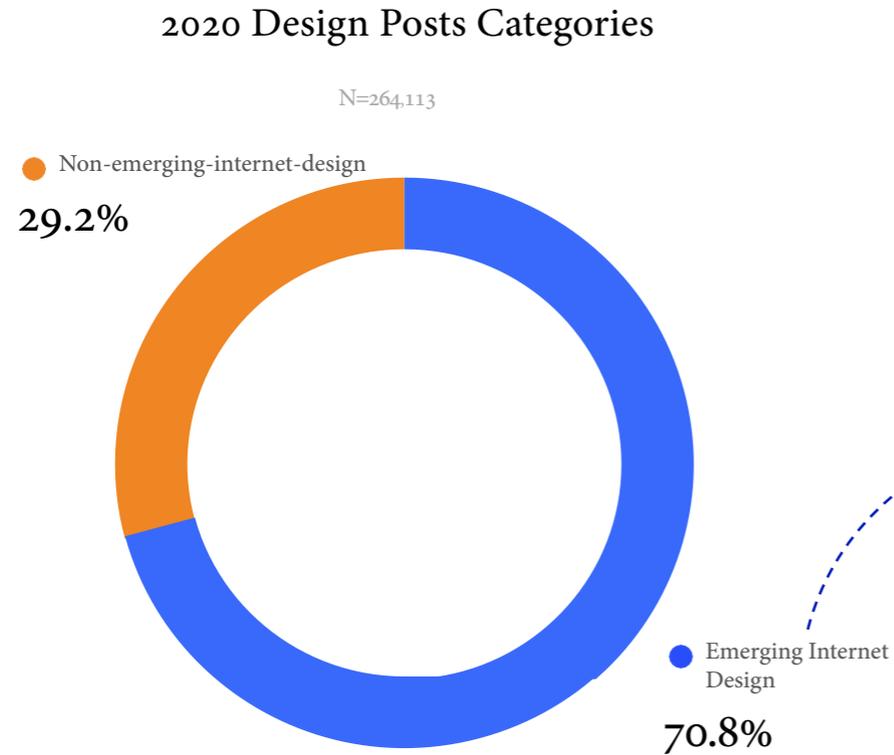
The development of digital economy has propelled the Internet Plus initiative, which was particularly accelerated this year by the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, both the job market data of design posts and user experience employees survey have indicated that emerging internet design is becoming a mainstream.

As design-related positions have increasingly extended responsibilities, companies in tier-1 cities as well as in new tier-1 cities are putting increasing value in design positions, as salaries for design posts in both tiers are rising.

USER EXPERIENCE INDUSTRY SURVEY

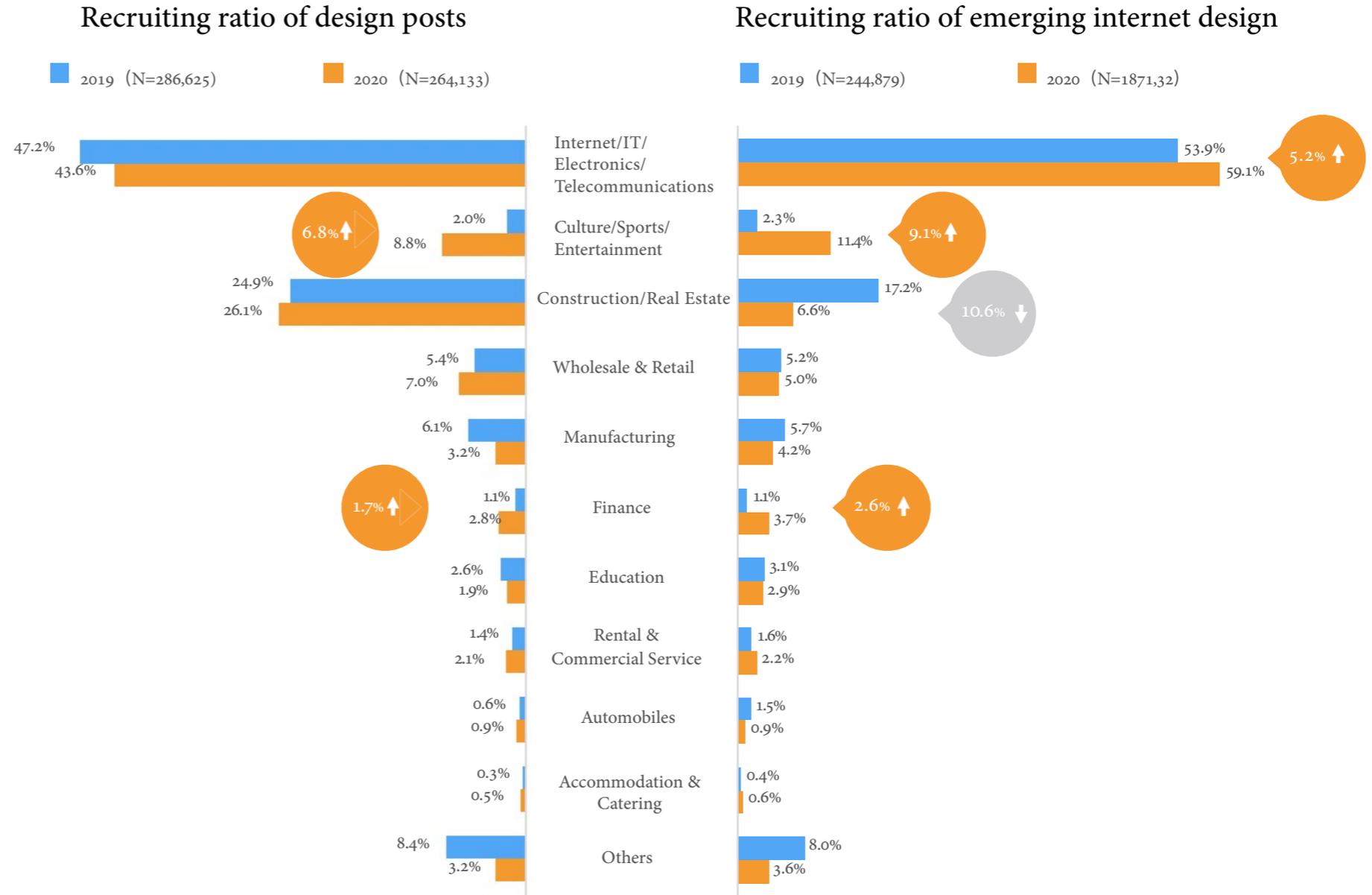
1.1 Emerging Internet Design Posts have become the mainstream: 70% of design posts are related to emerging internet design.

According to the recruitment data, **emerging internet design is the mainstream post** with 70% of recruiting volume among the existing design-related job posts. They mainly include brand & operation design, game design, user research, vision design, interaction design, etc.



1.2 Increasing design posts in Internet, Cultural/Sports/Entertainment, and Financial industries.

According to the recruitment data, industries with the greatest number of design posts include **Internet/IT/Electronics/Telecommunications**, Construction/Real Estate, Culture/Sports/Entertainment; compared with the same period of last year, the demand of emerging internet design **has risen in Internet/IT/Electronics/Telecommunications, Culture/Sports/Entertainment and Financial** industries; the Culture/Sports/Entertainment industry had the biggest hike (up by 9%) in the ratio of design posts, and its total recruiting volume exceeded the Construction/Real Estate sector.

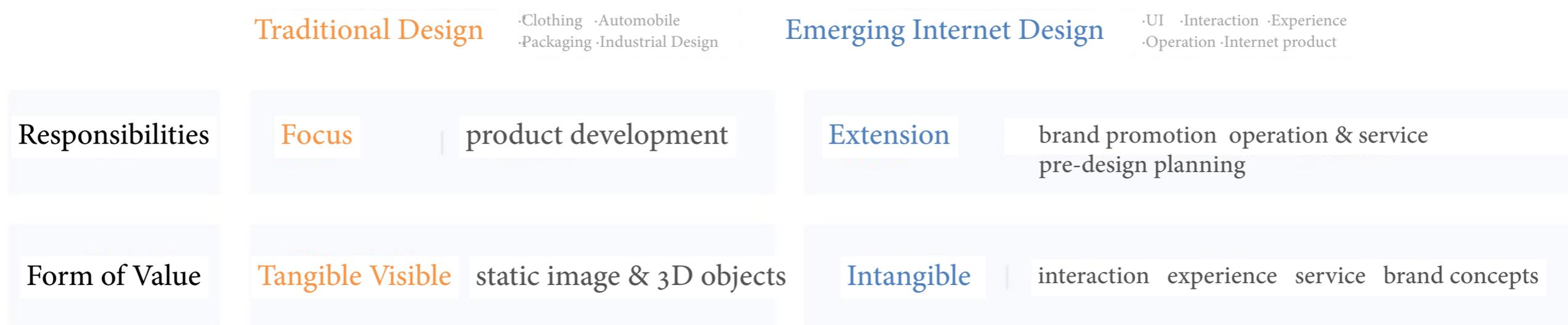


1.3 As design position's responsibility has extended, the emerging internet design now serves the full-process of business, including research, operation, and promotion of digital products and services.

The digital economy has propelled the Internet Plus initiative that was particularly accelerated this year by the COVID-19 pandemic. The emerging internet design has become the mainstream, reflecting that the design sector has undergone significant transformations, embracing the digital economy and the Internet Plus.

Emerging internet design is a **conglomerate of humanistic design** concerning development, operation and promotion of **digital products and services**, characterised by application of internet technologies and focused on user experience and interaction process.

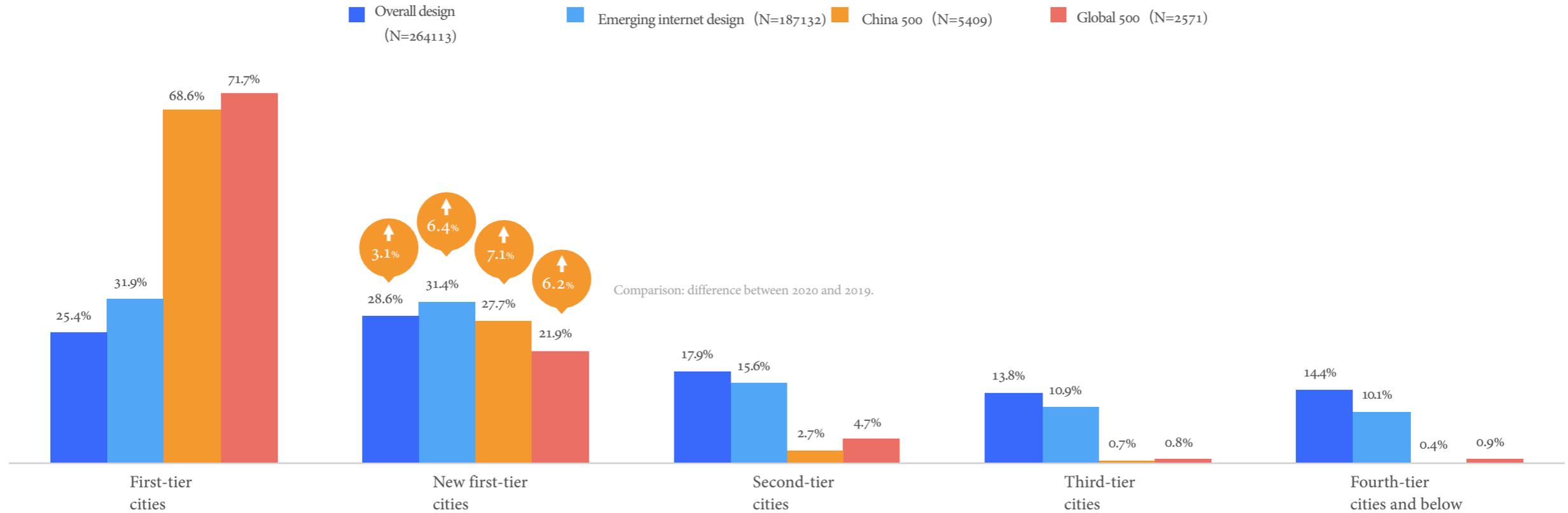
In contrast with traditional industrial design, the **content and medium** of emerging internet design are tangible products to **intangible** interaction, experience, services, etc.; the responsibility of many design jobs have extended from only focusing on the product development stage to all-stage & full-process design that requires more comprehensive and diversified skills and talents.



1.4 Market demand for design talent has expanded into new tier-1 cities

Comparing to the same period of last year, according to the job market data, various type of design posts have expanded into **new tier-1 cities** in 2020, with an increased ratio of design posts in the job market.

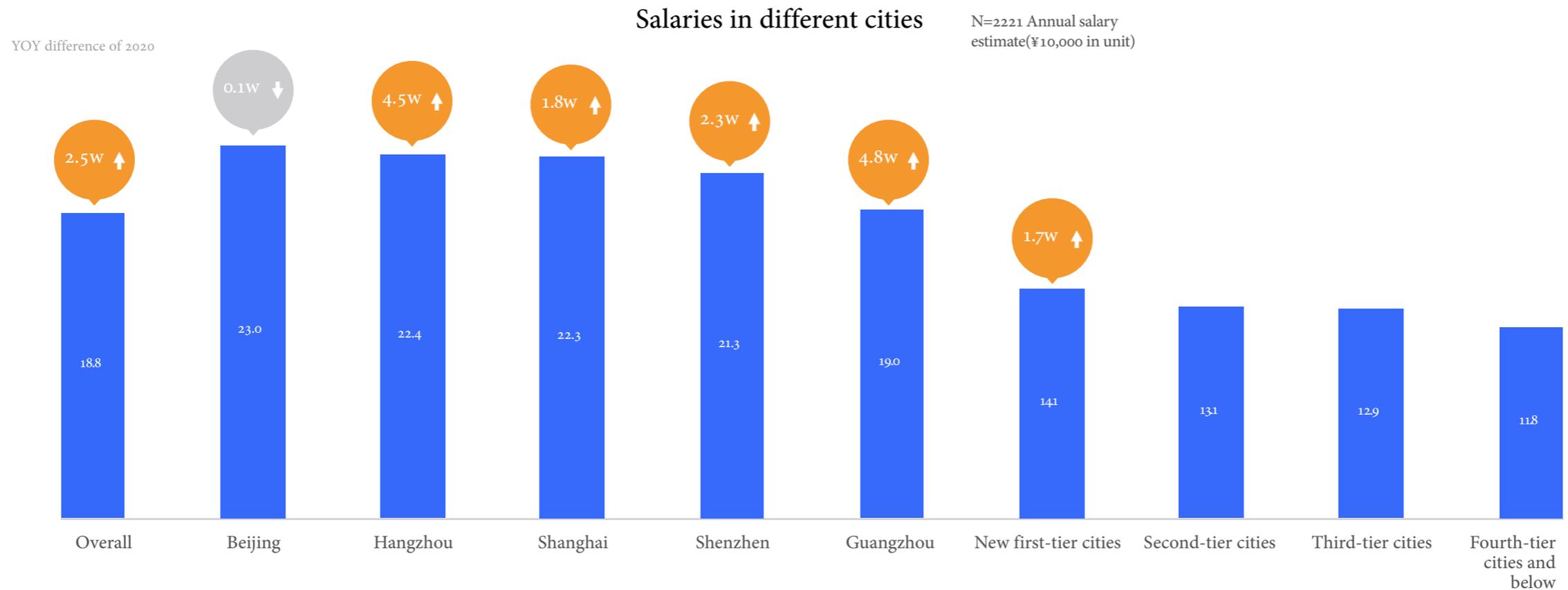
2020 Design post sample distribution in different regions



1.4.1 Tier-1 cities have the highest salaries; tier-1 and new tier-1 cities, except for Beijing, have seen rising salaries.

Salaries in tier-1 cities are significantly higher than other regions, with Beijing (¥230,000 annually on average) at the top, followed by Hangzhou, Shanghai and Shenzhen.

Comparing with in 2019, tier-1 cities, except for Beijing, have seen rising salaries for design jobs in 2020, with Guangzhou and Hangzhou enjoying the biggest increase in salaries. (Guangzhou +48,000, Hangzhou +45,000)



2.0 Corporate Demand for Design Talent & Status Quo

The Covid-19 pandemic has sped up the polarization of design talent demand among companies. Though the overall volume of design-related posts have seen a YOY decline of 7.9%, the design talent demand of the Top 500 Companies has improved, particularly in demand for emerging internet design talent with higher ability requirement.

The responsibility of many design jobs have extended from only focusing on the product development stage to all-stage & full-process design that requires more comprehensive and diversified skills and talents.

Design is playing an increasingly important role in user experience.

Corporations put more emphasis on various user experience related indicators, among which “user attitude” and “experience design quality” are having greater weights in the KPI of many product teams.

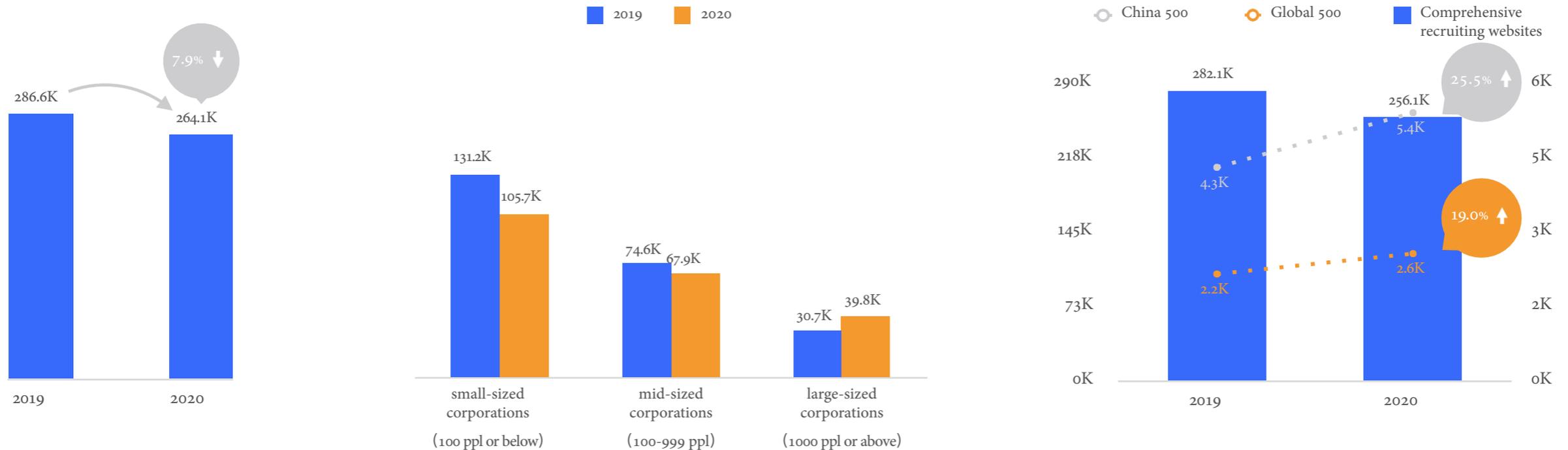
USER EXPERIENCE INDUSTRY SURVEY

2.1 Although the total volume of design job posted in Sep 2020 declined year-on-year, post volume by big companies, particularly China 500 and Global 500 rise.

According to the recruitment data, the volume of design job posted online was 260,000 in 2020, down by 7.9% YoY;

SMEs are recruiting fewer design talents; On the other hand, big corporations have seen increasing demand for design talent, up by 25.5% YoY and 19.0% YoY respectively for China 500 and Global 500.

Volume of design job posted online



Note:

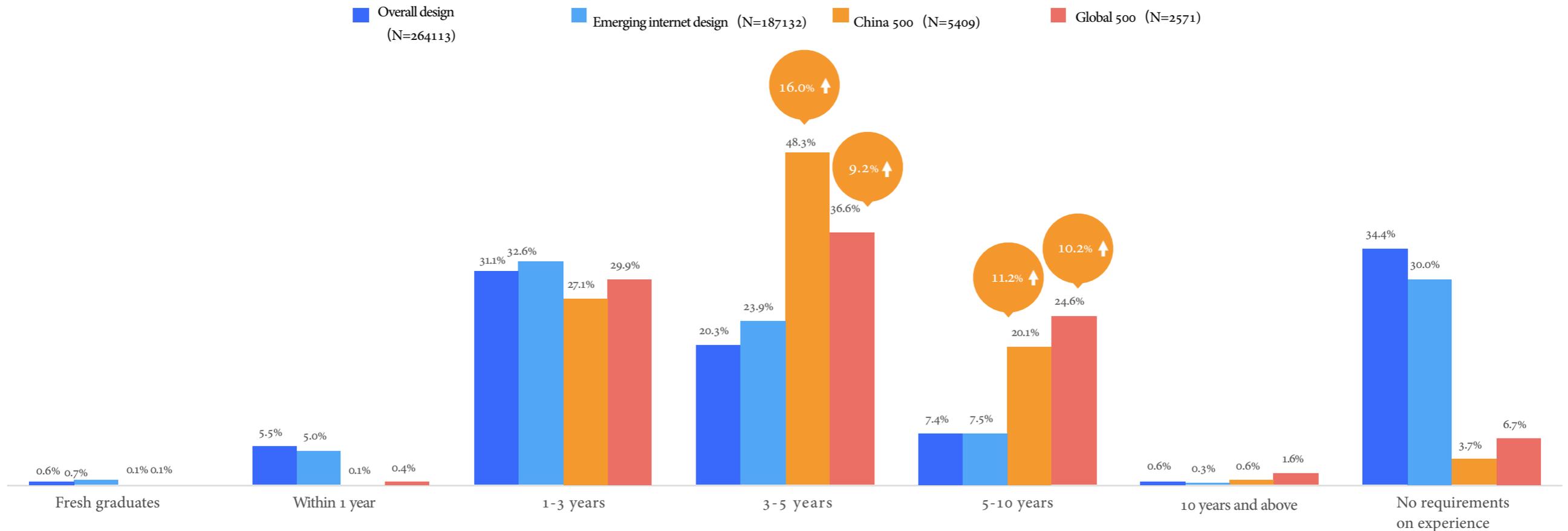
1. Source from public recruitment sample data of Sep 2019 and Sep 2020 from comprehensive recruiting websites, China 500 and affiliates of Global 500 in China. Same hereinafter;
2. The "recruiting volume" in this report refers to the number of job posts, instead of the number of candidates. Duplicated data from different recruiting websites has not been deleted;
3. Statistics of Global 500 indicate the number of design job posts for the affiliates of Global 500 in China. Same hereinafter;
4. Lists of China 500 and Global 500 are sourced from the 2019 lists published by FORTUNEChina.com, attached with the weblink:
http://www.fortunechina.com/fortune500/c/2019-07/10/content_337536.htm http://www.fortunechina.com/fortune500/c/2019-07/22/content_339535.htm

2.2 China 500 & Global 500 put more emphasis on the candidates' real work experience.

In general, recruiters prefer design talent with 1-5 years of work experience;

As compared with the same period of last year, leading corporations (China 500, Chinese affiliates of Global 500) have had higher standards for candidates' work experience, who demand more of 3-10 years of work experience (60%) instead of 1-3 years (50%).

2020 Requirement of work experience for design candidates



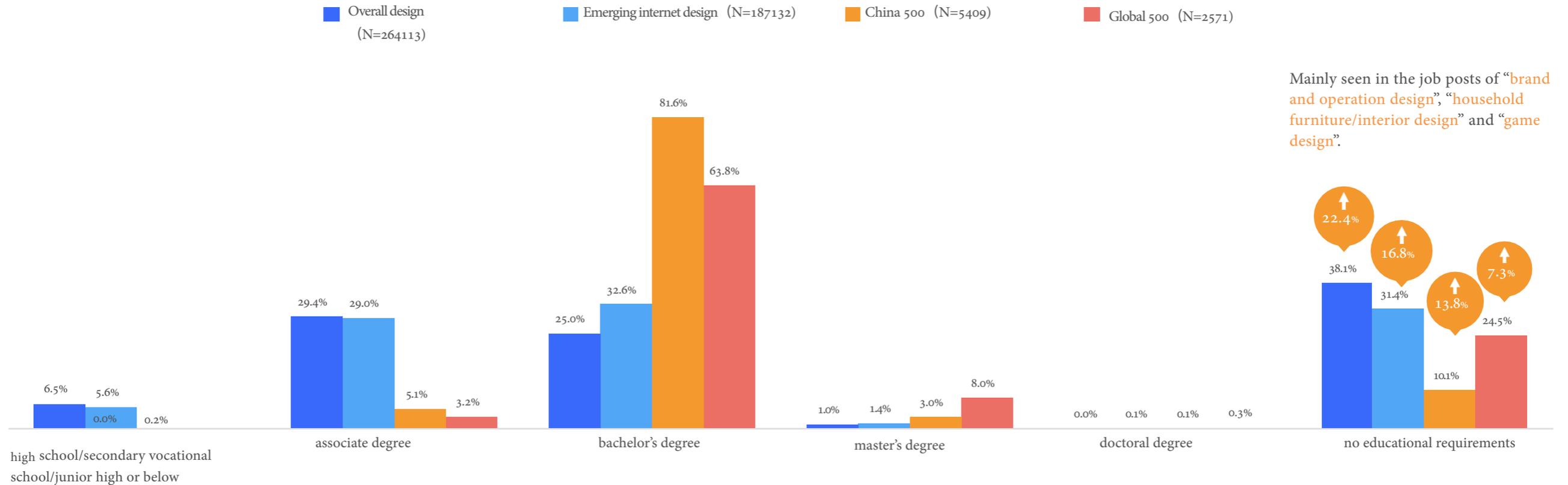
2.2.1 Educational requirements for design talent mainly include associate degree and bachelor's degree, and higher for Top 500 corporations.

Recruiters mostly prefer **associate degree and bachelor's degree** when recruiting design talent;

Leading corporations (China 500, Chinese Affiliates of Global 500) have **higher educational requirements**, with over 60% design-related posts requesting bachelor's degree or above;

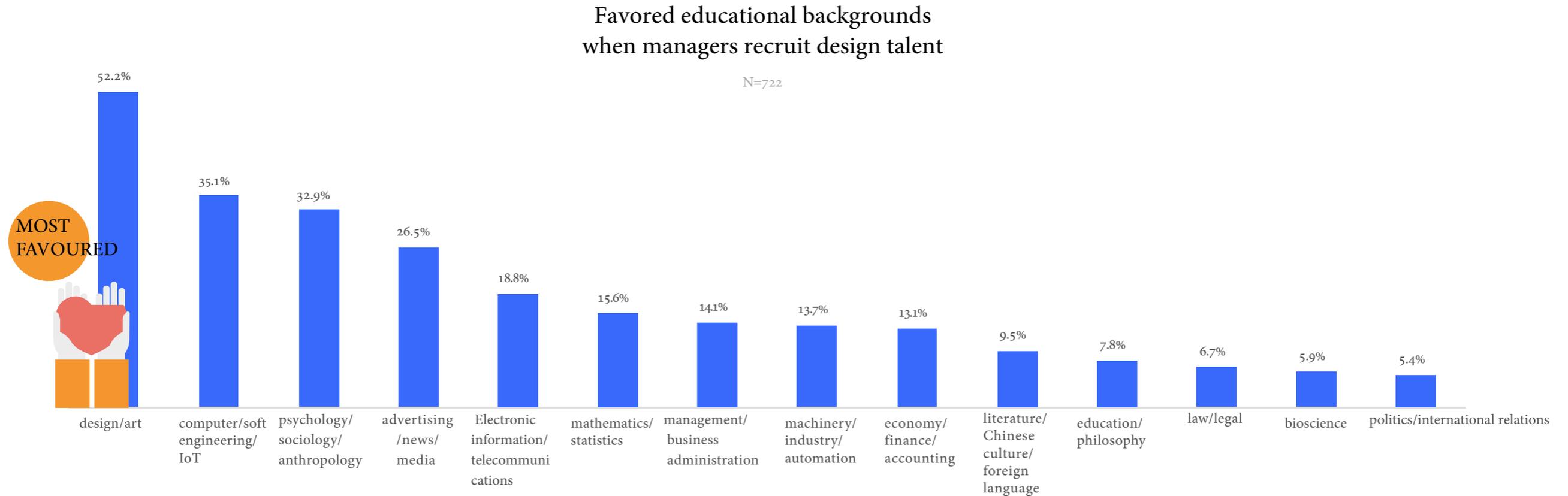
Comparing with the same period of last year, **“no requirements on education level”** for design posts has increased in ratio, frequently seen in the job posts of **“brand and operation design”**, **“household furniture/interior design”** and **“game design”**.

Educational requirements for design candidates



2.2.2 Corporate managers mostly favor candidates majoring in “design/art”, with various backgrounds also appreciated.

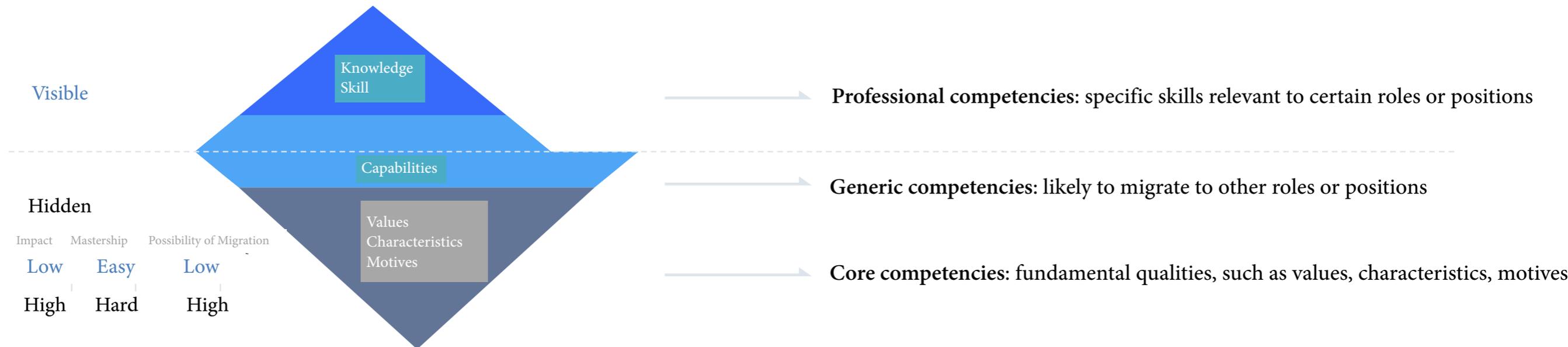
For managers, the most favored educational background is “design/art” (52.2%); other favored backgrounds vary from “computer/soft engineering/IoT”(35.1%) to “psychology/sociology/anthropology”(32.9%) and “advertising/news/media”(26.5%), etc.



2.3 Talent Competency Model Theory

- Prof. McClelland, an American psychologist, proposed the **Iceberg Model of Competencies** in 1973, which was made up of two parts: one was visible, and the other was hidden below the water-line.
- **The visible competencies** include knowledge and skills that are external manifestations, easy to understand and measure, and most of which are related to **specific professional skills**, relatively easy to change and develop via training; the middle layer of the iceberg model is capabilities that are not palpable at the first sight and belong to **generic competencies**, possible to migrate; **the hidden part underneath** includes social status, self-concept, traits and motives, which are internal manifestations, **core to the fundamental qualities** and uneasy to measure;
- Based on the iceberg model of competencies, this report will analyse recruiters' requirements on the candidates' qualifications in three areas, i.e., **core competencies, generic competencies and professional competencies**.

The Iceberg Model of Competencies proposed by Prof. McClelland, the renowned American psychologist



2.3.1 Design values strong teamwork as a core competencies, consisting of collaborative spirit, sense of responsibility, and original thinking.

In terms of core competencies, corporations show various preferences for emerging internet design positions, generally focusing on **teamwork, ability of deep thinking/problem-solving, sense of responsibility, etc.**

Compared with last year, corporations display more preference to **extrovert/active personalities, enthusiasm/passion for work, cultural/artistic qualities, etc.** The ratios of such requirements have risen comparing with the ratio last year.

Core Competencies

TGI	Emerging Internet Design	brand & operation design	interaction design	vision design	user research	game design	
Teamwork	26.8% 	103	87	79	103	82	“cheerful, a sense of responsibility, good professional qualities, spirit of teamwork , ability of coordination and planning”
Deep thinking/ problem-solving	9.3% 	57	228	44	243	29	“ability of deep thinking , good data analysis, problem-solving and observation”
Sense of responsibility	5.7% 	115	86	95	80	128	“conscientious, patient, well-organised, a sense of responsibility , enterprising, work under pressure”
Proactive	6.1% 	74	119	159	83	95	“patient, detail-oriented, reliable, strong sense of responsibility, proactive at work.”
Enterprising	3.6% 	117	120	103	63	137	“ eager to learn and grow, diligent and enterprising ”
Extrovert/active new	2.8% 	120	24	34	67	66	“ extrovert, active thinking, able to collaborate with team members, able to plan ahead and summarise”
Conscientious	3.6% 	127	98	86	73	257	• “proactive at work, conscientious at work, responsible, able to work under pressure.”
Enthusiastic/ passionate new	2.3% 	97	172	96	74	129	• “ passionate for work with great values, active and proactive.”
Integrity	2.0% 	116	13	35	76	41	“ integrity of purpose , good virtues, cheerful personalities.”
Cultural/artistic qualities new	1.7% 	156	43	58	82	108	“Interested in Chinese traditional culture and internet culture ; styles similar to the young generation’s taste, good at QQ persona design.”

new: newly added top 10 qualification requirements in 2020, compared with 2019. (same hereinafter)

note: TGI > 100 means that this group surpasses the population in this indicator; the greater TGI is, the more significant this indicator shows.

2.3.2 Designers need to coordinate with both upstream and downstream, therefore the generic competencies that corporations value are communication skills, target-mindedness, and executive abilities.

Regarding generic competencies, “communication skills”, “objective-mindedness” and “executive skills” are the common requirements for all the emerging internet design posts.

Compared with last year, corporations display more preference to target-mindedness, executive abilities, coordination & planning, acuity/sensitivity, etc. The ratios of such requirements have risen comparing with the ratio last year.

Generic Competencies

TGI	Emerging Internet Design	brand & operation design	interaction design	vision design	user research	game design	
Communication skills	8.7% 	115	107	75	94	93	“great learning capabilities, communication skills, coordination skills, strong sense of responsibility”
Target-mindedness <i>new</i>	7.9% 	81	87	104	148	55	“logic thinking, macro-thinking, target-minded, good process management & habit”
Executive abilities <i>new</i>	7.0% 	76	45	18	143	26	“efficient executive capabilities, able to solve problems during the work”
Talent nurturing	6.1% 	92	47	80	92	152	“have previous work experience in talent nurturing and management”
Coordination/ planning <i>new</i>	5.1% 	101	55	20	108	59	“strong coordination and team management skills, strong sense of responsibility”
Logic/reason	4.0% 	94	157	97	130	85	“good logic and reasoning abilities in product operation”
Project management	3.7% 	87	74	19	101	67	“project management capabilities, schedule management, good communication, strong logic thinking”
Innovative abilities	3.7% 	144	97	215	48	109	• “design is up-to-date, imaginative, originative, high-standard.”
Independent	3.3% 	84	103	136	117	75	“independently work on scientific research projects, strong communication and writing skills”
Acuity/sensitivity <i>new</i>	2.3% 	94	120	88	128	51	“have business sense, sensitive to data and market, able to connect market & competition research to business decisions.”

2.3.3 Emerging internet designers shoulder multiple responsibilities at one position, thus corporations require comprehensive professional competencies. “One profession, holistic capabilities” is now a prerequisite.

Regarding professional competencies, corporations now require **comprehensive capabilities** for emerging internet design, including **product capabilities, user research**, as well as design capabilities.

As compared to the sample population of emerging internet design, corporations now require comprehensive competencies covering **interaction design and user research**; **interaction design** highlights “product”, “data analysis” and “user research”; **user research** position requires competencies concerning “product” and “business”, along with professional research skills.

Professional Competencies

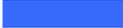
TGI	Emerging Internet Design	brand & operation design	interaction design	vision design	user research	game design	
Design	62.6% 	123	100	109	79	108	“educational background in fine arts, good skills of fine arts, skilful in painting or design ”
Product	13.0% 	91	116	101	124	100	“good aesthetics, certain vision design capabilities, product capabilities is an advantage”
User research	7.0% 	112	134	102	167	93	“certain level of user research , acutely understand user operating habit”
Technology	4.0% 	99	107	85	103	134	“masterful with painting softwares, such as Photoshop, AI, Axure, technological knowledge with Html, CSS, etc. is an advantage”
Data analysis	5.0% 	110	138	92	177	71	“insightful with market and product, product data analysis capabilities”
Marketing	3.4% 	125	25	58	109	49	“good marketing skills, familiar with the market, applications & industry of the intermediate”
Operation	3.4% 	113	17	35	111	47	“know the procedure of product development, masterful with user experience, interaction design, information architecture, certain level of product operation ”
Business analysis	1.6% 	104	27	25	128	33	“good communication skills in solutions, client report and business analysis ”

2.3.4 Regarding design competencies, corporations value tool-handling, quantitative design, and design experience.

Regarding design competencies, corporations require **tool-handling, quantitative design delivery, and industry research** for emerging internet designers.

Professional design competency requirements have varied priorities for different positions of emerging internet design.

Professional Design Competencies

TGI	Emerging Internet Design	brand & operation design	interaction design	vision design	user research	game design	
Tool-handling	18.2% 	89	104	85	83	136	“sufficient knowledge, master design tools , design procedure and design specifications”
Quantitative design delivery	16.2% 	81	111	49	128	49	“able to identify problems based on the product performance after the product is launched, actively optimise product direction in a continuous manner.”
Design experience/masterfulness	9.2% 	120	121	160	112	166	“at least four years of work experience concerning game UI design, know various game UI design styles”
Industry reserach	9.4% 	113	64	146	111	101	“Based on the user research and industry research, deliver scene user research report and industry research report.”
Demand/business understanding	8.1% 	106	97	71	128	74	“grasp good understanding of the business , quickly identify the business priority, form research framework and deliver explicit opinions.”
Design methodologies	3.8% 	103	142	211	141	104	“summarise and share design thinking and methodologies , propose design strategies in a creative fashion, translate good ideas to concrete actions.”
Design positioning/goals	3.5% 	91	59	63	145	73	“set the design positioning , deliver UI design for products, and follow up the project.”
Recap/reflection	2.5% 	84	97	221	116	61	• “develop relative design specifications, deliver retrospective report, recap the experience and commonalities and commit them to a report.”
Design representation/manifestation	2.3% 	121	95	277	76	132	“know and love games, able to deliver rich visual representations , active thinking.”
Design procedure	2.1% 	89	254	108	93	97	“help to build and improve design procedures , specifications and framework.”

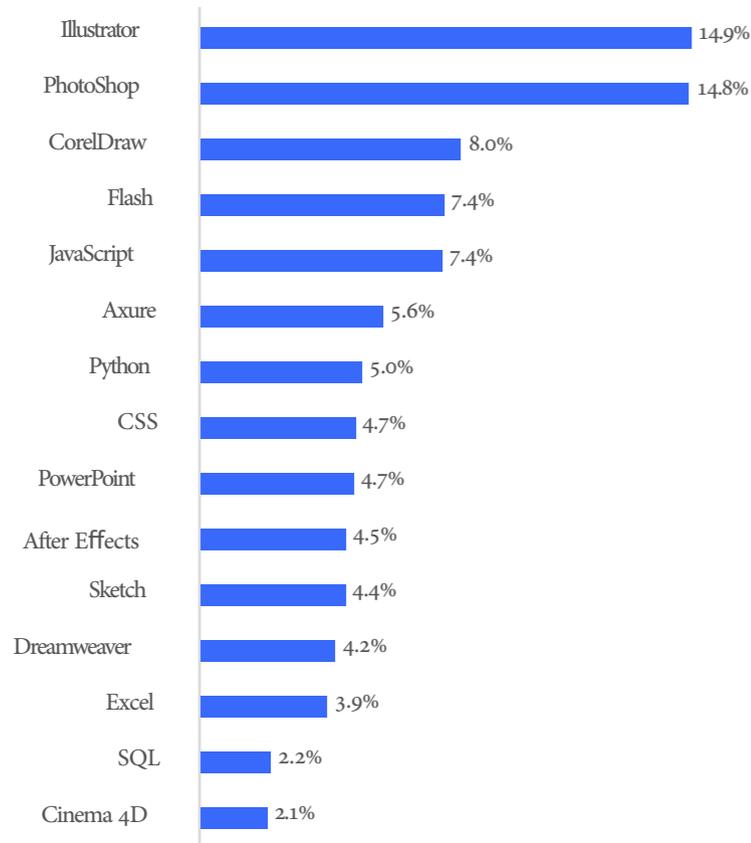
2.3.5 Designers who master new skills/tools are more likely to bring innovation; emergent design's skill requirements are often diversified.

Regarding skill requirements, designers are required to master basic design softwares, such as Illustrator, PhotoShop, etc.

Corporations have more **diverse** skill requirements for emerging internet designers. Apart from basic design softwares, development capabilities using JavaScript, CSS, etc. are also valued.

relative value, relatively larger percentage compared to other positions

TOP skill requirements for emerging internet design



visual design

- PhotoShop
- Illustrator
- After Effects
- Sketch
- Coreldraw
- Cinema 4D
- Axure
- Adobe XD
- Figma
- Fireworks

interaction design

- Sketch
- Axure
- PhotoShop
- Illustrator
- Maya
- CSS
- Flash
- Visio
- Xmind
- Cinema 4D

brand design

- PhotoShop
- Illustrator
- CorelDraw
- Premier
- After Effects
- Cinema 4D
- 3Dmax
- InDesign
- Flash
- Maya

game design

- PhotoShop
- 3Dmax
- Maya
- After Effects
- Zbrush
- Spine
- Flash
- Illustrator
- Painter
- Cinema 4D

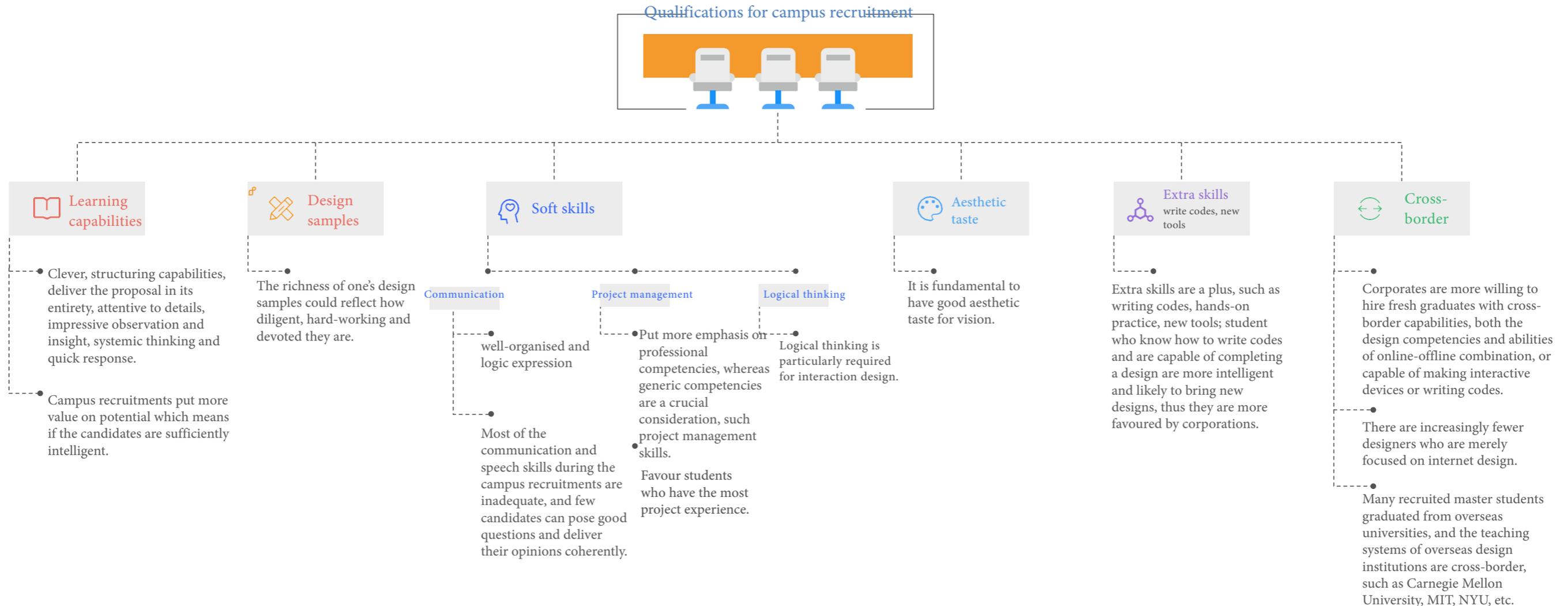
user research

- Python
- SQL
- Excel
- PowerPoint
- SPSS
- Spark
- SAS
- Tableau
- Word
- PowerBI

- “participate in the design of products on mobile terminals and relative extensions, participate in the overall design planning of projects. Qualifications: 1. preferably major in design; able to design websites and complete the re-construction of static webpages; 2. master **H5, DIV+CSS3**, responsive layout, etc. and various application softwares concerning webpages and arts, including **Photoshop, Coreldraw, Illustrator, Dreamweaver, Flash, Fireworks, etc.**”
- “design, draw and slice interface effect, code relative styles, create static **HMTL** webpage, write **html+css** codes, adjust compatibility of various browsers, coordinate with the development and completion of webpage modification, maintenance, update and revision.”
- “master tools of prototype, flow chart, wireframe, such as **Sketch, Axure, Visio, Photoshop, etc.**, swiftly design prototype and interaction with the prototype tools.”
- “produce special effects for characters, scenes and UI, familiarity of producing special effects with softwares such as **Photoshop, 3DMax/Maya, After Effects, U3D, Cocos, Spine, etc.**, have certain level of animation production experience and drawing capabilities, deep understanding of the particle system.”
- “Have experience in hosting offline interviews, focus groups, etc., good communication with users, accurately mine user insights, master data analytics softwares such as **SPSS, SAS, Tableau, etc.**, solid knowledge of quantitative analysis.”

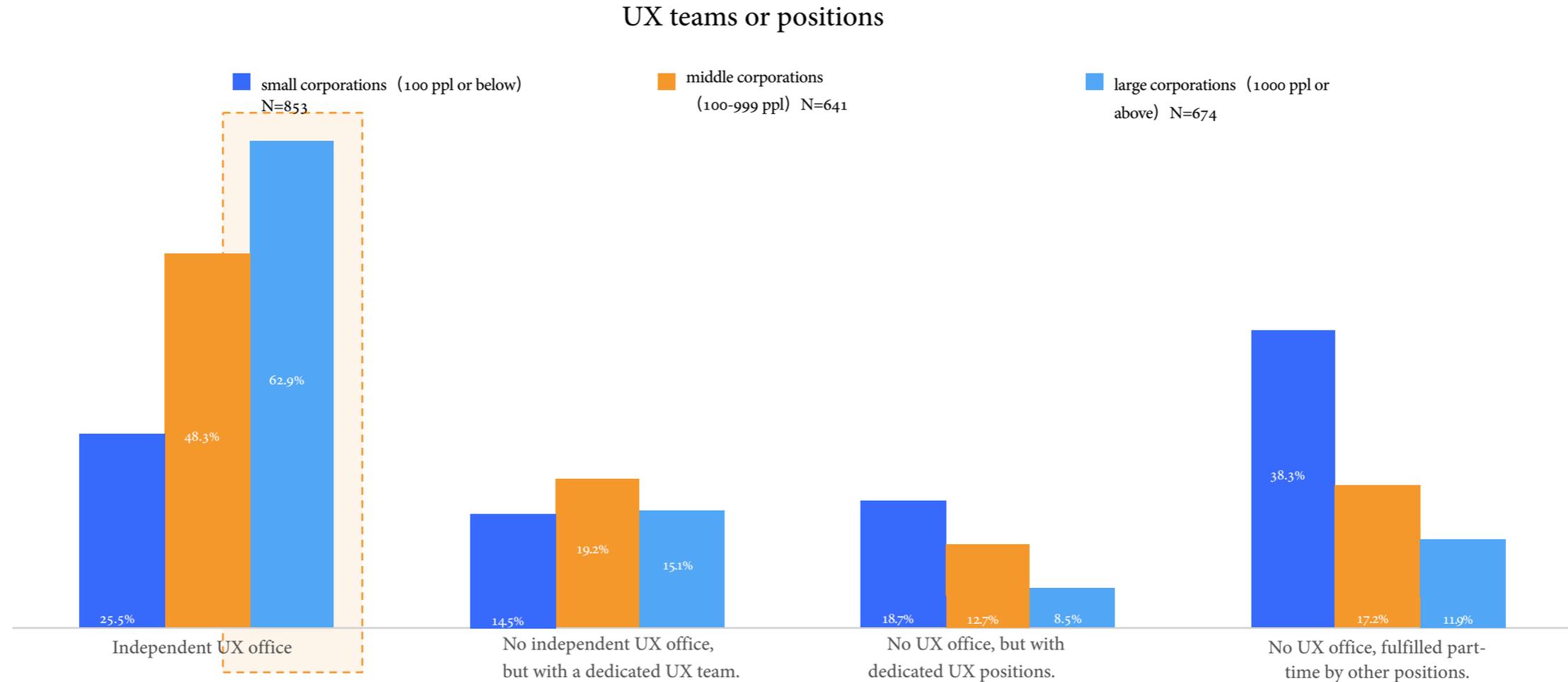
2.3.6 Campus recruitment of internet giants is highly competitive, where comprehensive capabilities are greatly valued, and extra skills and crossover competencies are advantageous.

Internet giants have increasingly higher requirements, and thus their campus recruitments are particularly competitive. Besides the **professional design competencies**, **soft skills** and **extra design skills** are greatly valued.



2.4 UX team distribution

Designers in **large corporations** mainly work at the **independent department specialized in working on user experience** (62.9%), whereas small corporations mostly do not have an independent department.

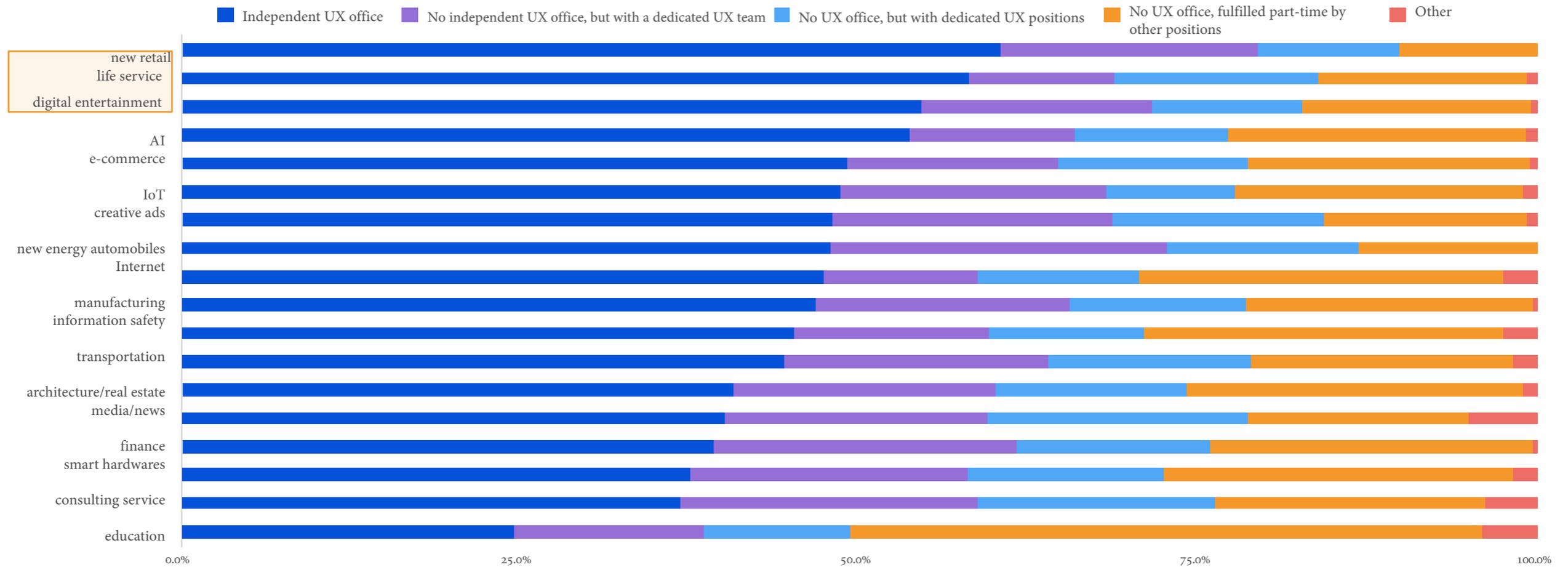


2.4.1 UX team distribution in different Sectors

Corporations from different sectors have varied arrangements of UX teams. Those in the sector of **new retail, life service, and digital entertainment** have the highest ratio of having **independent UX office**.

Most corporations from the education sector do not have a UX office or team, and UX roles are mainly fulfilled part-time by other positions (46.5%).

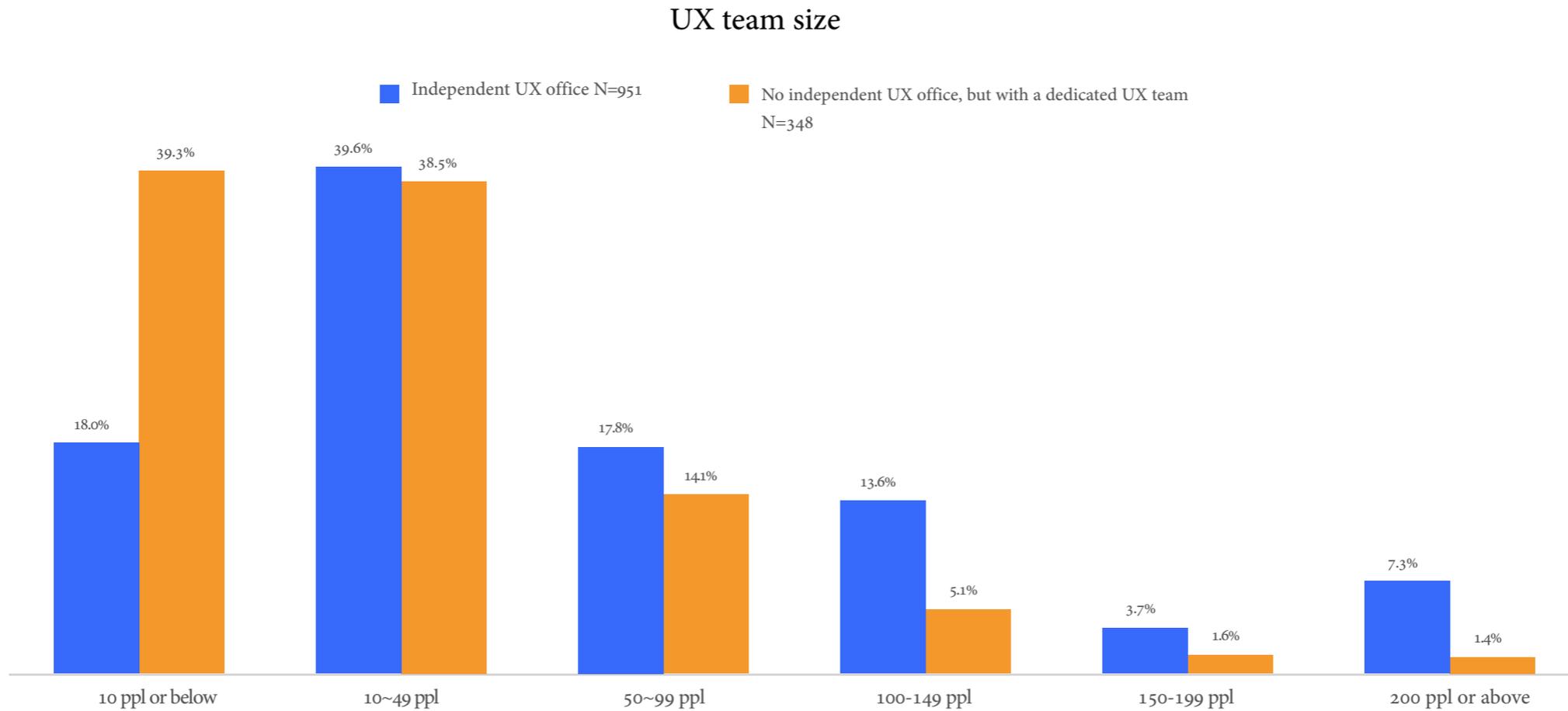
UX teams in different sectors N=2168



2.4.2 UX team size

An independent UX office is normally a team of 10-99 ppl (57.4%), and another 24.5% with 100 ppl or above.

The dedicated UX team with no independent office is mainly composed of 49 ppl or below (77.8%).

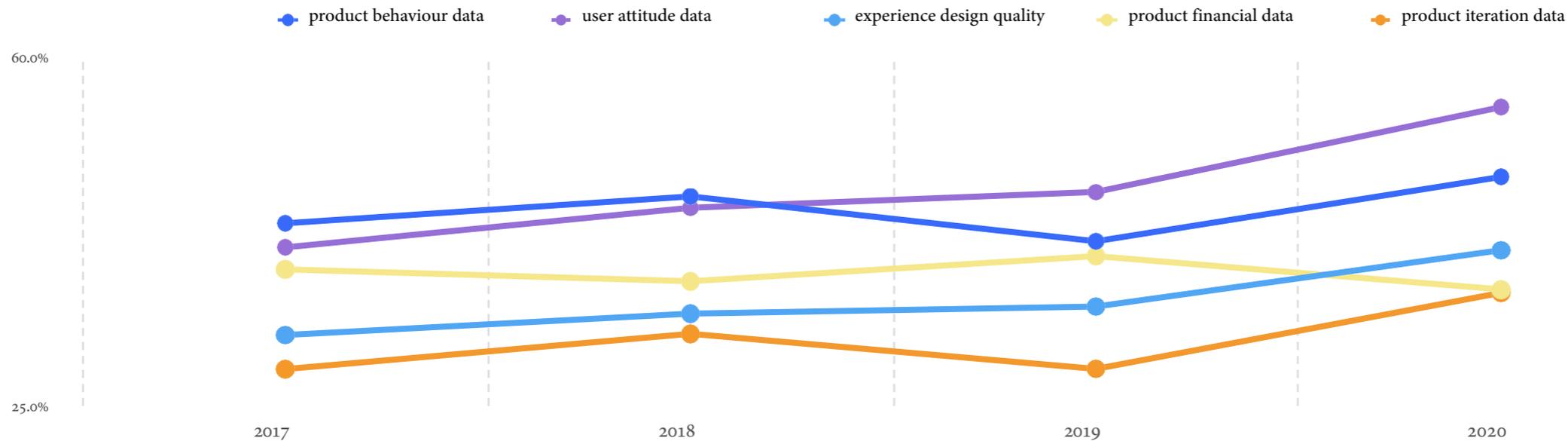


2.5 The weights of “user attitude data” and “experience design quality” in the KPI indicators are on the rise.

KPI for a corporation’s key products usually includes user attitude data (55.4%), product behavior data (48.4%) and experience design quality (41.0%).

The user attitude data and experience design quality are taking more weights in KPI indicators for key products. In 2020, the experience design quality surpassed the product financial data for the first time.

Common KPI indicators for key products



product behaviour data: PV, UV, DAU, MAU, retention rate, download volume, Crash rate;
user attitude data: user satisfaction, recommendation, brand recognition rate, brand image, etc.

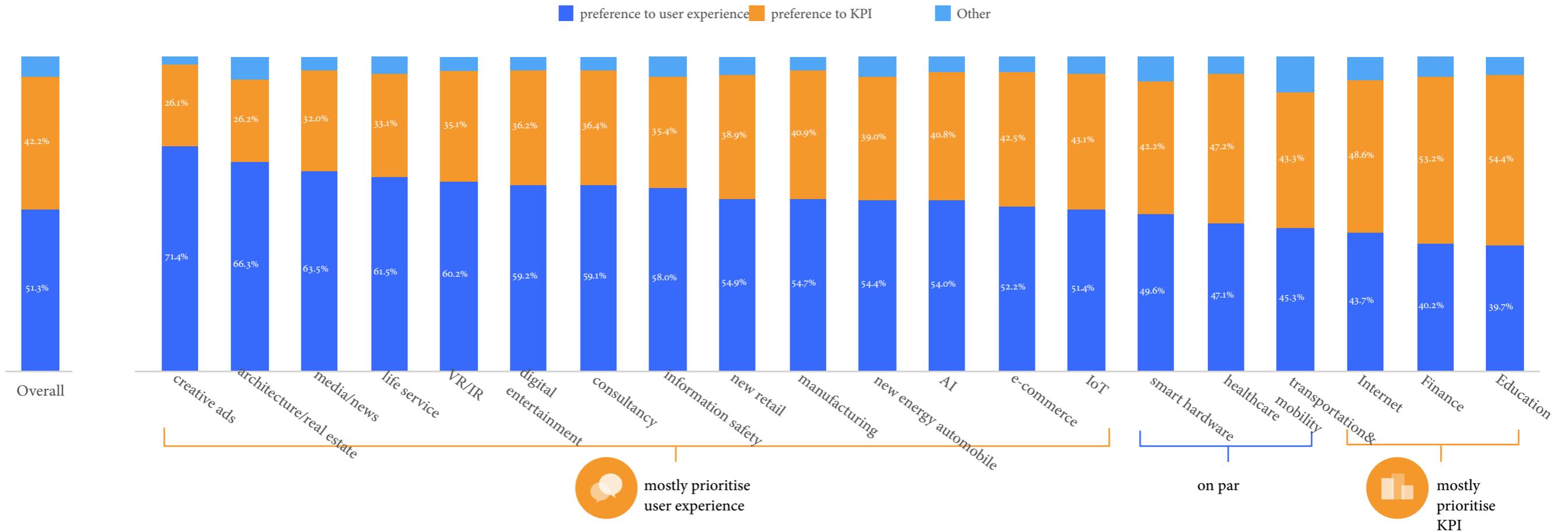
product financial data: revenues, margin, etc.
product iteration data: product launch date, launch frequency, etc.

Note: 2016 N=1580; 2017 N=2842; 2018 N=2810; 2019 N=3445; 2020 N=2168

2.5.1 When KPI conflicts with the user experience indicator, decision-maker often prioritizes user experience.

When the key product KPI (user experience not included) conflicts with the user experience, in general, the preference to user experience (51.3%) exceeded the preference to KPI (42.2%) for the first time in many years. The former preference is more prominent in sectors of creative advertising, space architecture/real estate, media/news, life service, etc.

Decision-making when KPI conflicts with user experience

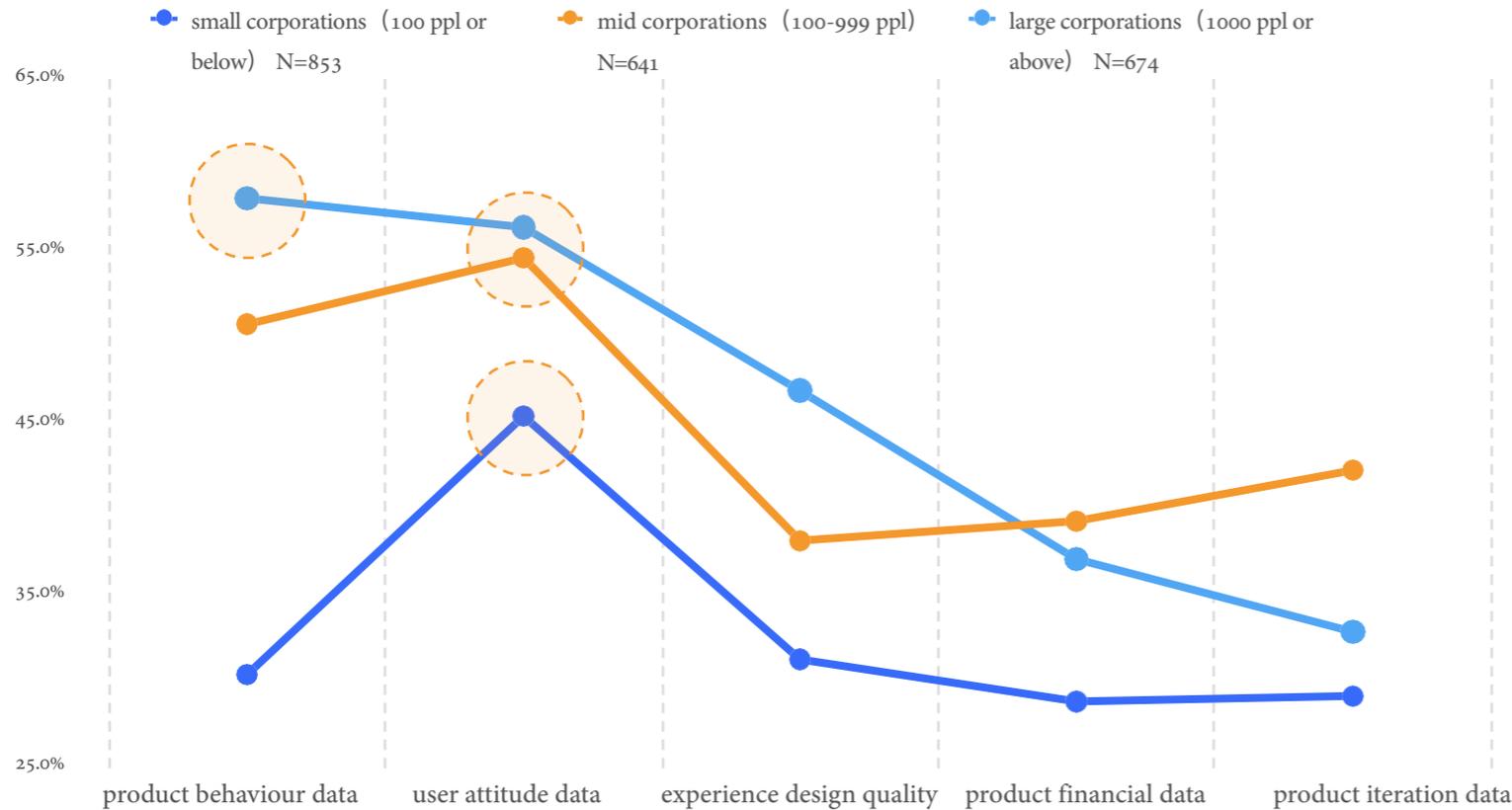


2.5.2 Large corporations value more on product behavior data, whereas SMEs prioritize user experience.

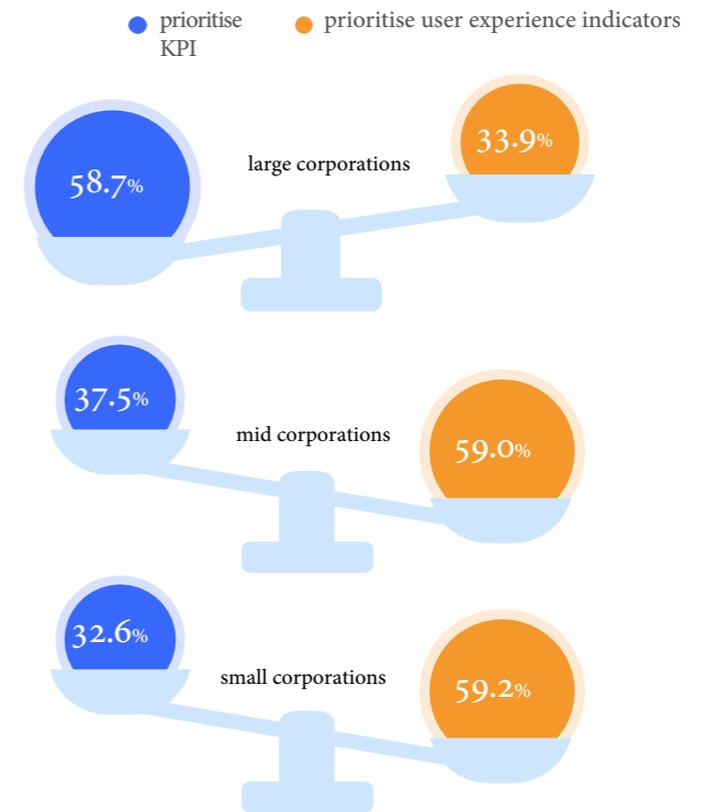
Large corporations prioritize product behaviour data, followed by user attitude data. Whereas SMEs prioritize user attitude data.

When the key product KPI conflicts with user experience, large corporations prioritize KPI and SMEs prioritize user experience indicators.

Common KPI indicators for key products in differently sized corporations



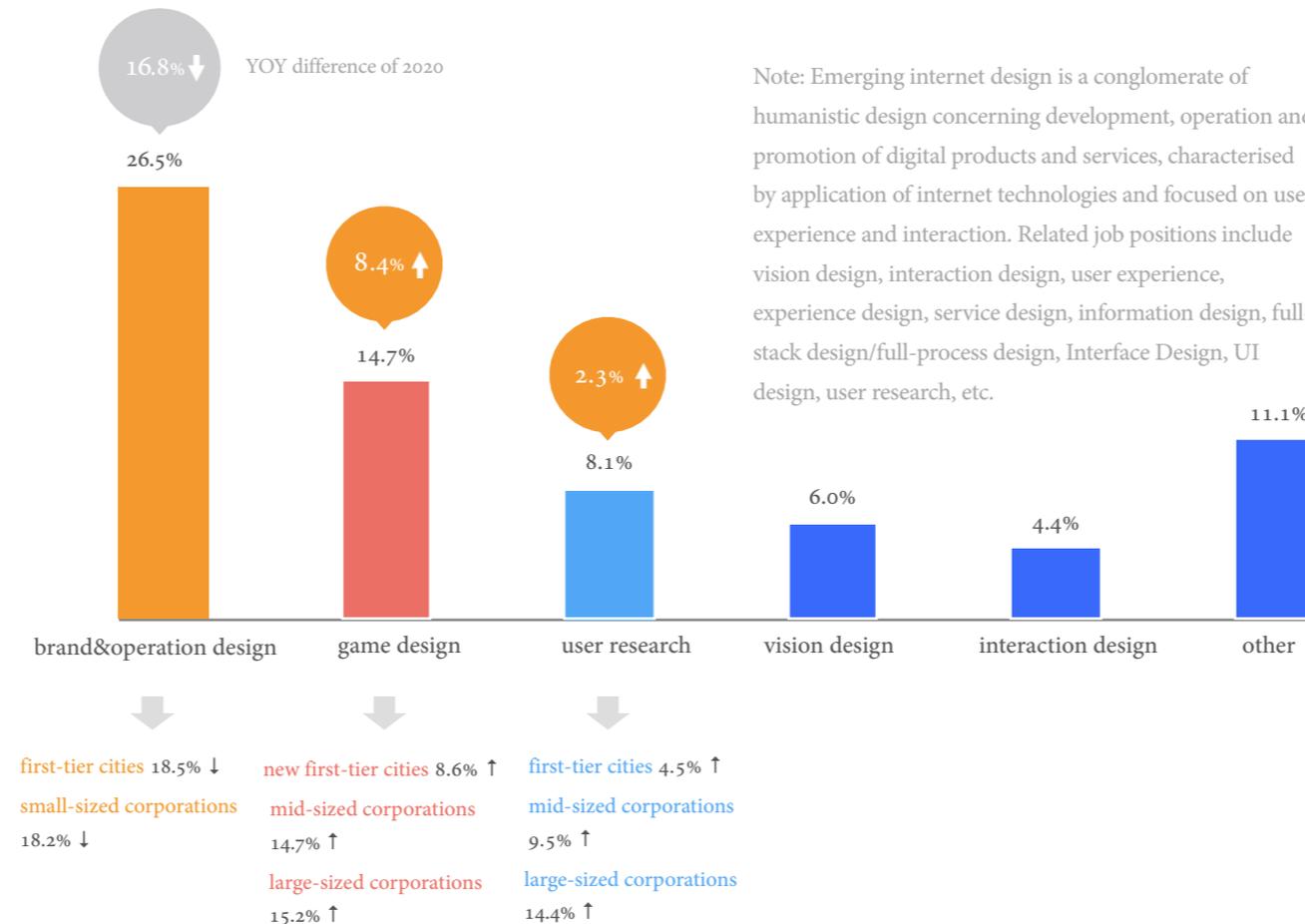
decision-making when KPI conflicts with user experience



2.6 The epidemic accelerated the development of digital entertainment industry. Among the emerging internet design posts, game design has seen the sharpest increase in recruiting ratio, while brand design has seen the biggest decline.

Comparing with last year's recruitment of emerging internet design, the ratio of brand and operation design (26.5%) has declined by 16.8%; the ratio of game design (14.7%) and user research (8.1%) has risen by 8.4% and 2.3% respectively; such changes this year have to do with the accelerated growth of digital entertainment industry due to the epidemic.

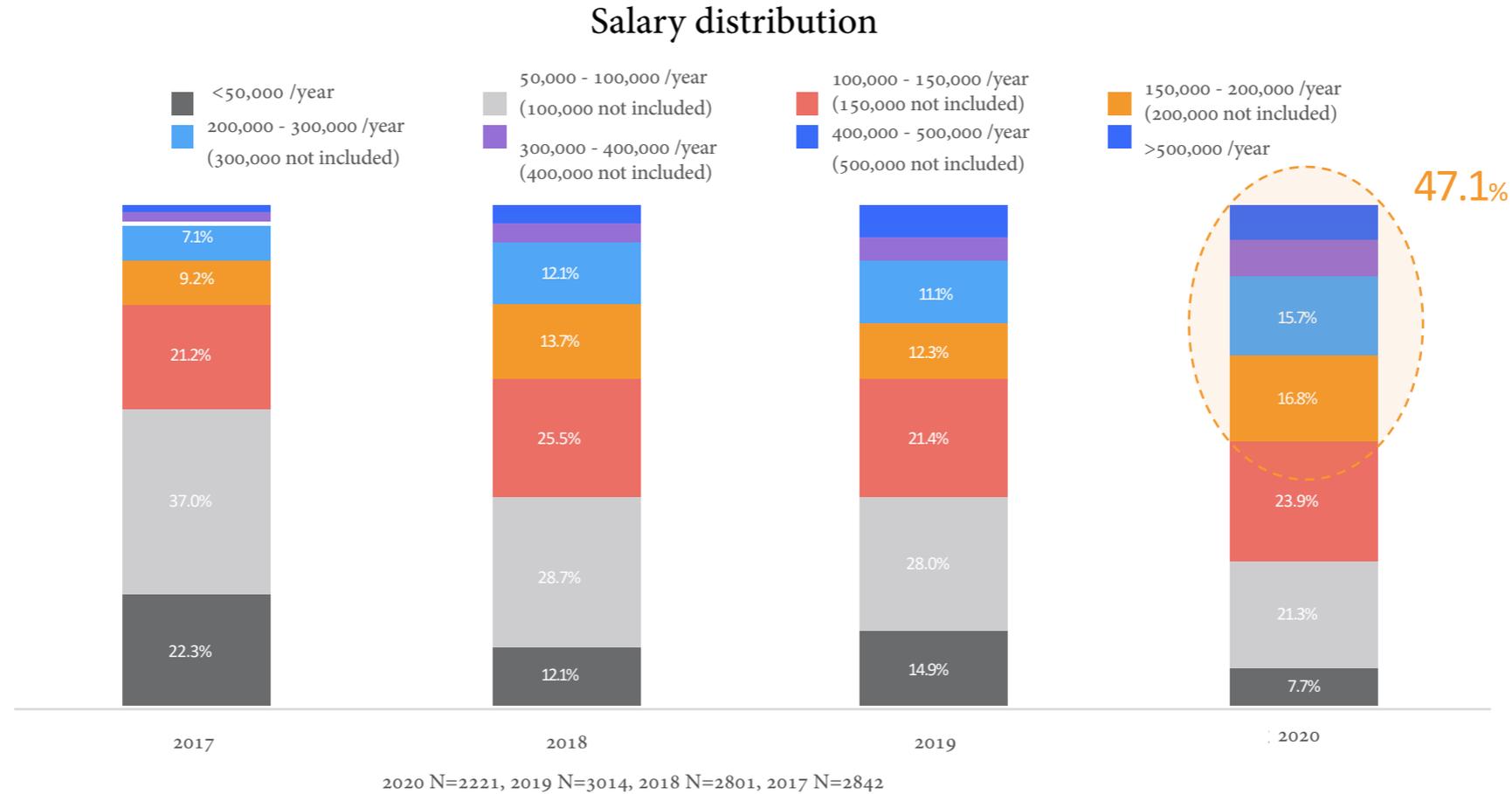
Recruiting volume of emerging internet design posts 2020



2.6.1 During the epidemic, the ratio of designers with mid-high salaries has risen.

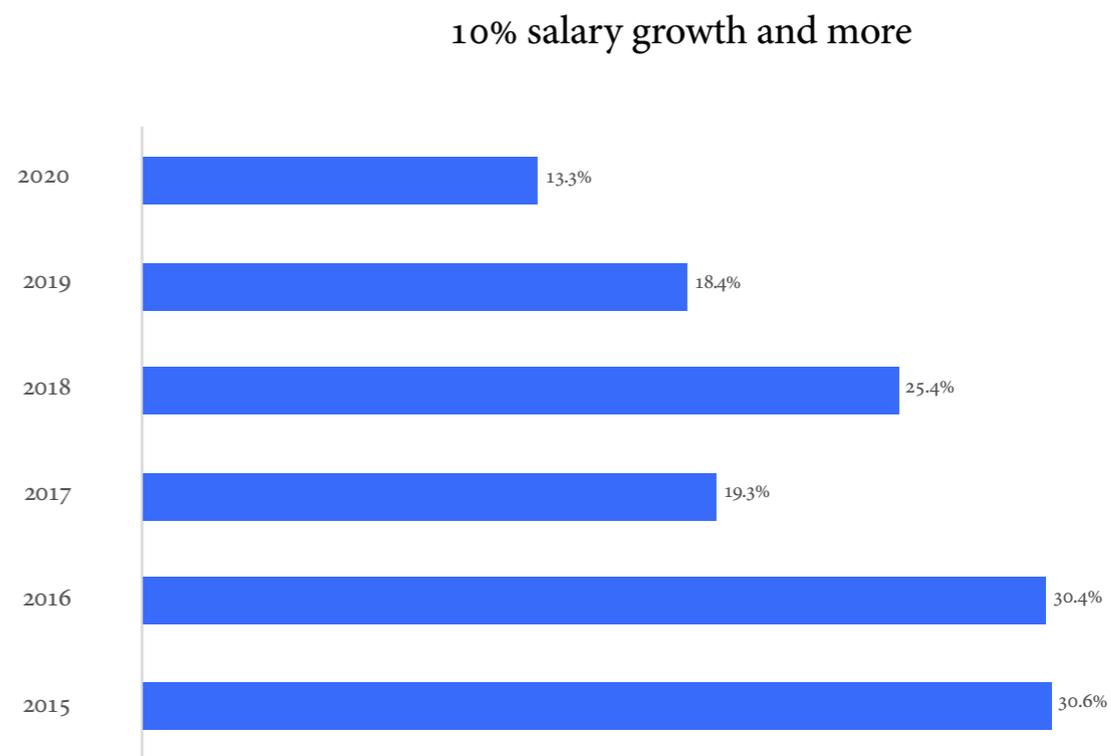
The salary of user experience designers normally ranges from 50,000 to 200,000. (73.8%)

In general, the salary is on a rising path in recent years. The ratio of annual salary this year at 150,000 and above has grown by 11.3% year-on-year.



2.6.2 However, the salary growth slowed down in recent years, particularly for SMEs being hit hard by the epidemic. A small percentage of designers had to endure negative growth of salaries.

In general, more than 50% of designers had increasing salaries this year, but **the growth rate has declined**. The ratio of **over 10% growth rate** was **record lowest over the past six years**. Salaries of 40% of designers remained unchanged, and another 4.3% with negative growth, possibly relevant to **SMEs being hit hard by the epidemic**.

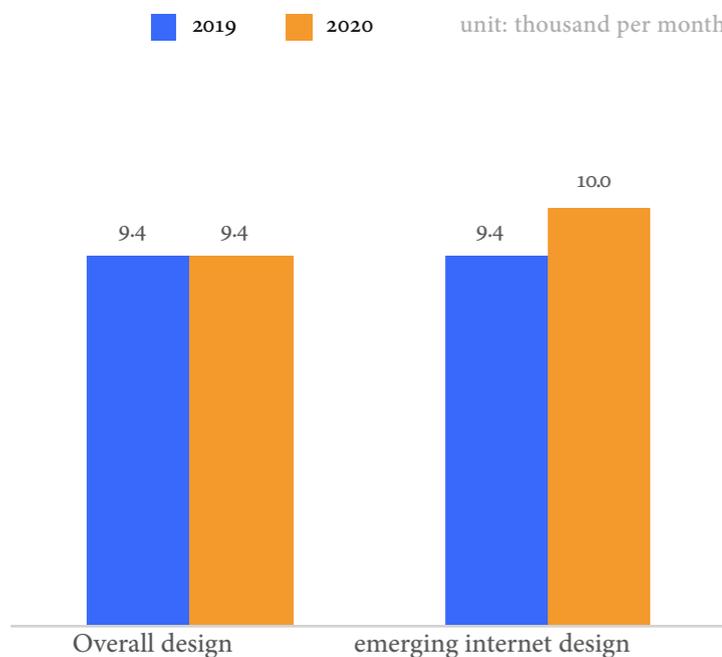


2.6.3 The pandemic has little impact on the overall wages of new designer posts, whose wage level remain as the same level of last year. The wages of new posts of emerging internet design have slightly increased.

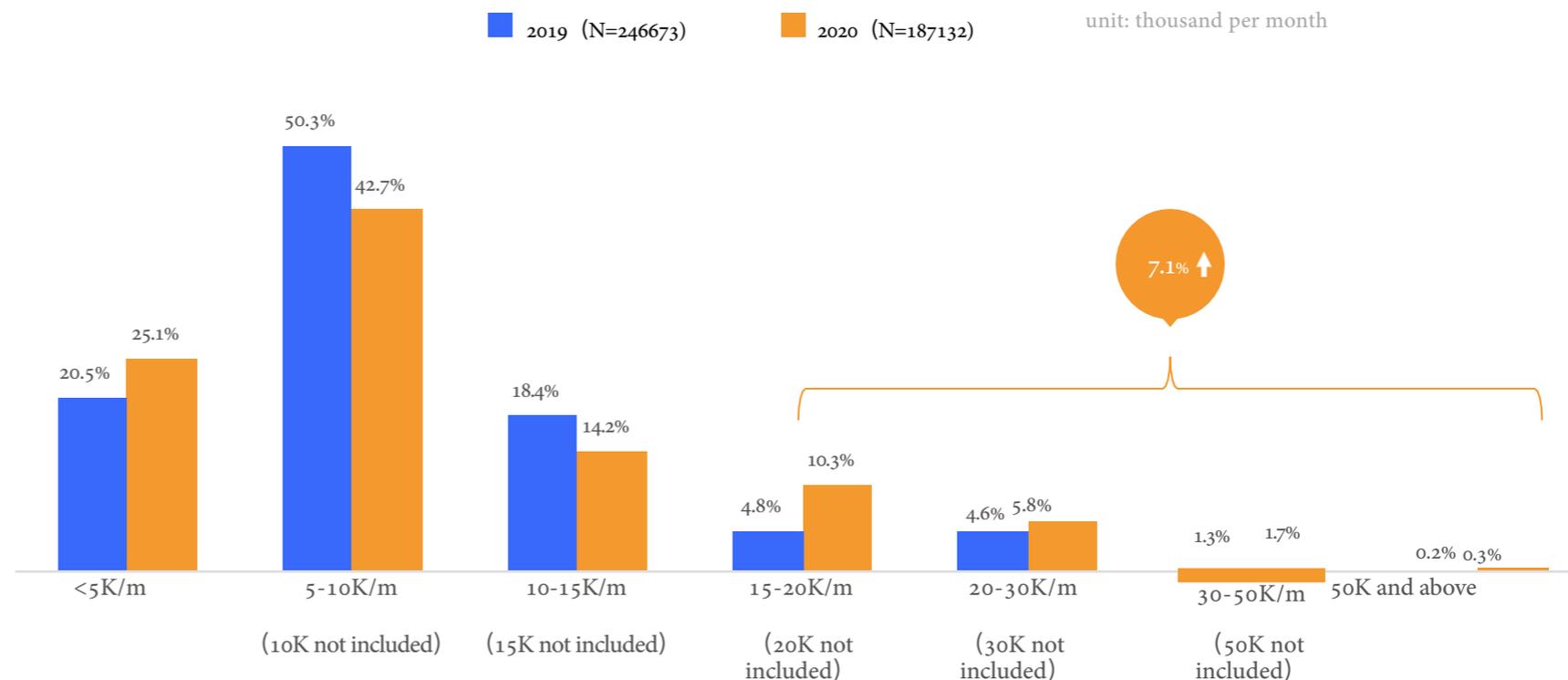
As compared with the same period of last year, the average salaries of new designer posts in 2020 remain unchanged at **9.4k per month**.

The new post salaries of emerging internet design have risen in 2020, averaged at 10k per month, which was mainly attributed to the rising ratio of wages above 15k/m that has grown by 7.1% yoy.

Average wages of new design positions

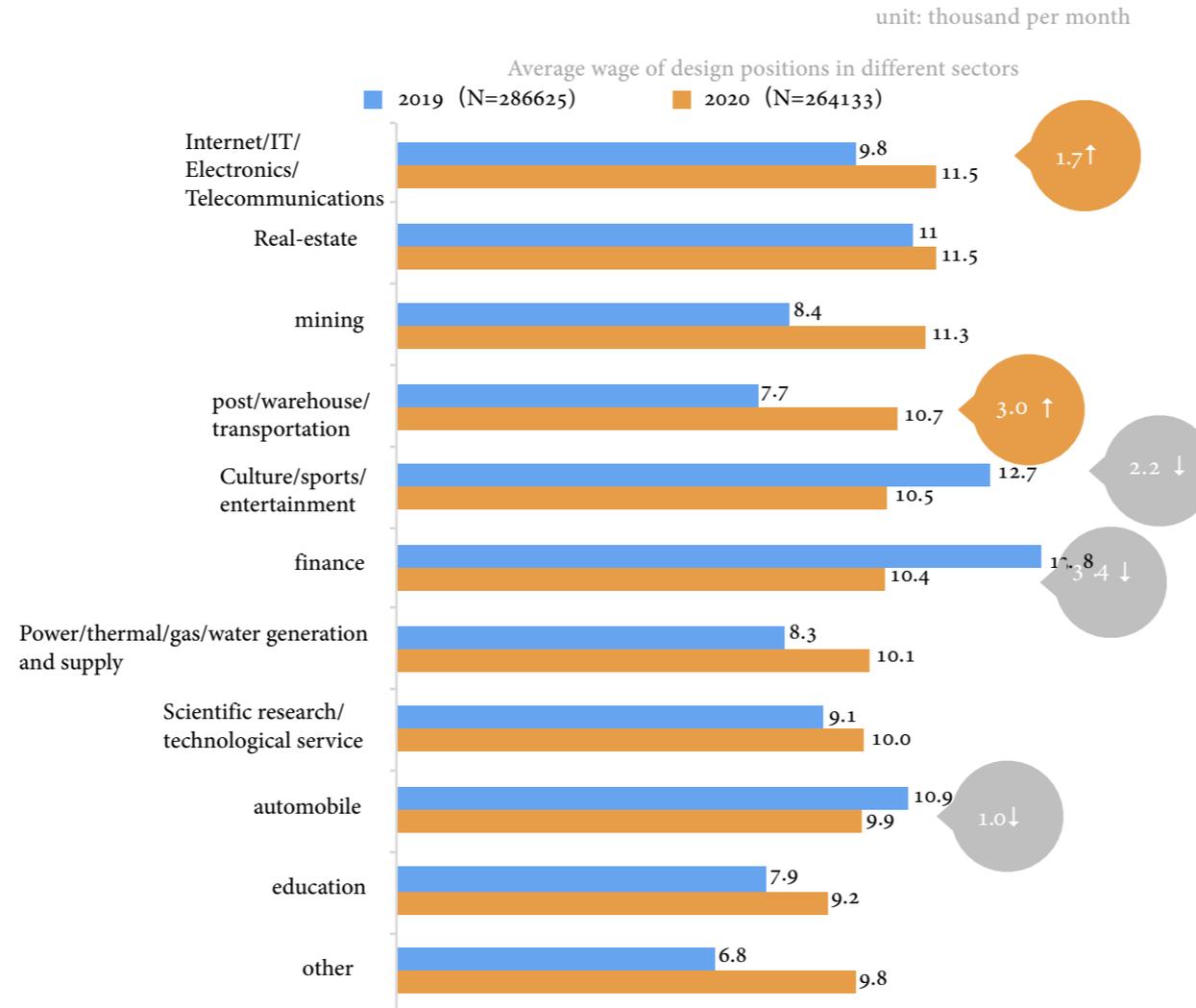


Wage distribution of new emerging internet design posts



2.6.4 The epidemic promoted the work and life online, thus the average wage growth of new design posts in the sector of Internet and posting/warehouse/transportation has risen significantly.

The epidemic promoted work and life online, thus the average wage growth of new design posts in the sector of Internet, posting/warehouse/transportation has increased significantly; however, in the traditional sectors that were hugely impacted by the pandemic, such as finance, culture/sports/entertainment, automobile, etc., the average wage growth has drastically declined.



2.6.5 The epidemic has little impact on the wages in tier-1 cities, senior designers, and mid-large-sized corporations, whose wage have increased for new posts.

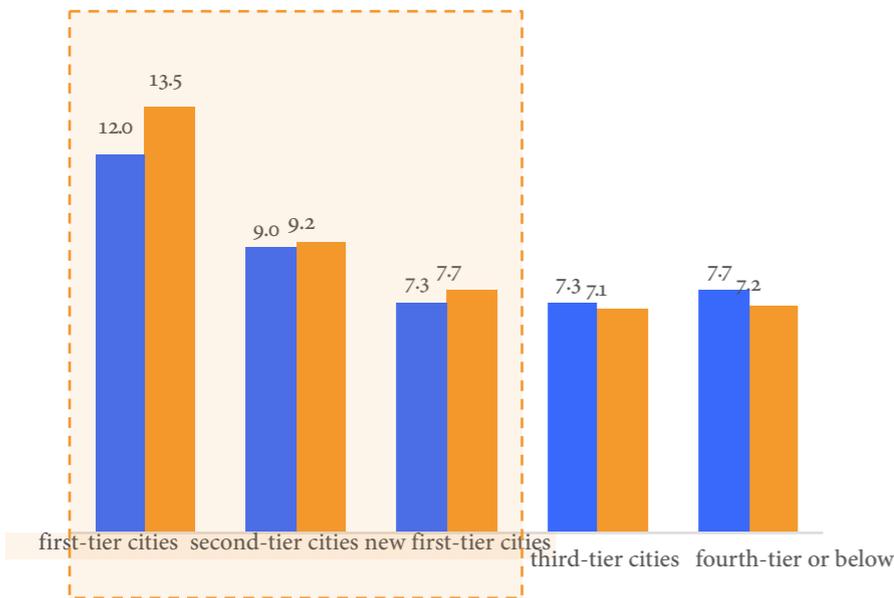
As compared with the same period of last year, the average wage of new posts for **emerging internet design** has increased in **tier-1, new tier-1 and tier-2 cities**, among which the tier-1 cities have witnessed the sharpest growth (by 1.5K/month).

The average wage of new posts of emerging internet design that require **more than 3 years of work experience** has grown, with the senior posts that require **over 10 years of experience** enjoying the largest growth (by 4.8K/month);

The average wage of new posts in **mid-large-sized corporations** has relatively large increase compared with the same period of last year.

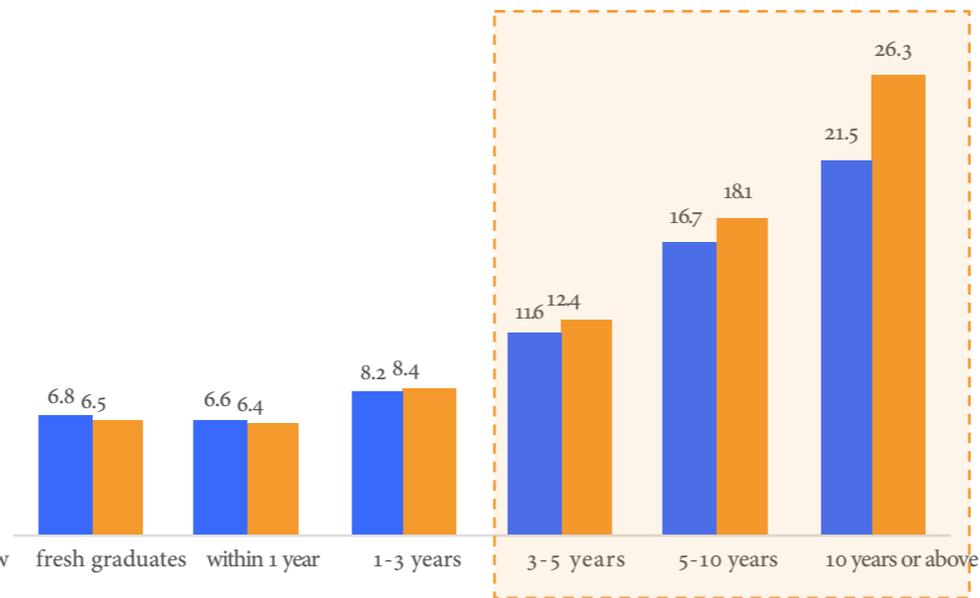
Average wage of new emerging internet design posts in different regions

■ 2019 ■ 2020 unit: thousand per month



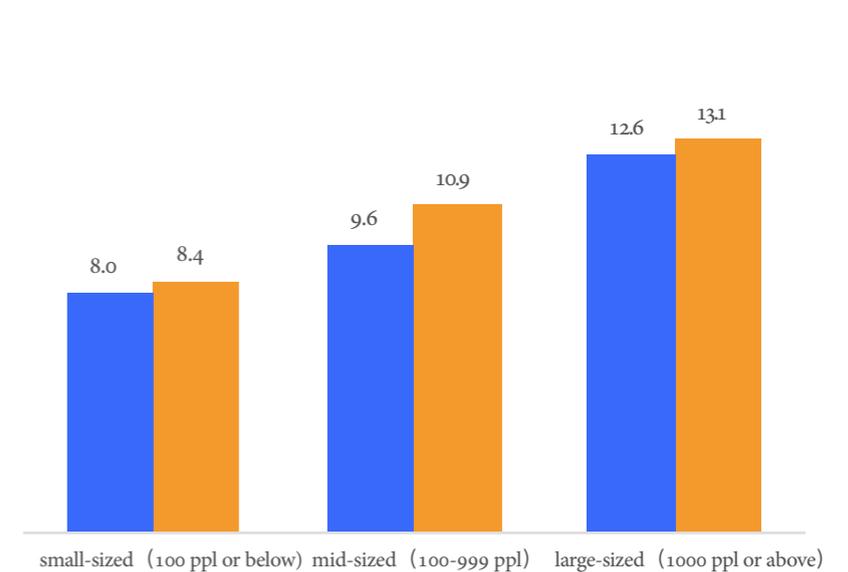
Average wage of new emerging internet design posts with different experience requirements

■ 2019 ■ 2020 unit: thousand per month



Average wage of new emerging internet design posts with corporations of different sizes

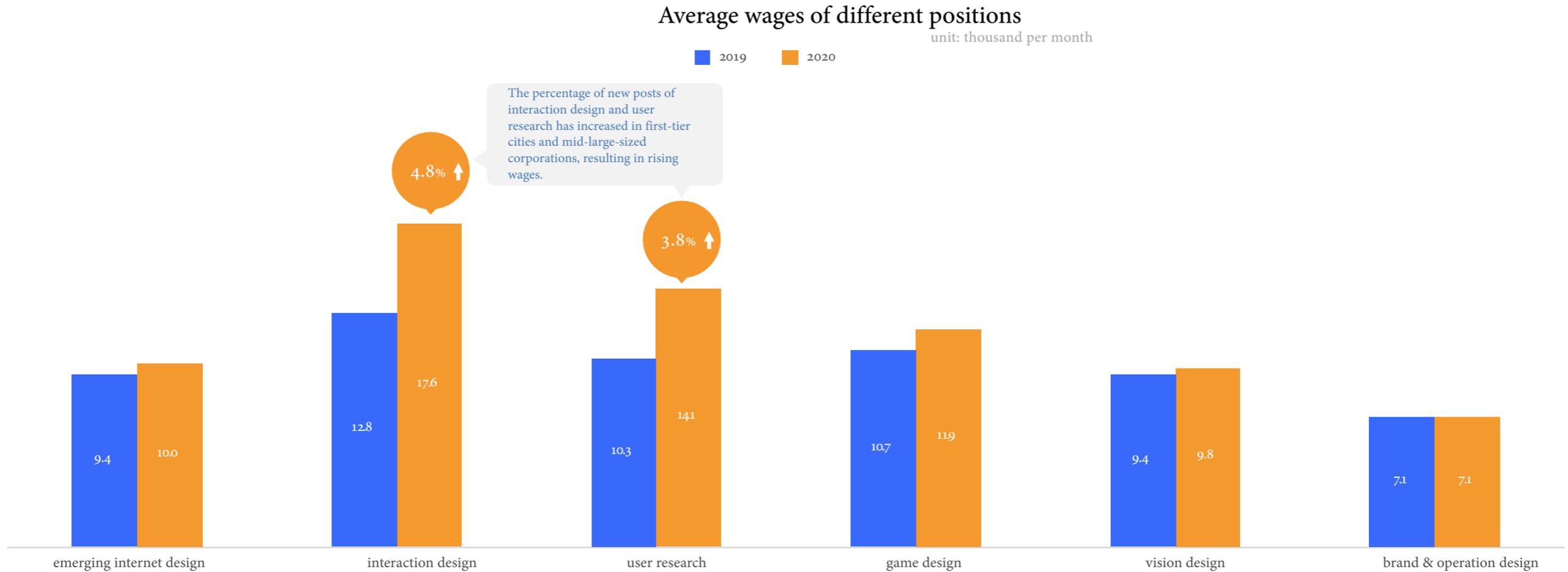
■ 2019 ■ 2020 unit: thousand per month



2.6.6 The wages of new emerging internet design posts have risen against the backdrop of the pandemic, among which interaction design and user research had the highest raise in the average wage.

As compared with the same period of last year, the average wage of new emerging internet design posts in 2020 has slightly risen to 10.0k/month.

The interaction design and user research had the biggest growth of average wages, mainly manifested in tier-1 and new tier-1 cities and mid-large-sized corporations.



3.0 Design Talent & Employees Status Quo

This year's pandemic is catalyzing the growth of digital economy, not only in the internet companies with relatively stable UX culture and structure, but also in digital life and other new digital technology fields. UX talents are also expanding their footprints into companies in new tier-1, tier-2, and even tier-3 cities.

The major pain points for designers' development are lack of working environment support and limitation in career development. They yearn for more training and learning opportunities.

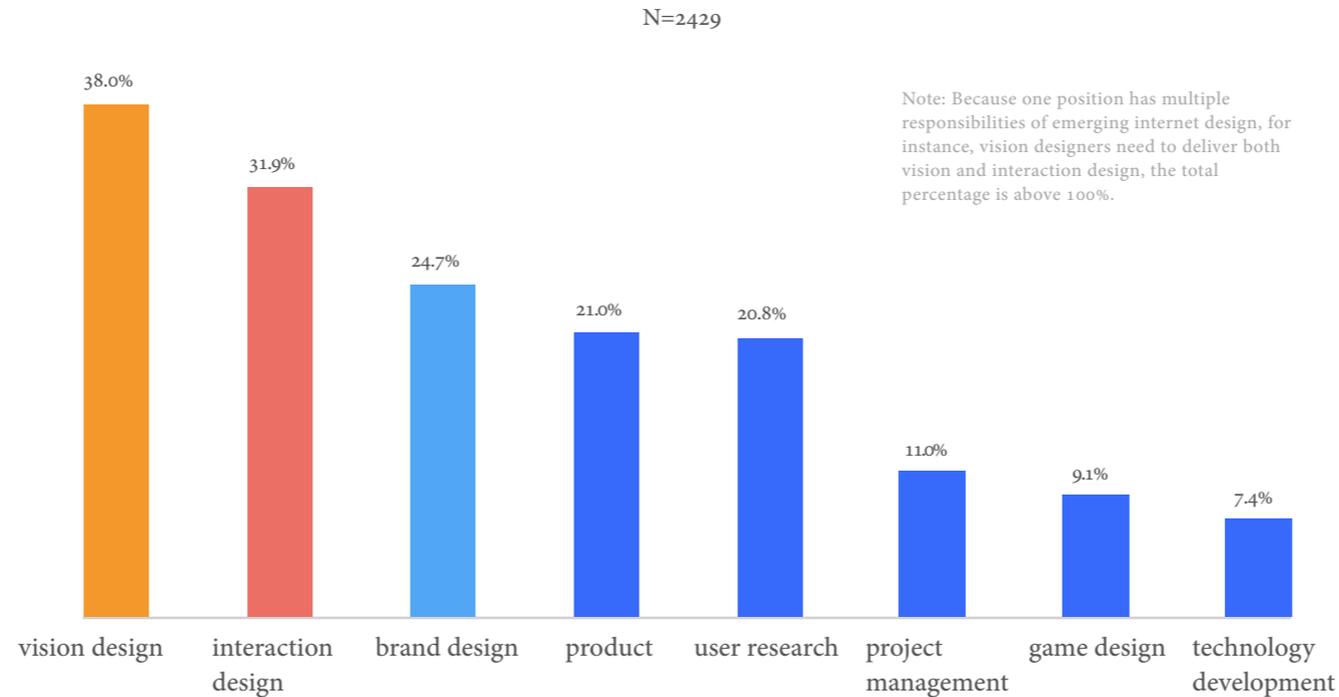
This year, the global economy is teeming with uncertainties because of the pandemic. As such, designers are more inclined to stability, and a major proportion of them do not plan a switch, whose proportion is highest in the recent 6 years. Big tech companies such as Tencent, Alibaba, Huawei, Apple, ByteDance, etc. are the most desired destination.

USER EXPERIENCE INDUSTRY SURVEY

3.1 Designers primarily work at positions of vision design, interaction design, brand design, product, user research, etc.

According to our survey, user experience designers mostly work at positions of emerging internet design, such as **vision design** (38.0%), **interaction design** (31.9%), **brand design** (24.7%), **product** (21.0%), **user research** (20.8%), etc.

Emerging internet design position distribution



3.1.1 Designer Persona



vision design

Designers with relatively low salaries who are not satisfied with the status quo and want to have a change, yet don't know where to begin.

Mostly female with the average age at 27.9 years old; Educational background in design/art, such as vision communication design; relatively low salaries, low confidence in the industry; limited career path, eager to find another job yet not clear how to begin; frequently teach themselves online, mainly in courses of design thinking, creative and innovation design, aesthetics and art.



interaction design

Designers with relatively high salaries who are not clear about job responsibilities and objectives, yet willing to stay in the user experience sector.

Slightly more female representation with the average age at 28.0 years old; educational background in design/art, such as digital media, etc.; many work in large corporations and choose to find a new job because they don't like the corporate culture or have few training opportunities; many attend online courses of design thinking, user research or product definition.



brand design

The youngest group of designers with the lowest salaries in small corporations who are unsatisfied with mundane and repetitive work and unleashed potential.

Slightly more female representation with the average age at 27.7 years old; the youngest group of designers; more associate degree holders compared with other positions; mainly seen in sectors like creative advertising, e-commerce, etc.; mainly work in small-sized corporations; feel that the work is repetitive and mundane; many are attending online courses of creative and innovation design.



game design

Male artistic minds that have the longest OT work hours and are satisfied with the status quo, confident in the sector.

More male representation, averaged at 28.5 years old; educational background in design/art, such as digital media; mid-level wage; longest average daily work hours, 31.6% with 10 hours of daily work; slow promotion and yet they don't intend to find a new job; many attend online courses of creative and innovation design.



user research

Highly-educated research specialists with diverse backgrounds; stable career path in large corporations.

More female designers with average age at 28.9 years old; the highest educational level, 31.9% with master's or doctoral degree; diverse educational background in user research, mostly in psychology and sociology; relatively high salary level; many work in large corporations; they want to have resourceful managers to secure more say in decision-making; many attend online courses of user research and product definition.



product

Young designers who want to have standardised procedures and guidance from managers.

More male representation with the average age at 28.6 years old; mid-salary-level; unsatisfied with non-standardised procedures; unclear with the job responsibilities and objectives; they want to have more guidance from managers; many attend online courses of design thinking, user research and product definition.



project management

Middle-aged and most senior designers with the highest wages who expect more team support.

Slightly more male representation; the oldest group of designers, averaged at 30.3 years old; more educational background in management and industrial design compared with other positions; the highest pay level; the most senior; many attend online courses of design thinking, project management and design management.



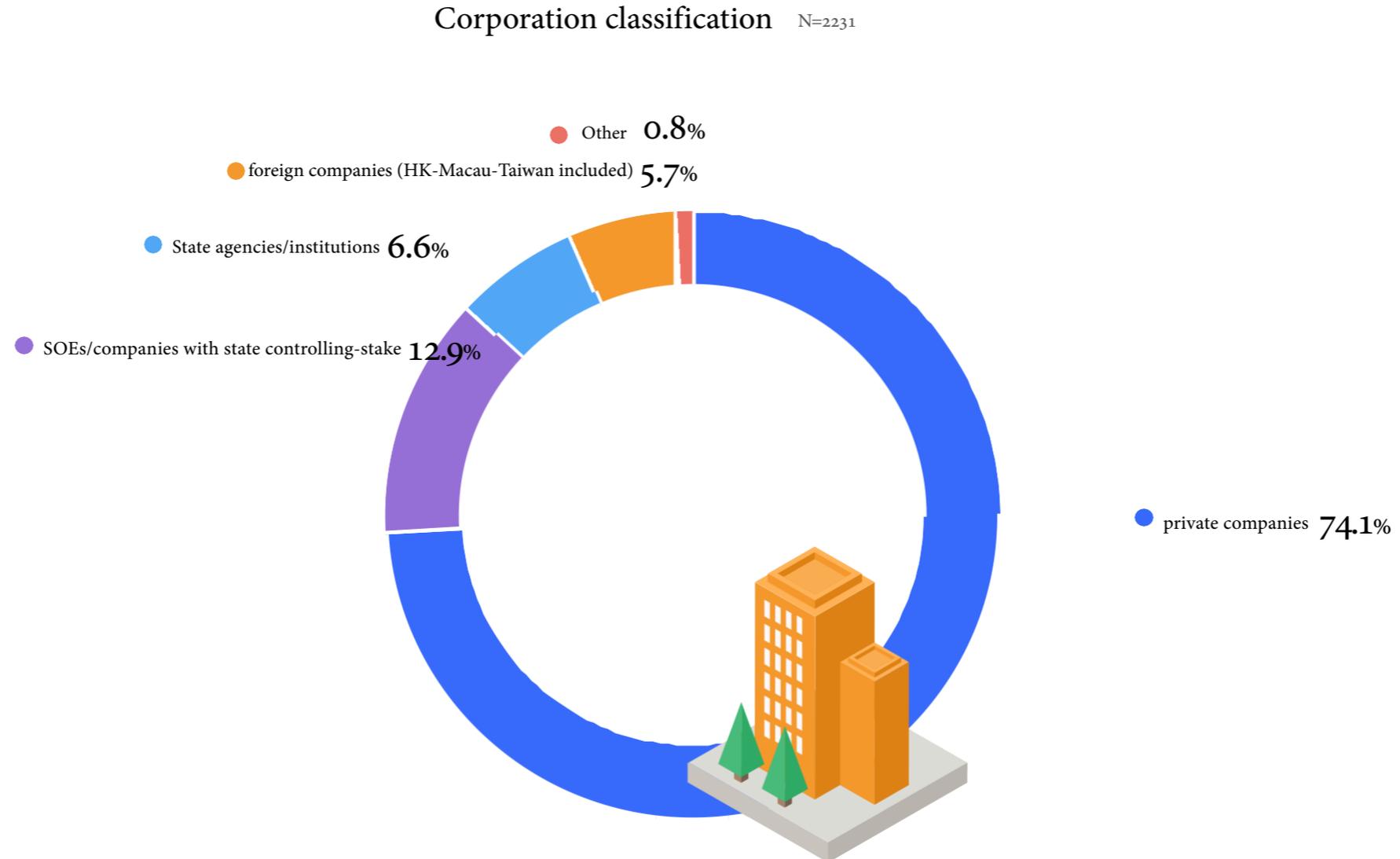
tech development

Programmers with entrepreneurship and lesser personal skills; educational background in computer science or electronic communication.

Mostly male; a relatively older group, averaged at 29.2 years old; educational background in computer science, electronics or telecommunications; mid-pay-level; mostly work in the internet sector, many work in the digital economy sector, such as AI, e-commerce, IoT, etc.; compared with other positions, more of them intend to start their own businesses; many attend online courses of AI, big data and cloud computing.

3.1.2 Designers mostly work in the private sector.

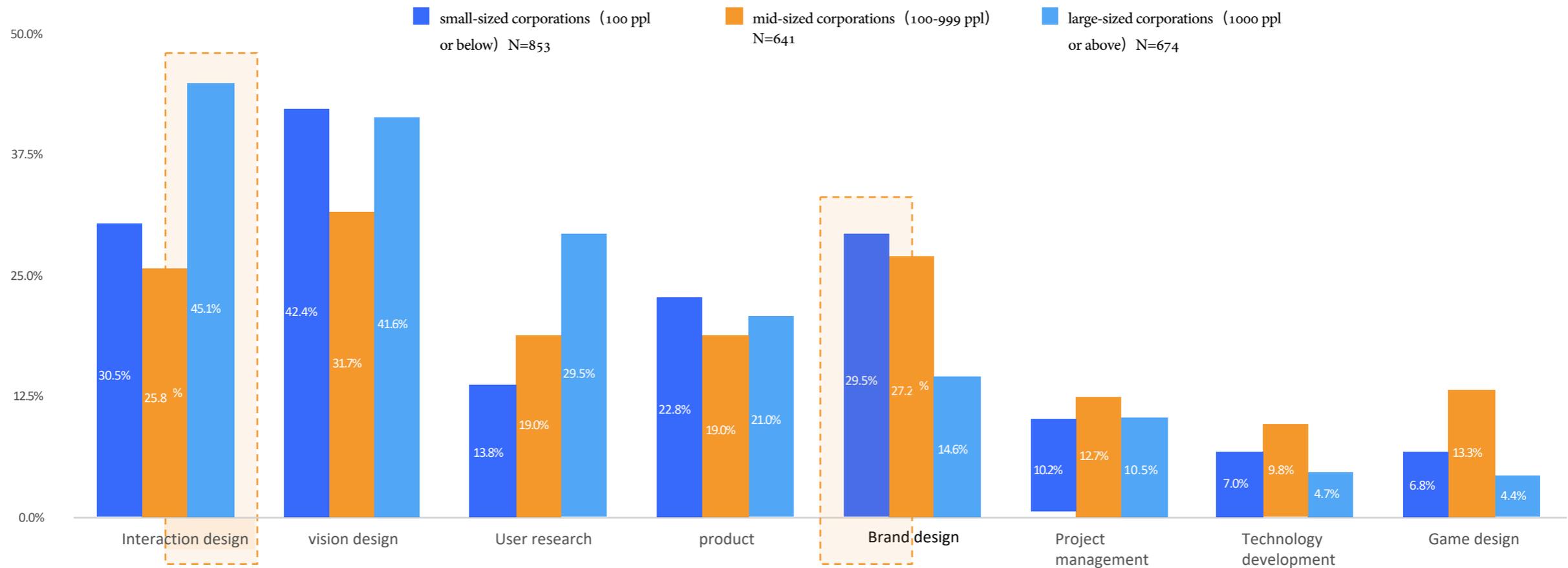
Designers mainly work in **private companies/businesses**, with **74.1%** in percentage.



3.1.3 The design post distribution varies in corporations of different sizes, with interaction design and user research primarily found in large-sized corporations.

Interaction design and user research are primarily found in large-sized corporations, while brand design is mainly seen in small-sized corporations.

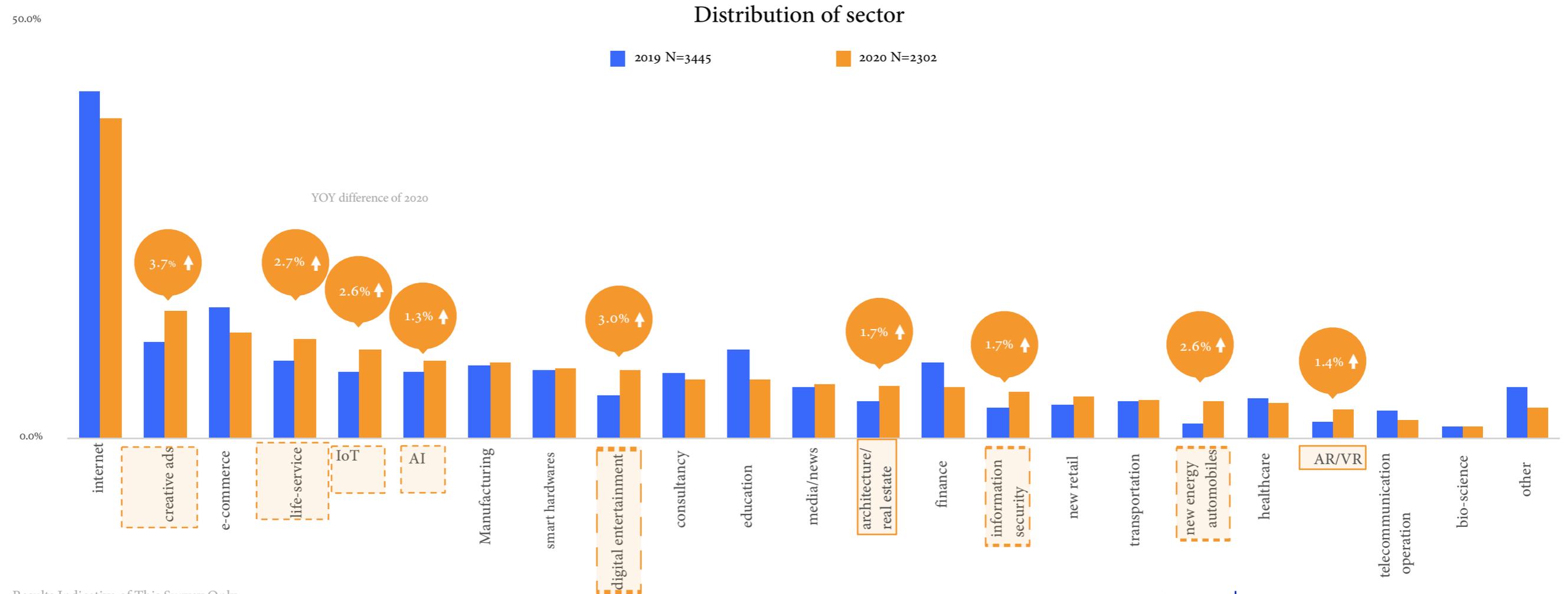
Job position classification in corporations of different sizes



3.1.4 The epidemic has catalysed the digital economy, with designers heavily distributed in the internet sector, followed by the growing trend of creative advertising, life-service, new technologies of digital economy.

Designers work in the **internet sector** take the highest proportion, with **38.3%** in percentage, down by 3.2% compared to that of 2019 (41.5%).

As compared to 2019, the ratios of **creative advertising, life-service and new technologies of digital economy** (IoT, AI) have slightly grown in 2020.



Results Indicative of This Survey Only

Note: IoT includes drones, smart city, etc.; new retail includes smart stores, unmanned supermarket, etc.; healthcare sector includes medicare apparatus, medicine, bio-medicine, etc.

3.1.5 Corporations with design talents have different sizes in different sectors, with the large ones mostly in the internet sector.

Compared with the sample population, **large corporations** are mostly located in the sectors of **internet**, **smart hardwares**, **finance**, **mobility**, **new-energy automobile**, etc.

Mid-sized corporations are mostly located in the sectors of IoT, media/news, architecture/real estate, information security, etc.;

small corporations are mostly located in the sectors of creative advertising, consultancy, education, etc.



Large-sized corporations

internet

smart hardwares

finance

mobility

new energy automobile



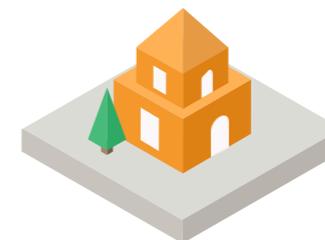
Mid-sized corporations

IoT

media/news

architecture/real estate

information security



Small-sized corporations

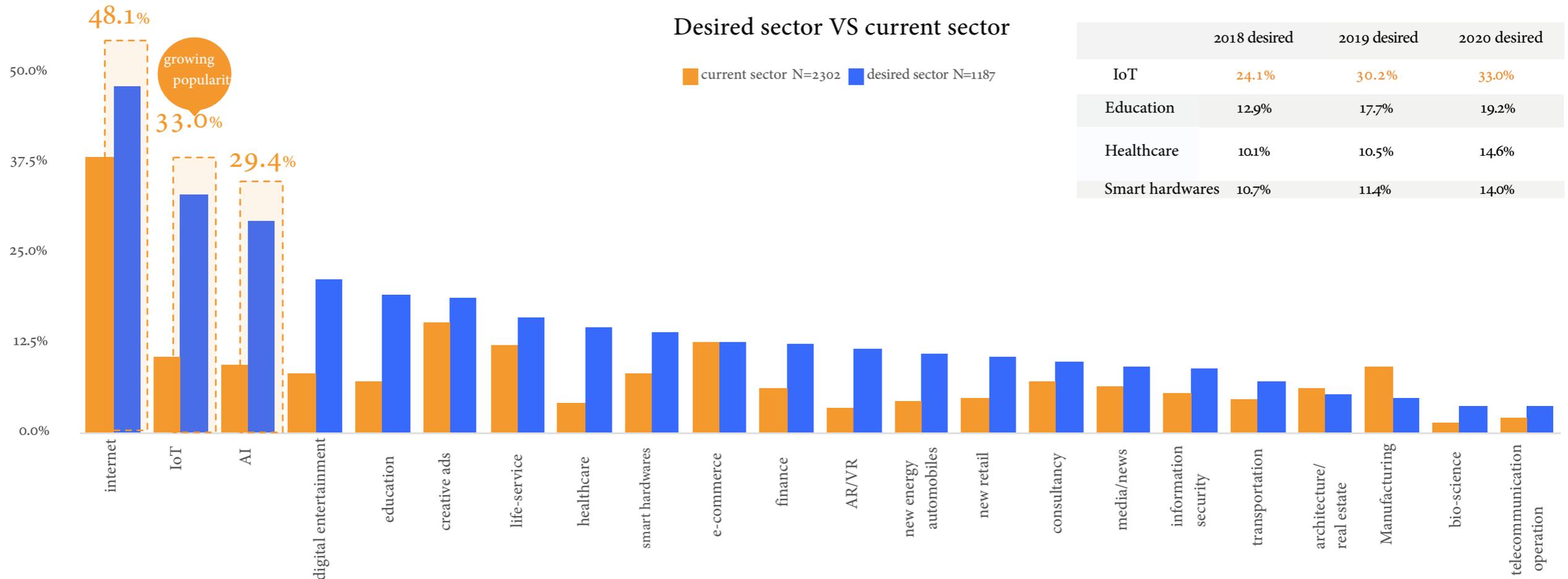
creative ads

consultancy

education

3.2.1 The internet sector remains as the most popular, and IoT is gaining popularity.

The most popular sectors for designers include the **internet** (48.1%), **IoT** (33.0%), **AI** (29.4%) and **digital entertainment** (21.1%); the **popularity of IoT sector has constantly risen** (24.1% in 2018, 30.2% in 2019); the popularity of education, healthcare and smart hardwares has also risen.



3.2.2 Large high-tech corporations are the most favored for designers.

The most favored corporations for designers are, in sequence, **Tencent**, **Alibaba**, **Huawei**, **Apple**, **ByteDance**.

Huawei, **Apple** and **ByteDance** have **higher ranking** this year, compared with last year. New Top 14 corporations include **Bilibili** and **GAC Group**. Specialised user experience corporations, such as **Frog**, **IDEO**, declined in ranking and lost their appeal for designers.



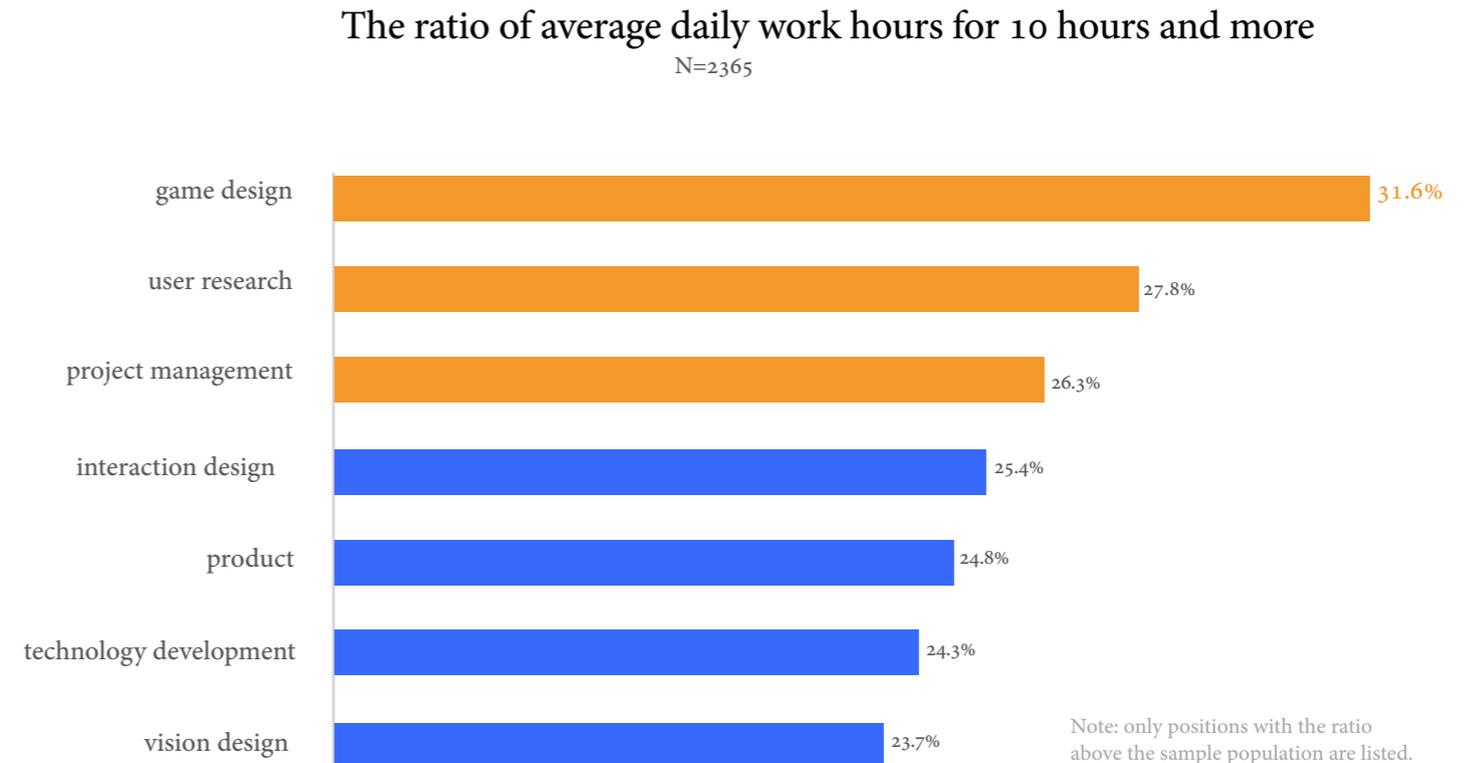
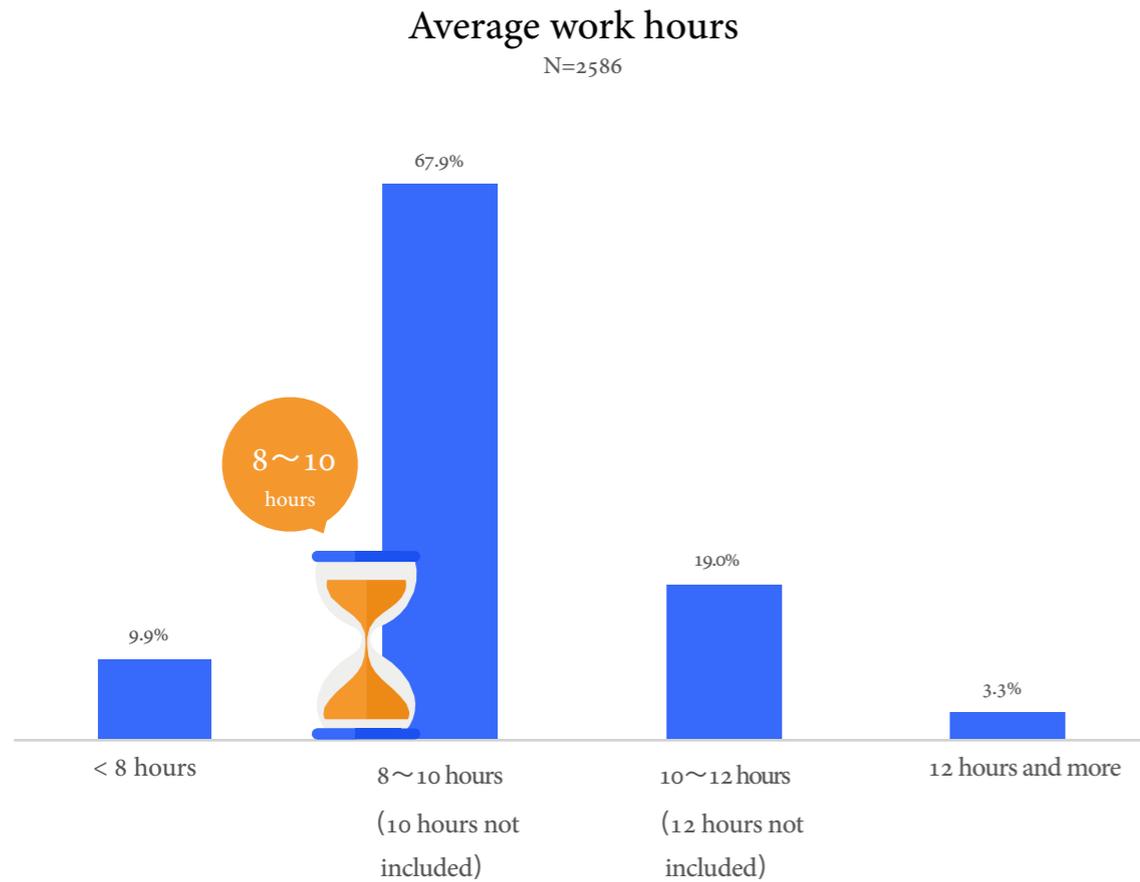
Most-favoured corporations for designers

2020 TOP14			2019 TOP14			2018 TOP14		
1	Tencent	-	1	Tencent	1	Tencent		
2	Alibaba	-	2	Alibaba	2	Alibaba		
3	Huawei	↑	3	Netease	3	Netease		
4	Apple	↑	4	Google	4	Google		
5	ByteDance	↑	5	Huawei	5	Baidu		
6	Google	↓	6	ByteDance	6	JD		
7	Netease	↓	7	Baidu	7	Xiaomi		
8	Baidu	↓	8	Apple	8	frog		
9	Bilibili	new	9	Airbnb	9	Apple		
10	JD	↑	10	Xiaomi	10	Airbnb		
11	Meituan	↑	11	frog	11	IDEO		
12	Ant Finance	↑	12	IDEO	12	Didi chuxing		
13	Xiaomi	↓	13	Ant Finance	13	Meituan		
14	GAC	new	14	Microsoft	14	Huawei		

3.3 Game designers have the longest daily work hours and the longest OT hours.

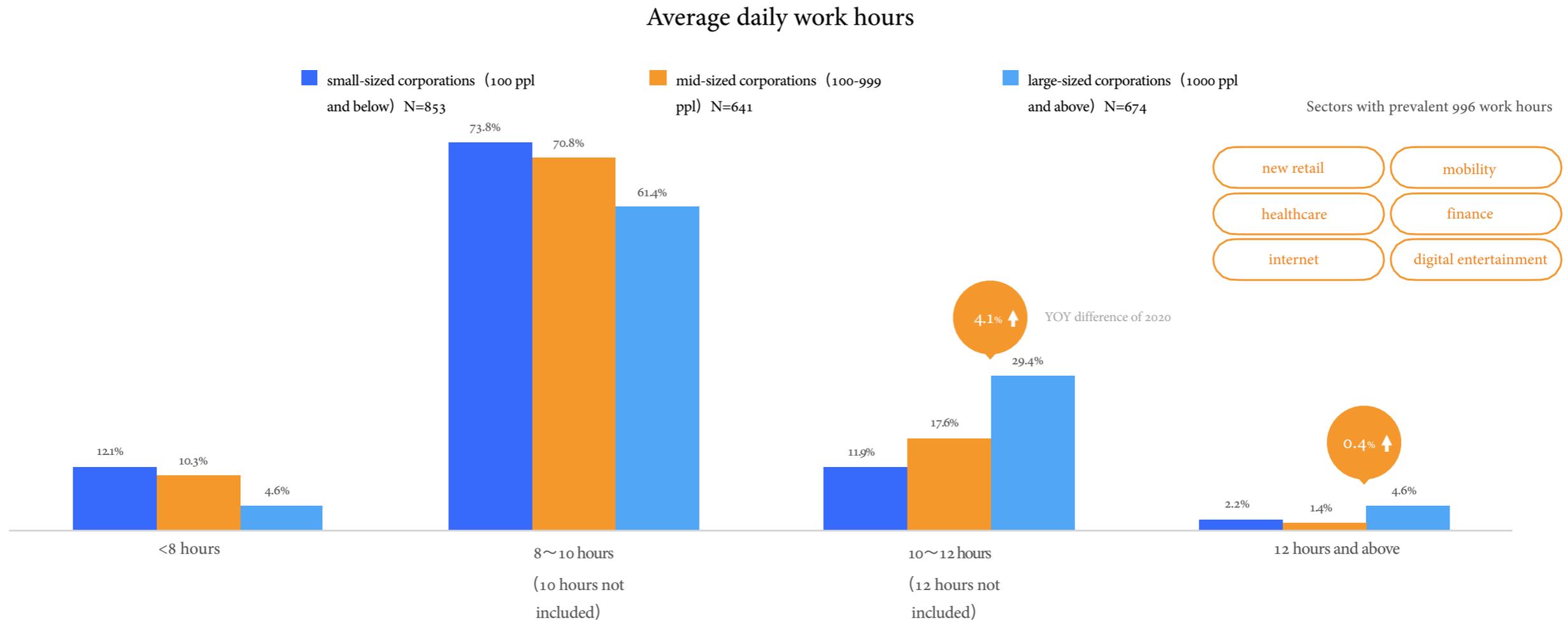
The average daily work hours of designers range from 8~10 hours (67.9%).

Game designers have the longest work hours, with 31.6% of significantly longer hours than other positions (10 hours and above), followed by user research positions.



3.3.1 The bigger-sized corporations are relevant to more OT hours.

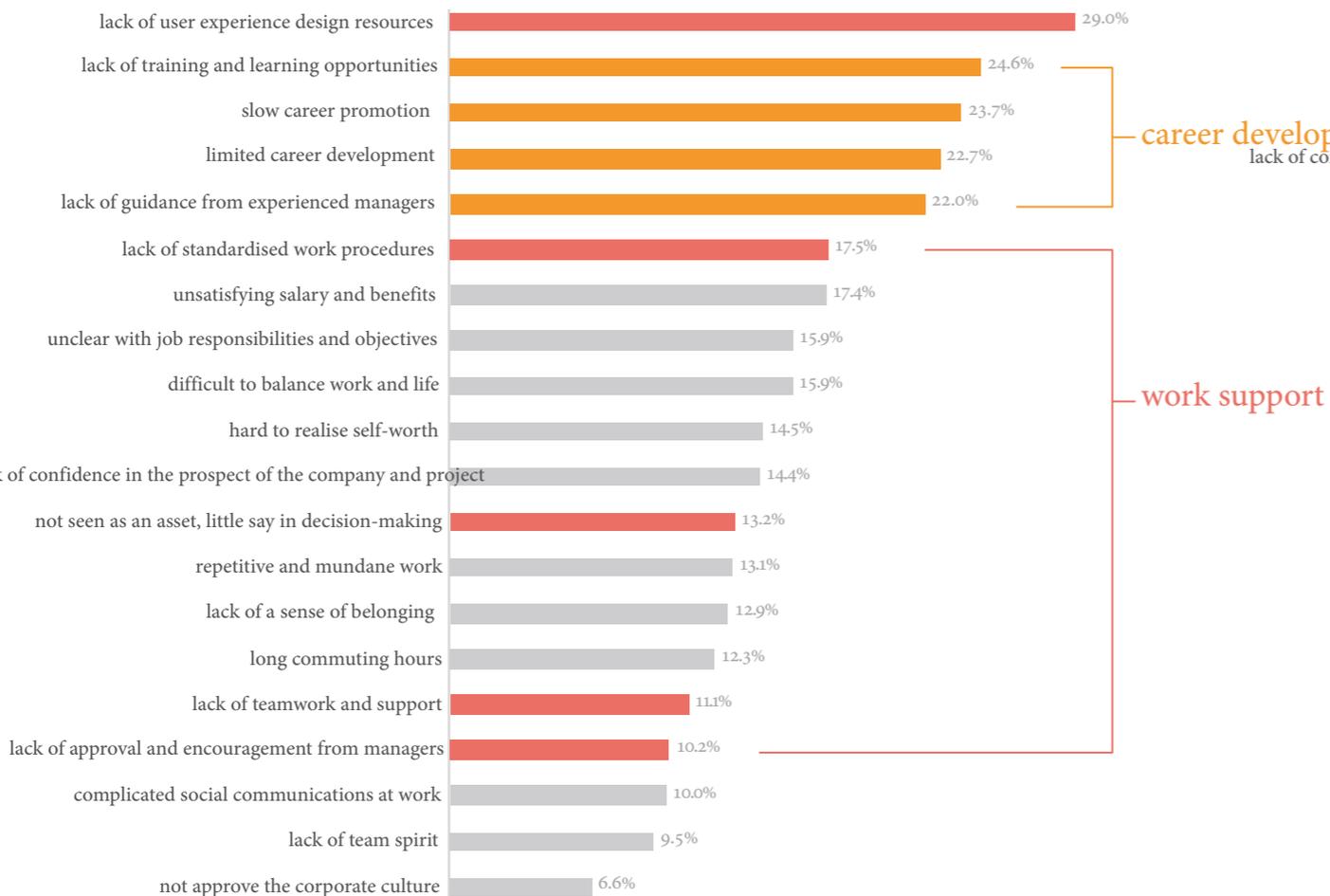
The average daily work hours of user experience designers range from 8~10 hours. The bigger-sized corporations are relevant to more OT hours, and large-sized corporations generally have the biggest OT ratio. Compared with 2019, large-sized corporations have more OT hours, and the ratio of 10 work hours and above has grown by 4.5%.



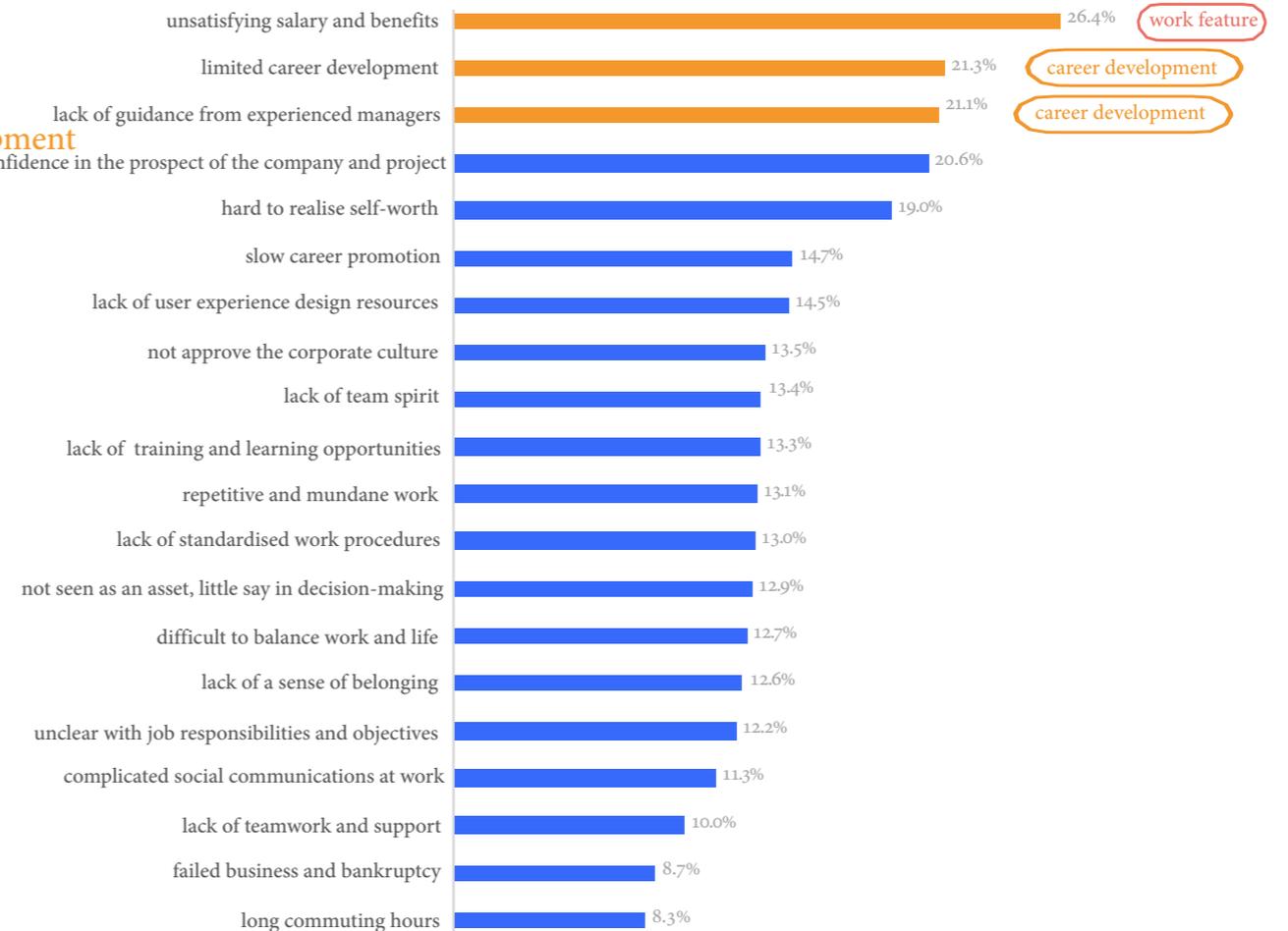
3.3.2 The current pain points for designers include lack of support at work and limited career path. Designers expect more training and learning opportunities.

According to the interviews with designers about the pain points and reasons for switching jobs, **lack of work support and limited career path** turned out to be the biggest pain points. Designers aspire to improve their capabilities via **more training and learning opportunities**.

TOP20 pain points at work N=2402

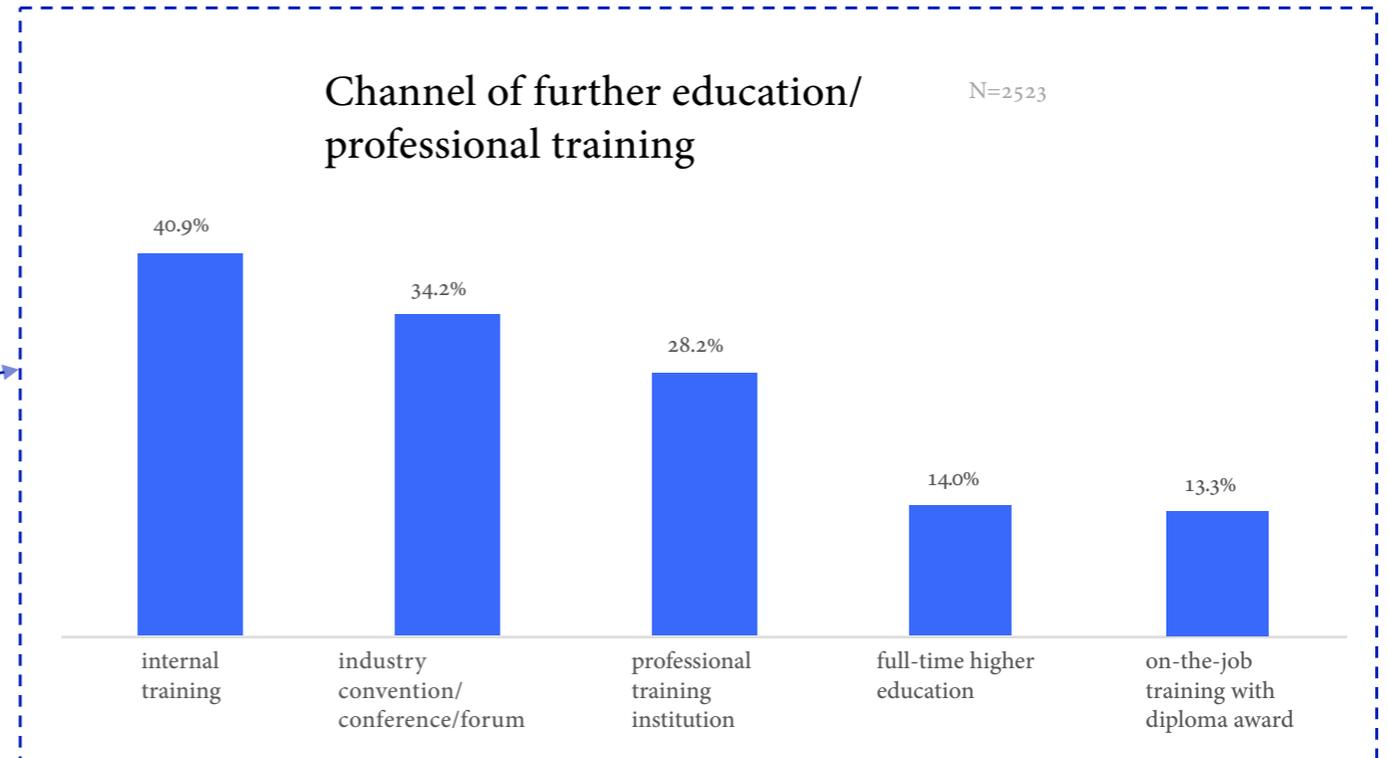
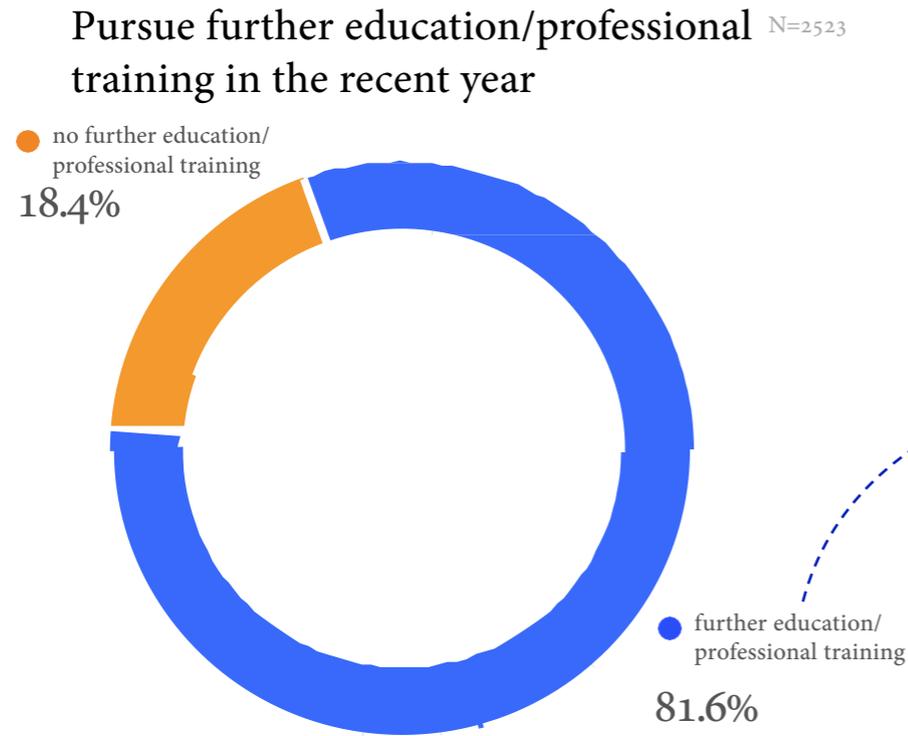


TOP20 reasons for switching jobs N=745



3.3.3 Internal training and industry conventions are the main further education resources for designers.

Over 80% of designers are pursuing further education/professional training, via internal training (40.9%) and industry convention/conference/forum (34.2%).



3.3.4 Pain points at work are relevant with seniority.

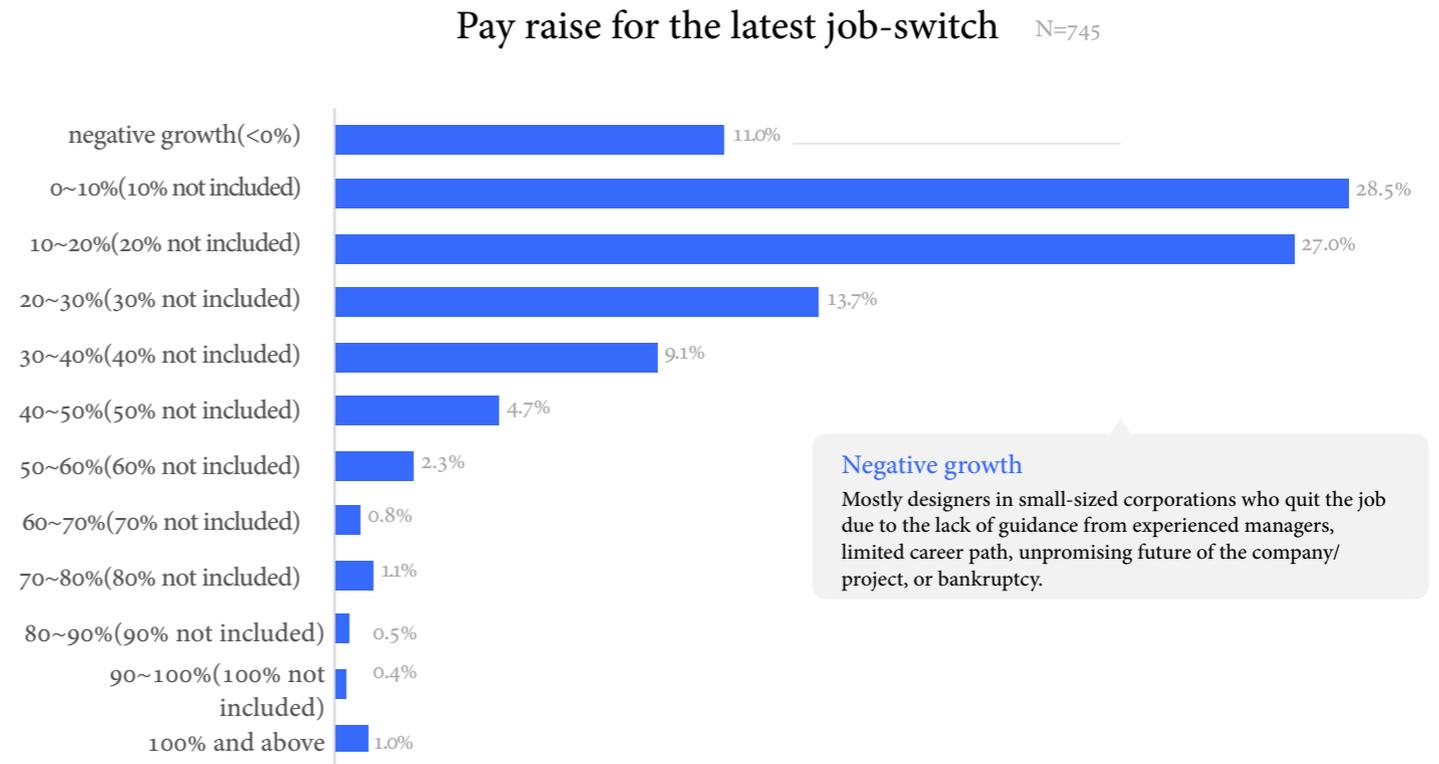
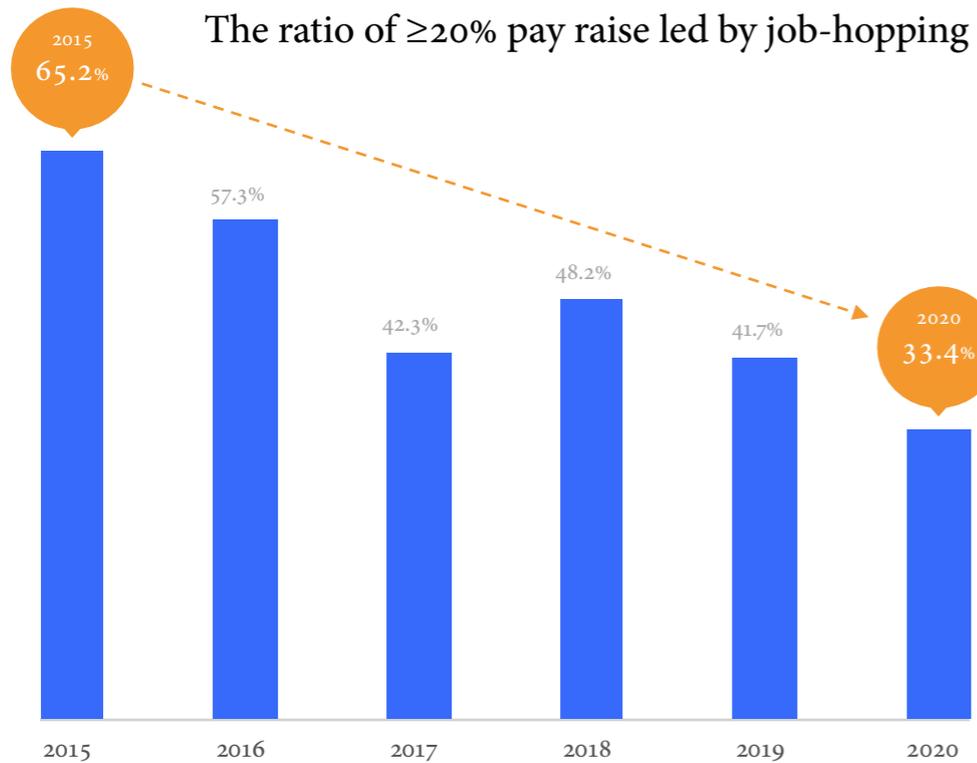
Junior designers with **shorter years of experience** have not yet got accustomed to their roles and thus are not clear with what they want or need to do. Many of them mentioned the pain point of “**unclear with job responsibilities and objectives**” and “lack of confidence in the prospect of the company/project”. Designers with 1~3 years of experience have **strong aspiration for further training**; senior designers with 3~5 years of experience yearn for **more attention and say in decision-making**; senior designers with 5~8 years of experience are more concerned about **promotion**; senior designers with 8 or more years of experience are mostly married and have children, thus they found it difficult to **balance work and life**.

TGI comparison	overall design	within 1 year	1~3 years (3 years not included)	3~5 years (5 years not included)	5~8 years (8 years not included)	8 years or above
lack of user experience design resources	29.0%	112	99	103	86	92
lack of training and learning opportunities	24.6%	108	118	93	69	73
slow career promotion	23.7%	86	102	103	114	91
limited career development	22.7%	96	91	117	96	112
lack of guidance from experienced managers	22.0%	111	112	91	79	80
lack of standardised work procedures	17.5%	103	115	103	65	77
unsatisfying salary and benefits	17.4%	102	111	94	85	86
unclear with job responsibilities and objectives	15.9%	134	106	79	78	90
difficult to balance work and life	15.9%	82	89	107	114	147
hard to realise self-worth	14.5%	110	93	114	86	92
lack of confidence in the prospect of the company and project	14.4%	124	102	92	84	84
not seen as an asset, little say in decision-making	13.2%	108	84	122	95	105
repetitive and mundane work	13.1%	104	91	115	104	85
lack of a sense of belonging	12.9%	89	102	112	95	89
long commuting hours	12.3%	102	95	94	116	107

3.4 The pay raise led by job-hopping has gradually slowed down.

The pay raise led by job-hopping in recent years has gradually slowed down. The ratio of $\geq 20\%$ pay raise has fallen from 65.2% in 2015 to 33.4% in 2020.

The pay raise led by job-hopping in 2020 was mainly within 20%, with 11.0% of negative growth.

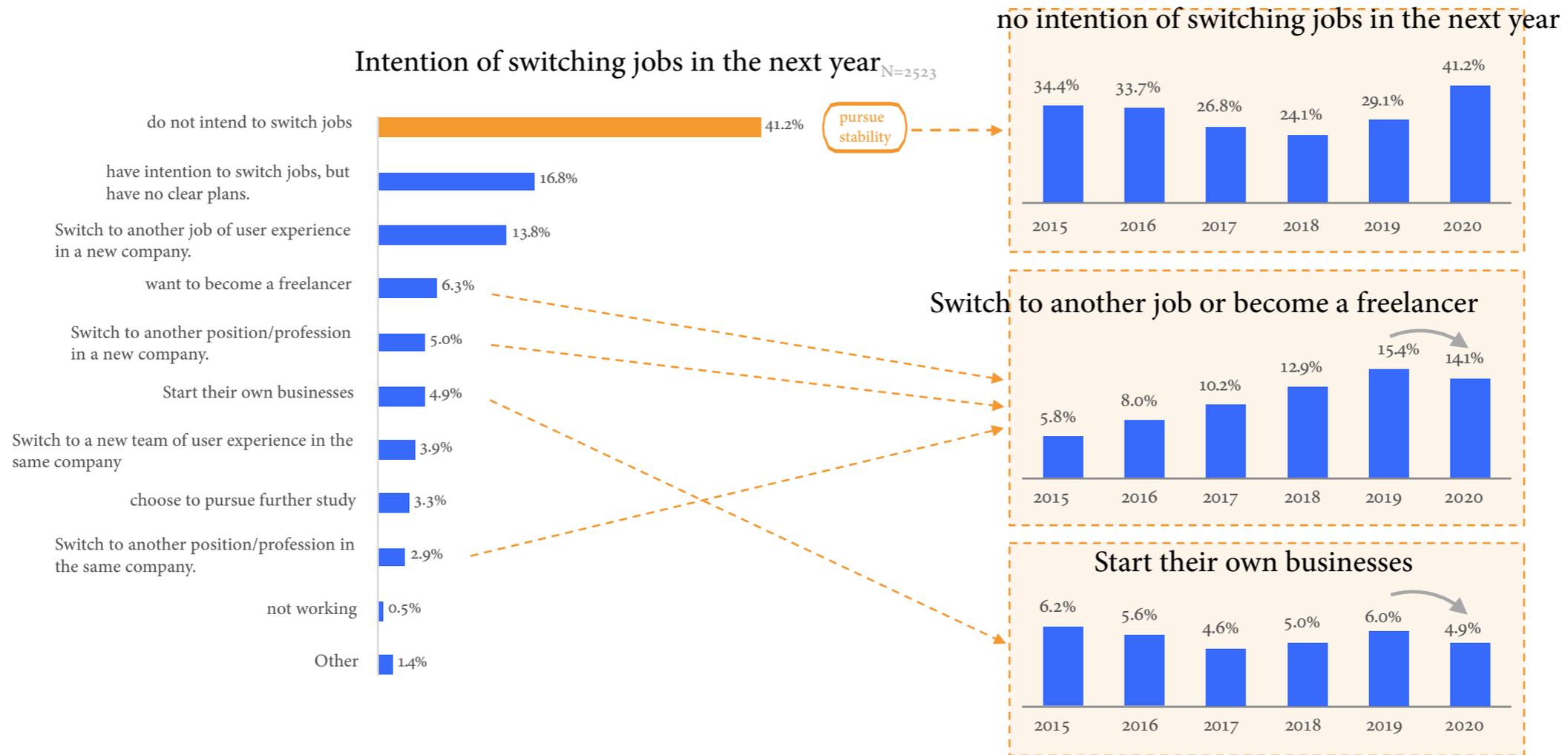


Note: The job-switch of 2020 indicates switching jobs or positions, and refers to the job-switch within one year; previous questionnaire surveys did not clearly include the position-switch as an act of job-switch, thus the job-switch indicates the latest one (no limit of within one year).

3.4.1 The epidemic has brought about economic uncertainties. Designers now prefer stability compared with the last six years.

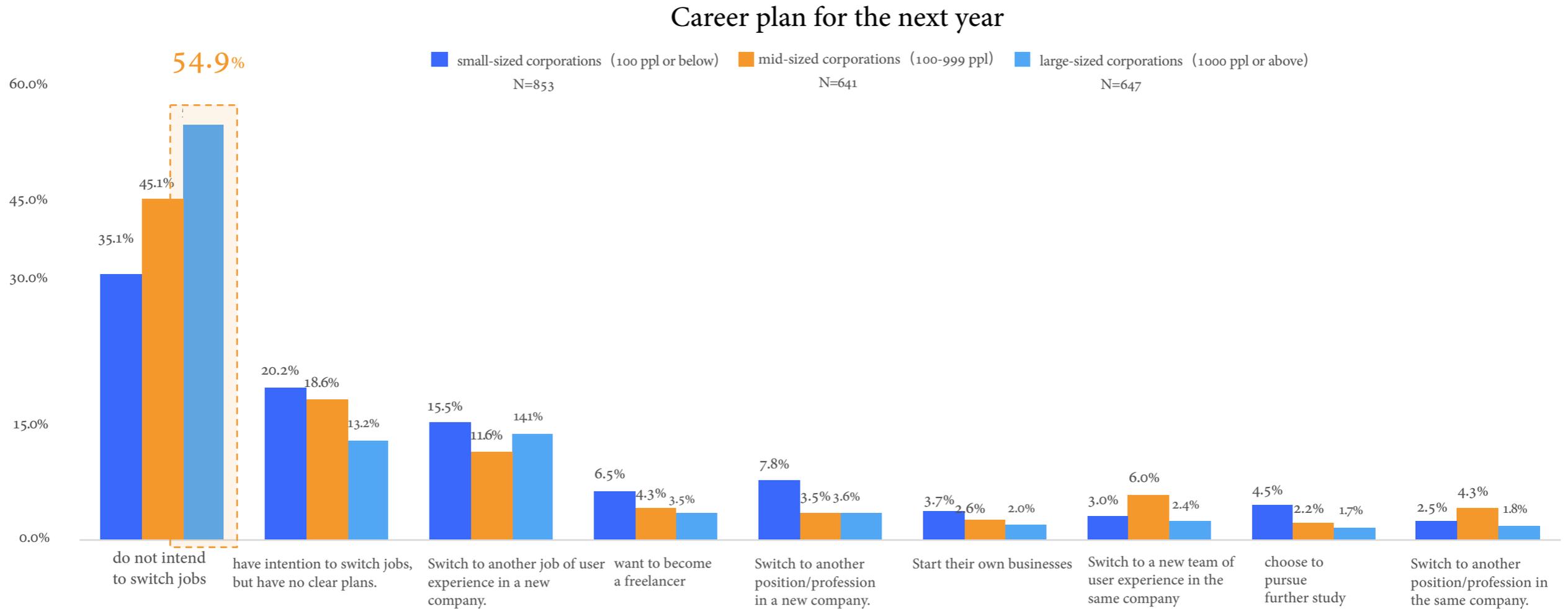
41.2% of designers **do not intend to switch jobs** in the next year, which is the highest proportion over the past few years. Designer now **prefer stability** in 2020.

The percentage of **designers who switch to another job or become a freelancer** has **declined** for the first time, **by 1.3% yoy**; the percentage of those who **start their own businesses** has also **dropped by 1.1% yoy**.



3.4.2 Designers in large-sized corporations tend to prefer more stability.

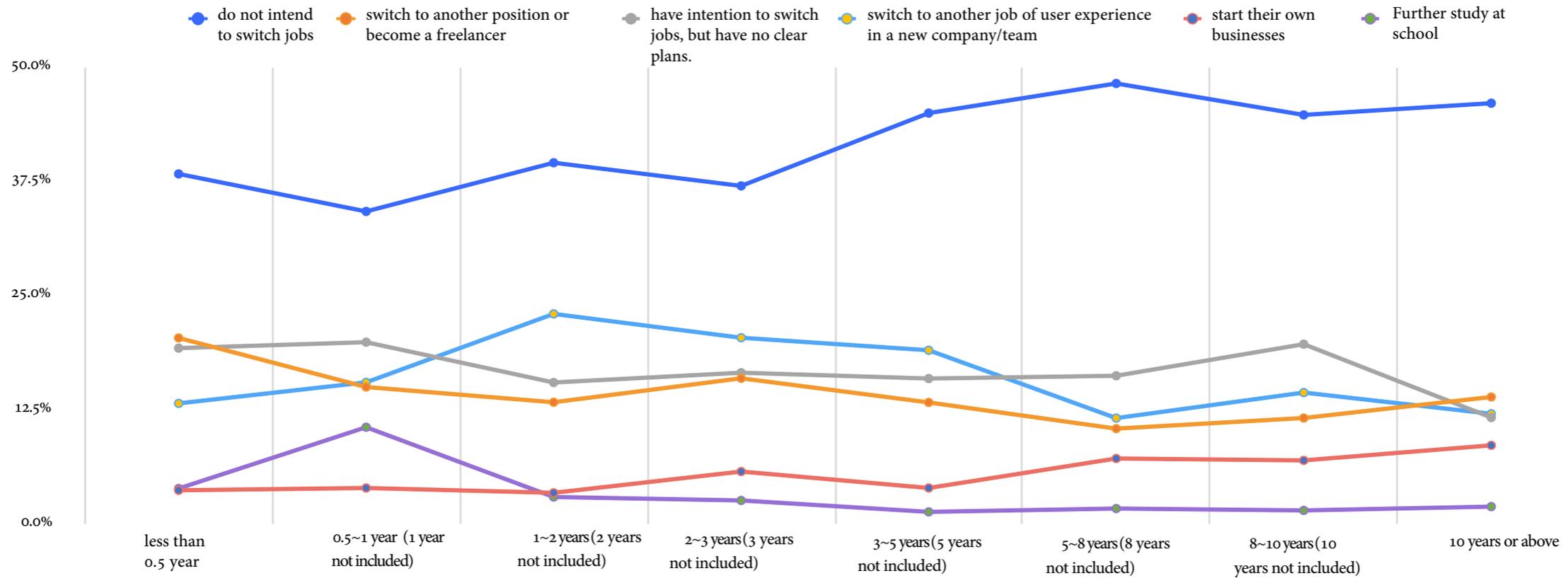
The career intention is relevant to the size of corporations. Designers in **large corporations** tend to **favor more stability**, with the highest ratio of “**no intention of switching jobs**” (54.9%).



3.4.3 The seniority of designers is relevant to the pursuit of stability.

Career plans of designers vary with the seniority. Designers with **more seniority** tend to prefer “no intention of switching jobs”; designers with **1~5 years of experience** are more inclined to “switch to another job of user experience in a new company/team”; designers with **0.5~1 years of experience** are more in favor of “further study at school”.

Career plan of designers with different seniorities within one year N=2523



4.0 Design Education (Talent Supply Side)

China is a big nation in design education, but not strong enough. The new digital-economy technologies represented by "ABC" are pushing forward the crossover design education, which requires shifting from pure artistic design to cross-discipline development. This trend has also been embracing by college education.

Design is an applied discipline, so design education naturally requires integration of industry, academia, and research. University students are expected to grow both in knowledge and experience and unlock more capabilities in real projects, in order to meet the market demand.

USER EXPERIENCE INDUSTRY SUPPLY

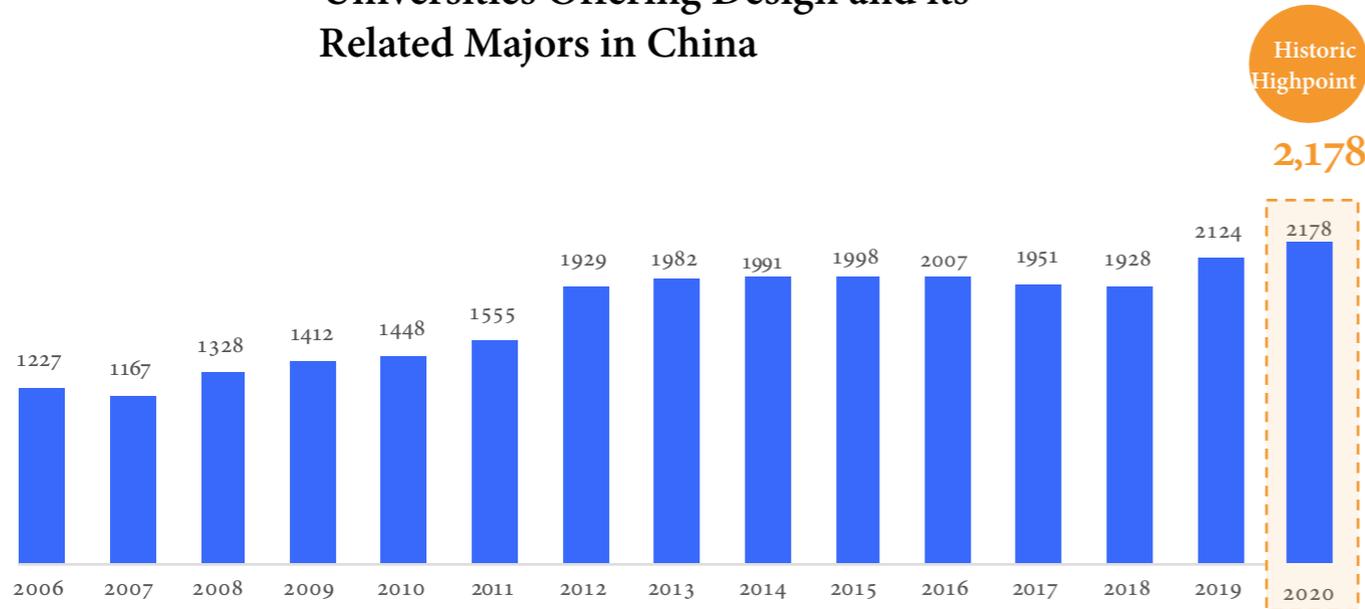
4.1 China has become a big country in design education with the record-high number of design institutions in 2020.

China is a **big country in design education**, with **2,178 universities** offering courses in design and related majors in 2020, **reaching a historical highpoint**.

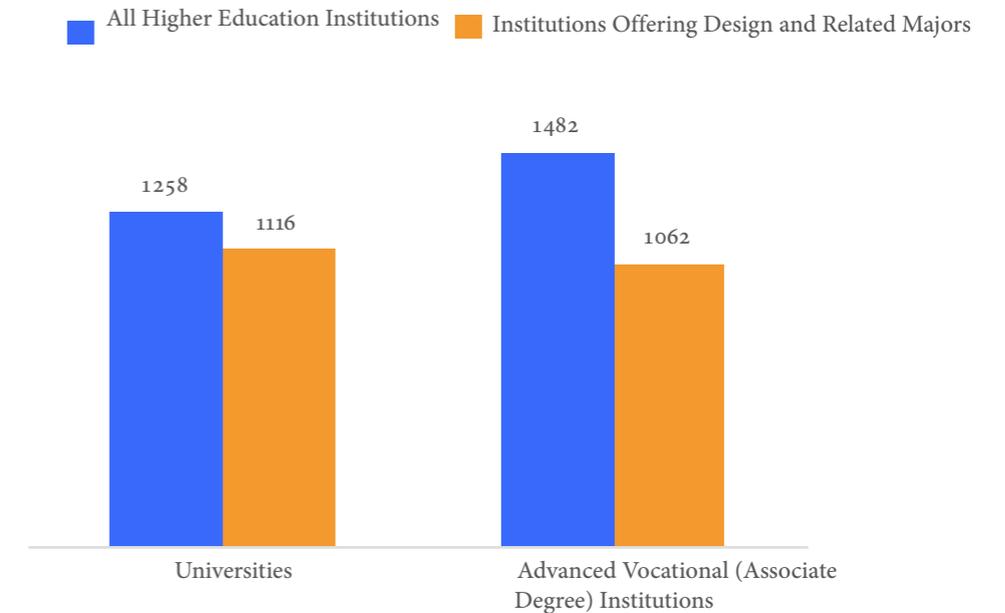
88.7% undergraduate universities (1,116 universities) and 71.7% vocational institutions (1,062 institutions) offered design majors.

There were estimated **720,000** new student admissions to design and related majors at the undergraduate level, compared to the total number of 9,149,000 undergraduate and associate degree students admitted in 2019, an average of 7.9 out of every 100 undergraduate students studied in design disciplines.

Universities Offering Design and its Related Majors in China



All Institutions VS. Institutions Offering Design and Related Majors in China, 2020



Source: Expert review, Central Academy of Fine Arts Professor Xu Ping, 2018.11 International Design Education Summit <Observations and Statistics of Chinese Design Education from 2006 to 2018>, Retrieved from Ministry of Education, http://www.moe.gov.cn/jyb_xxgk/xxgk_jyta/jyta_zcs/202010/t20201015_494771.html

Design and related majors include: Environmental Design, Visual Design, Product Design, Digital Media & Arts, Animation, Advertising, Architecture, Fashion Design, Landscape Architecture, Urban Planning, Arts and Crafts, Film Photography and Production, Public Art, Drama Fine Art, Game Design, Arts and Sciences, Exhibition Design, etc.

4.1.2 China is yet to become a top country in design education. Students tend to choose overseas institutions for further studies

We are still far from becoming a leading country in design education. In QS World Ranking of Art and Design Majors, China **only has four universities listed in the TOP 50**. The four listed universities are Tongji University, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Tsinghua University, and Central Academy of Fine Arts, ranking at 13, 15, 19, and 28 respectively.

Ranking	Institution	Region
1	Royal College of Art	United Kingdom
2	University of the Arts London	United Kingdom
3	Parsons School of Design at The New School	United States
4	Rhode Island School of Design (RISD)	United States
5	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	United States
6	Politecnico di Milano	Italy
7	Aalto University	Finland
8	The Glasgow School of Art (GSA)	United Kingdom
9	School of the Art Institute of Chicago	United States
10	Pratt Institute	United States
11	RMIT University	Australia
12	Art Center College of Design	United States
13	Tongji University	China (Mainland)
14	Goldsmiths, University of London	United Kingdom
15	The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	Hong Kong SAR
16	Stanford University	United States
17	Carnegie Mellon University	United States
18	Design Academy Eindhoven	Netherlands
19	Tsinghua University	China (Mainland)
20	California Institute of the Arts	United States
21	The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts (KADK)	Denmark
22	École Nationale Supérieure de Création Industrielle, ENSCI Les Ateliers	France
23	University of Technology Sydney	Australia
24	Loughborough University	United Kingdom
25	California College of the Arts	United States

Ranking	University	Region
26	Umea University	Sweden
27	Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs (ENSAD)	France
28	China Central Academy of Fine Arts	China (Mainland)
29	School of Visual Arts (SVA)	United States
30	National University of Singapore (NUS)	Singapore
31	Universidad de Buenos Aires (UBA)	Argentina
32	University of Oxford	United Kingdom
33	Konstfack University of Arts , Crafts and Design	Sweden
34	Columbia University	United States
35	Yale University	United States
36	Savannah College of Art and Design	United States
37	Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU)	Singapore
38	Seoul National University	South Korea
39	University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA)	United States
40	Emily Carr University of Art + Design	Canada
41	Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM)	Mexico
42	Universität der Künste Berlin	Germany
43	Swinburne University of Technology	Australia
44	New York University (NYU)	United States
45	Zurich University of the Arts	Switzerland
46	UCL	United Kingdom
47	Universidad de Palermo (UP)	Argentina
48	The University of New South Wales (UNSW Sydney)	Australia
49	The University of Melbourne	Australia
50	Politecnico di Torino	Italy

Renowned International Design Institutions More Popular Among Undergraduates

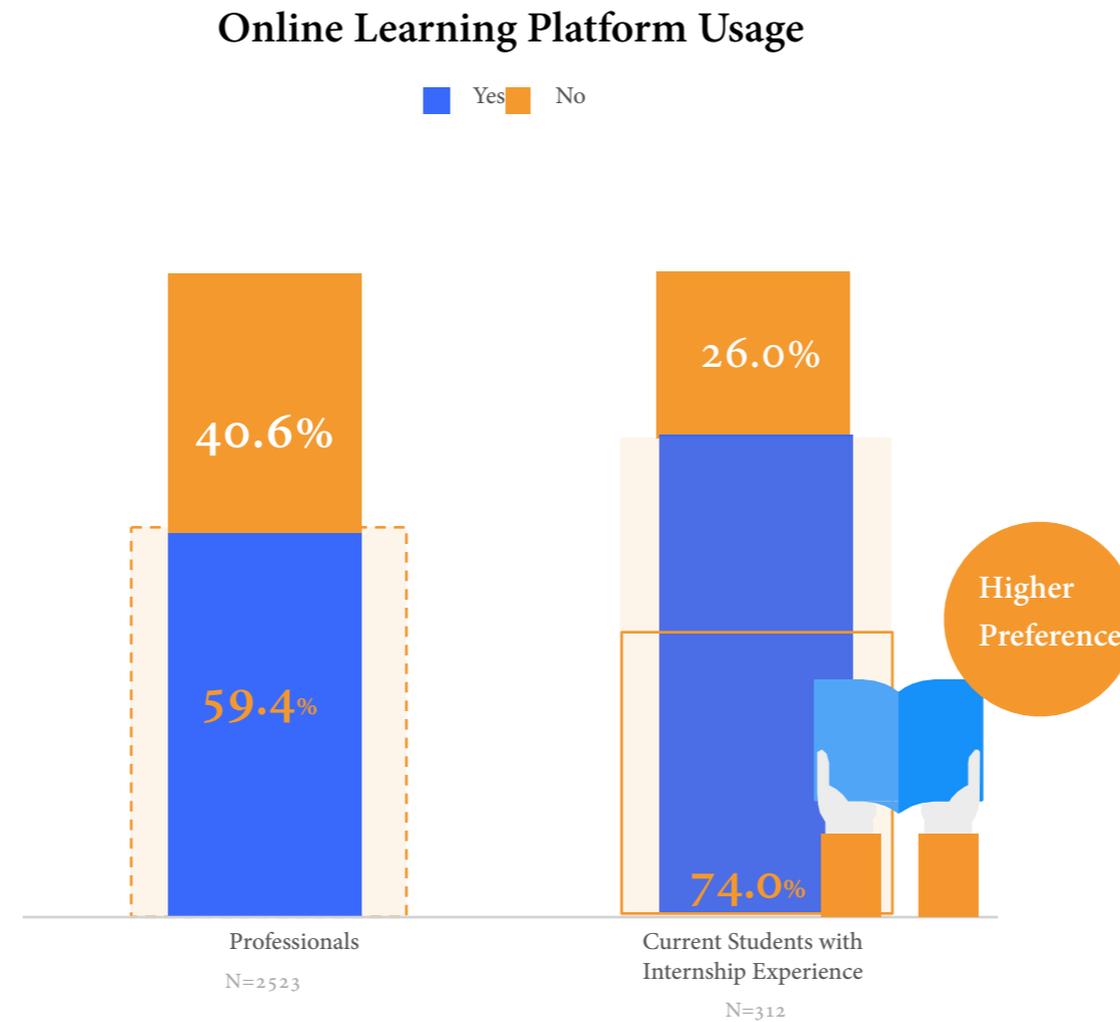
- “While the global COVID-19 pandemic kept many students from **studying overseas**, we saw very little change in the number of our students pursuing further education overseas. Last year we had 36 students out of the total 150 from our college going overseas, and 5 of them were admitted to world leading **Royal College of Arts**, the rest covered most of the other well renowned universities around the globe. With the pandemic, we had a small change of 2 less students going overseas. The rest of the students who did not study overseas mostly continued their studies here or at 4 other universities: Tsinghua University, Tongji University, Shanghai Jiaotong University, and Zhejiang University.” He Renke, Professor, College of Design, Hunan University.
- “Most of our students wish to continue their graduate studies here at China Central Academy of Fine Arts, and a large percentage of them already secured a guaranteed early admission decision, my personal estimate is over 20%.” Hang Hai, Professor, College of Design, China Central Academy of Fine Arts.
- “Not many students wish to continue their graduate studies here, they usually seek admission at higher ranked universities such as Tsinghua University, China Central Academy of Fine Arts, or universities overseas. Most of our graduate admissions are from other institutions” Chen Jiang, Dean, College of Design, Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts.

Source: QS World University Rankings for Art & Design 2020 <https://www.qschina.cn/university-rankings/university-subject-rankings/2020/art-design>

China has more institutions ranked in Top 50 in disciplines other than Art and Design. For example, China has 8 Top 50 institutions in Engineering with 5 in the mainland, 2 in Hong Kong, and 1 in Taiwan.

4.1.3 Students are more likely to use online learning platforms than professionals are.

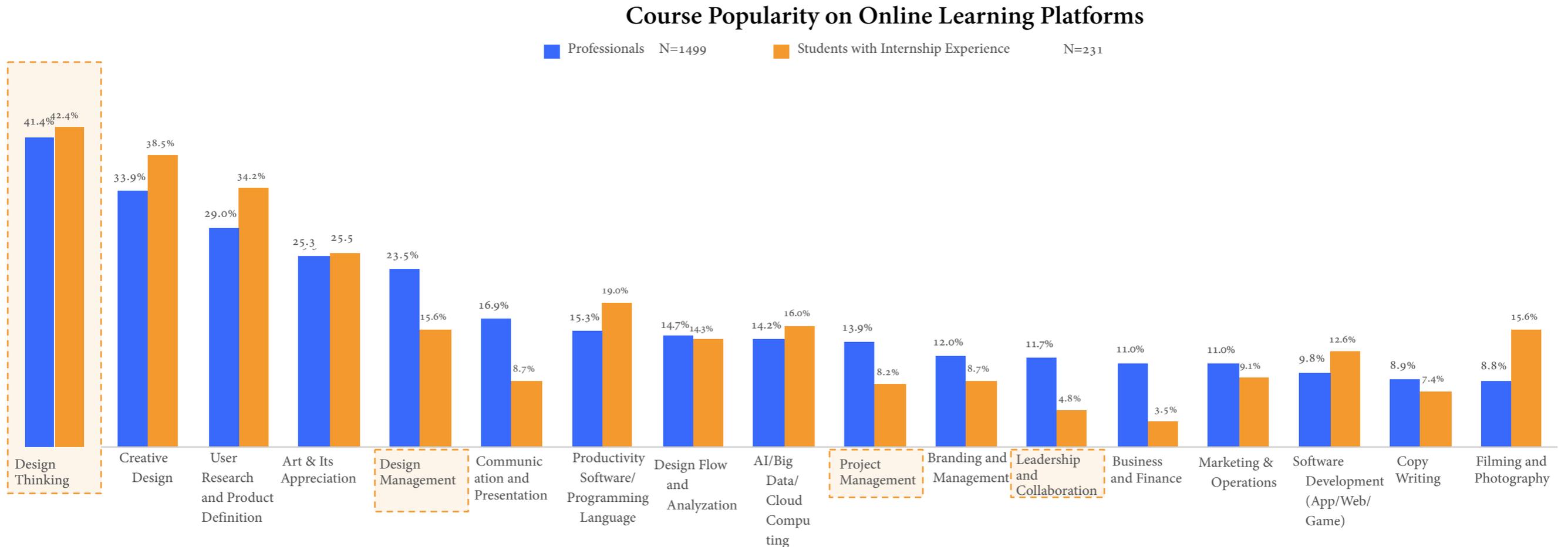
59.4% of professionals use online learning platforms; a higher percentage of 74.0% of current students using such platforms demonstrating higher preference for such professional training.



4.1.4 Design thinking course is the most popular among both professionals and students.

The most popular course was “**Design Thinking**” among both professionals and students (41.4% and 42.4% respectively).

Compared to students, **professionals are more inclined toward management courses**, such as “Design Management” (23.5%), “Project Management” (13.9%), and “Leadership and Team Collaboration” (11.7%).



4.2 Design major crossing over: from simple artistic design to multi-discipline development

From only being offered at art institutions, design majors has expanded and become part of an increasing number of **universities and science & technology institutions**, offering its maximum value by combining latest technology and cultural values.

Members of WDO (World Design Organization) have set 17 goals in *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* as United Nations resolution, among which 7 were particularly focused on industrial design. In fact, those goals have great influence not only on industry design, but also on the entire design industry. New topics like those usually **encompass a large field of disciplines** and thus pose new challenges to both design and other disciplines that involve design. With the rapid trend of multi-discipline collaboration, design is no longer a simple artistic discipline, giving multi-discipline universities a development edge over art institutions.

Percentages of Design Institutions

Institution Type	2018 Percentages
Universities	49%
Science and Technology Institutions	22%
Arts Institutions	4%
Independent Colleges	19%
Adult Education	5%
Un-registered Universities	3%

7 Industry Design Goals Set in Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development United Nations Resolution

3-Good Health and Well Being



6-Clean Water and Sanitation



7-Affordable and Clean Energy



9-Industry Innovation and Infrastructure



11-Sustainable Cities and Communities



12-Responsible Consumption and Production



17-Partnerships for the Goals



Blurred discipline definition requires further change and multi-discipline fusion for design

“Definitions of design will have very blur lines, with its fusion with other disciplines like biology, agriculture, and artificial intelligence. In the future, multi-discipline universities will have an easier time combing and collaborating between those majors, making design more inclusive and diverse. It will be difficult to define where design starts or stops, anything in the future could be part of design, such as biology, sociology, ethics, etc. great impact will be seen on our educational status quo. While universities already have multi-disciplinary collaboration mechanisms in place, art institutions will seek development in a different route, in order to transform from art design toward a more comprehensive discipline.

Crossing over is the obvious trend here.” Duan Shengfeng, Vice President, Sichuan Fine Arts Institute.

Source: 2018.11 International Design Education Summit <Observations and Statistics of Chinese Design Education from 2006 to 2018>, Professor Xu Ping, China Central Academy of Fine Arts ,

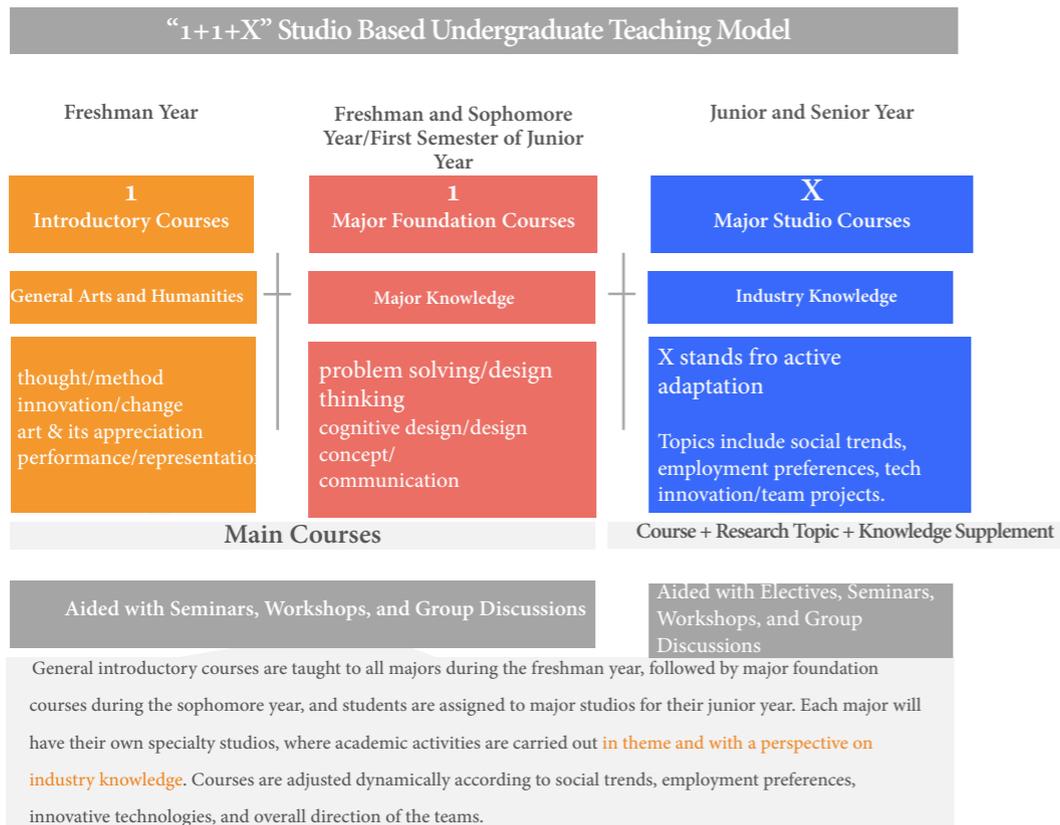
Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development United Nations Resolution

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

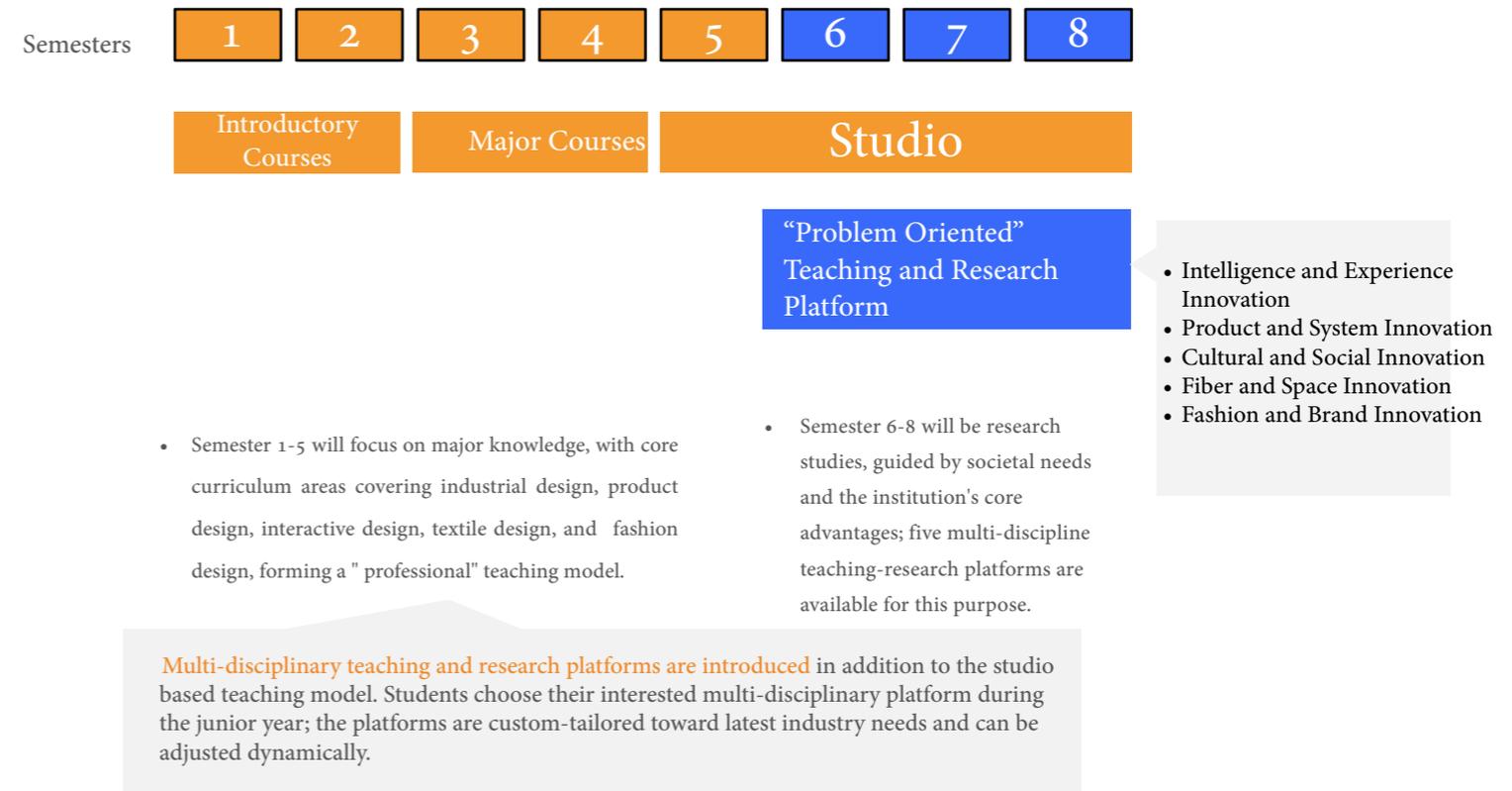
4.2.1 Cross-major and multi-discipline fusion in teaching model is trending.

Interviewed universities showed a **cross-major and multi-discipline** trend in their design major curriculums. Examples include Sichuan Fine Arts Institute's "1+1+X" studio based course plan, the Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts' combination of studio and research platform, and China Central Academy of Fine Arts' introduction of multi-disciplinary introductory courses and late capstone project advisor selection.

Sichuan Fine Arts Institute "1+1+X" Studio Model



Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts "Workshop+Research Platform" Undergraduate Teaching Model



4.2.2 Design institutions prefer faculty with multi-discipline backgrounds.

While faculty composition varies among different institutions and their design majors, there is a general trend where faculty members must **tightly follow industry development trend** and that in turn brings in more faculty members with cross-disciplinary backgrounds.

Compared to science and technology institutions, the majority of art institution faculties are made up of art and design backgrounds. Take Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts for example, non-art background members only make up 30-40% of their entire faculty. But with the recent trend of multi-disciplinary development of design industry, an increasing number of institutions has **started recruiting faculty members with science and technology backgrounds**, including art institutions.

Faculty Members with non-art backgrounds at Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts



About 30%~40%

2019-2020 Recruitment Quotas at China Central Academy of Fine Arts (excerpt)

College	Position Category	Number of Positions	Major
	Teaching	1	Social Design or related major
College of Design	Teaching	1	Fashion Design or related major
	Teaching	1	Transportation or related major

2018 Round 2 Recruitment Quotas at China Central Academy of Fine Arts (excerpt)

Position	Position Category	Number of Positions	Major
Product Design Instructor	Teaching	1	Design, Electronic Science and Technology, Information and Communication Engineering, Computer Science and Technology, Information and Information System Science, Software Engineering, or related majors.

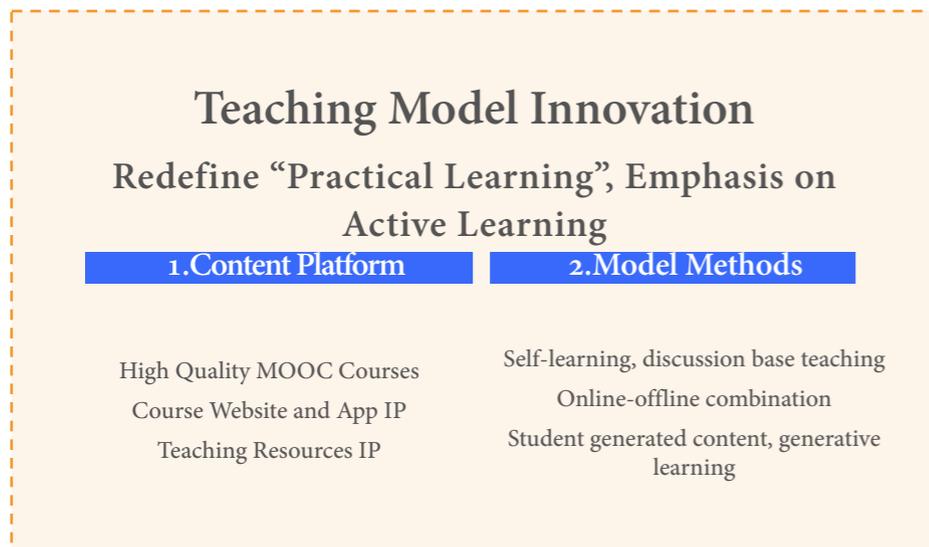
4.2.3 Combing “knowledge and experience” should be emphasized in design teaching due to the applicable nature of design.

During design teaching, **practical projects** are particularly effective in helping students to actively study, and gain problem thinking and solving skills, which prepare them for professional career.

University-enterprise collaboration is an important source of practical projects. Hunan University’s College of Design has collaboration projects throughout its undergraduate and graduate curriculums. Enterprises promote teaching faculty members to keep up with the latest trend while sending their experts to give lectures, resulting in leading students to design their plans in terms of **both aesthetics and business viability**.

<International Digital Design Talent Training Framework for National Development Strategy> (excerpt) 2018 First Class National Teaching Award

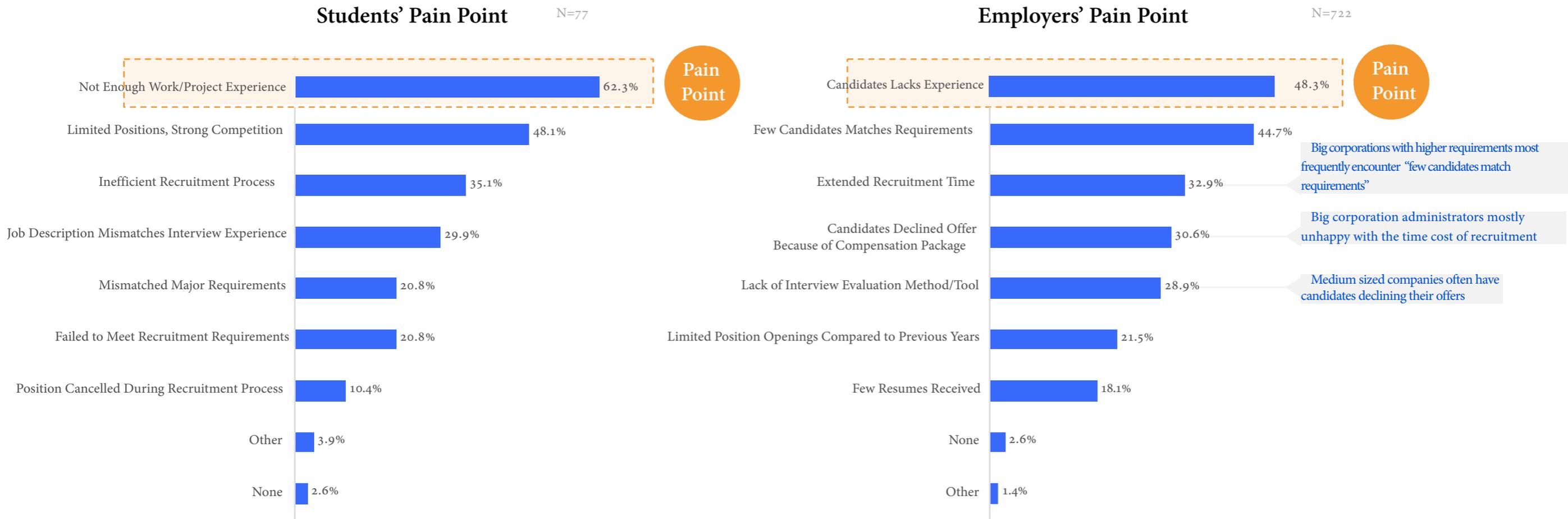
He Renke, Professor, Hunan University College of Design



- Design is highly practical; university-enterprise collaboration trains students in professional and general skills and keeps our curriculum relevant.
- “Almost every course we offer, ranging from undergraduate freshman to Ph.D. courses, involves practical partnerships with enterprises. For a long time, Hunan University has had a strong partnership with Huawei in areas like patent research in human-machine interaction and Database, and industry experience standards. A close grip of the latest industry development is also a strong emphasis of our practical programs, a new machine-brain interface could be introduced next week, and no one would have seen it before. In addition, professionals and experts are invited to give lectures, as our program is different from those only focused on academic research, we are highly aware of the business demand for design and are building our program toward a high practicality. The market drive requires that our faculty members must keep up with the latest trends.” He Renke, Dean, College of Design, Hunan University.
- “Design majors are essentially an applicable subject with a high emphasis on practicality, and such emphasis is further strengthened among vocational institutions. As one of the leading vocational institutions in China, social practical experience is one of the foundations of the College of Design here at Shenzhen Polytechnic. Our recruitment in the recent years has specifically required that faculty candidates must have 2 years or more of work experience. Our course curriculum is also built around the idea of practicality, with 60% of our courses being practical programs and 40% being taught theoretical courses traditionally offered at art institutions. And during the practical programs, students are spending up to 80% of their time getting hands on experiences. Our goal is to teach our students how to best apply their knowledge learned in class in real life situations, encompassing them with occupational skills that they can quickly deploy after graduation, and eventually leading to a better life outcome.” Zhou Liquan, Professor, Shenzhen Polytechnic.
- Practical projects allow students to participate in all project phases, and effectively nurture design and overall thinking.
- “In one of my collaborative innovation courses, we applied our previous year’s theories onto real-life projects. Our professor worked with a company that makes cosmetic devices and put us in charge of designing its software. The company participated throughout the project with seminars, mid-term presentations, and thesis, offering advices along the way. Such project was very helpful in terms of training us thinking in a global perspective and as designers.” graduate interview, College of Design, Jiangnan University.

4.3 “Lack of Experience” is a pain point for both students and employers.

Our survey showed that, design students’ most encountered **pain point** when seeking employment was “**not enough work/project experience**” (62.3%), meanwhile the most encountered pain point for business administrators during recruitment was “**candidates lack experience**” (48.3%).

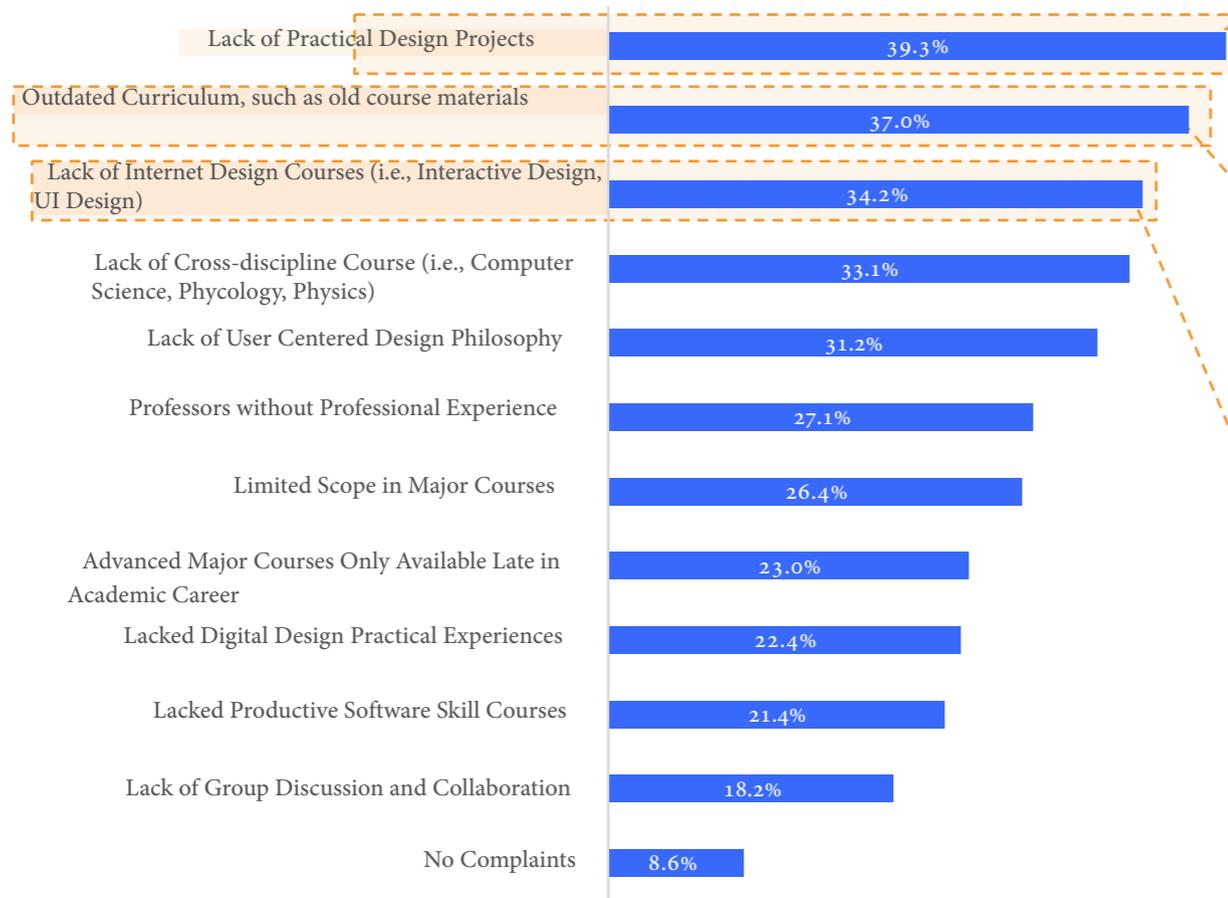


4.3.1 Strong demand from students for “practical design projects” at school.

Most complaint issues from design students and graduates were “**Lack of Practical Design Projects**” (39.3%), “**Outdated Curriculum**” (37.0%), and “**Lack of Internet Design Courses**” (34.2%)

Curriculum Complaints from Design students and Graduates

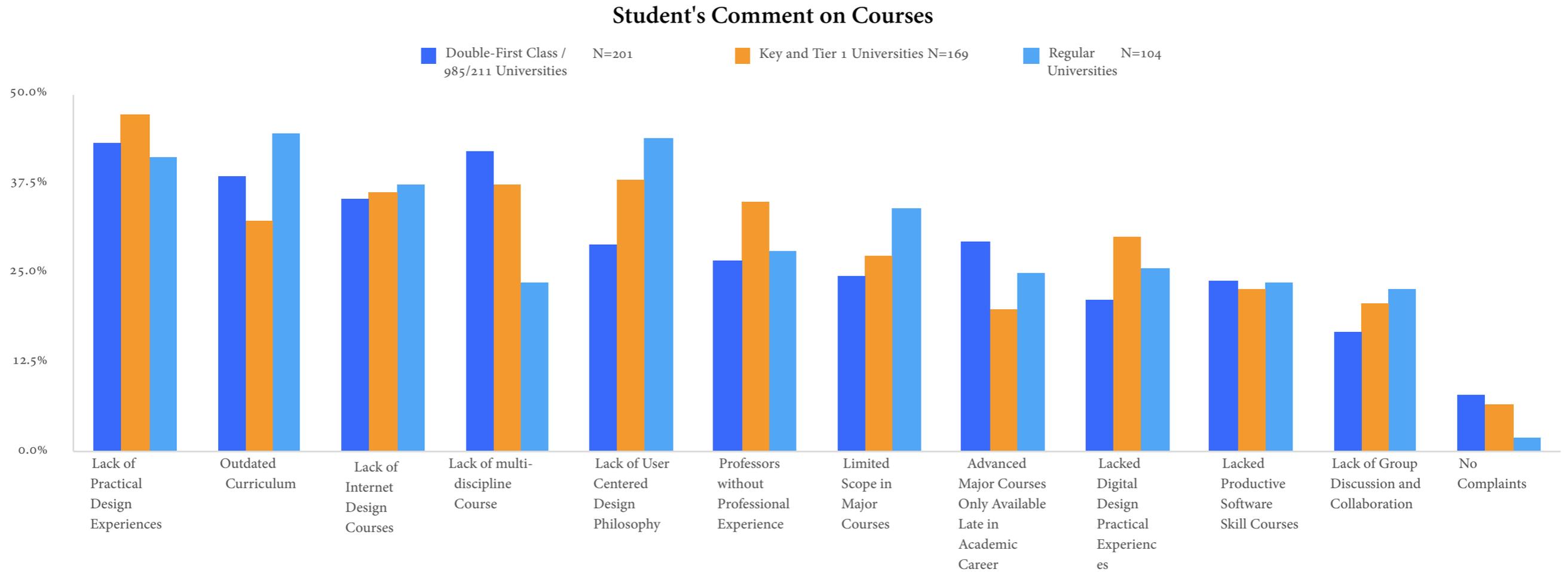
Students only had internship experiences, graduates from past two years



- Instructors remained on theories without offering practical experience
 - “We had no group assignments or practical projects, we did everything by ourselves. There was a poster design course where we just entered a competition individually” Design major graduate interview.
 - “The international instructor only gave us case studies, they did not offer use any opportunities in real life projects” Design student interview.
- Most instructors only use PowerPoint presentations to give lectures, which can be outdated and lack latest design trends or case studies
 - “We had no textbook as undergraduates, our Design Appreciation course had the same slides for years, the instructor might update a few slides here and there, but I don’t think they put much thought into it. My instructor gave a lecture in 2014 and his slides were dated 2012, an obvious sign of lacking attention. Case studies aren’t as outdated from several years ago but they are only relatively recent, usually not from the same year when the course was taught.” Design major graduate interview.
 - “Older professors teaching with slides dating back to the early 2000s with out much change, they were just way too outdated compared to today’s design trends. Other instructors also give lectures with several years old slides without updating it.” Design student interview.
- Some institutions only focused on physical designs, without courses in internet related designs, they fail to follow the recent development of internet. Students even pay for after school courses to supplement on internet designs. (examples of “physical designs” include printing and book binding)
 - “UI design is the topic that interests me most but my university does not teach it. My university is famous and highly rank but also old, its professors are in their 50s or 60s and just are not interested in UI design, which was only starting to tread in the last couple of years. So is interactive design, I wanted to learn both interactive and UI design since they are so closely related, but my school offers neither.” Design major graduate interview.
 - “Right now I am an internet UI design intern, which my school did not teach. My university had a curriculum that’s too traditional to include topics like UI design and our professors had to invite instructors from private training services to give us lectures on this topic.” Design student interview.

4.3.2 Uneven distribution educational resources led to varying student's comment on courses.

Due to uneven distribution of educational resources, **student's comment on courses varies among different levels of institutions**. Regular universities performed poorer in multiple aspects compared to higher levels of institutions, particularly in “Outdated Curriculum”, “Lack of User Centred Design Philosophy”, and “Limited Scope in Major Courses”.



4.4 Industry-Academia-Research joint effort should be emphasized for improving the competitive edge of design education.

Due to uneven educational development in China and other contributing factors such as institution type, geological constraints, faculty quality, and student cohorts, each school has its own advantages and disadvantages in developing their design majors. The future development of design education will require contribution from institutions, students and professionals, businesses, and policy support.

Policy Side

Policy Support for Education Reform and Open Talent Training Environment

- “Our design education should be more open and inclusive, starting from the **Ministry of Education's policy design** down to specifics like talent standards, educational environments, and curriculum layouts.” Duan Shengfeng, Vice President, Sichuan Fine Arts Institute.
- “Under the national development framework, design education has had an increased vitality and are now better suited for industry development needs” Chen Jiang, Dean, College of Design, Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts.

Industry Side

Embrace Industry and Technology Change in Promoting Design Education Reform

- administrators and participants of design education now clearly realise that, colleges and departments of design at institutions should consider their own geological advantages, resources, faculty, student body, and reputation when applying different teaching reform strategies and create their own **distinctive programs**.” Chen Jiang, Dean, College of Design, Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts.

Full Front Training in Artistic Taste, Professional Skill, General Skill (Thinking, Communication, and Collaboration Skills)

- “**Artistic taste** is important, and its education is of utmost importance within design institutions. Design education should be a part of general education, say if a person is able to come up with small inventions or ideas that could improve our daily lives, that same person will be the smartest in a tech company, or in other words talent will always be talent and is unaffected by industry change. So, in design education, there must be things that can make our students to open their hearts, and think about specific problems, eventually come up with different solutions for such problems. And such abilities will be cultivated through persistent training rather than coming from advanced technologies. In addition, **teamwork skills** are particularly important in today's context, design industry is no longer a one man show” Hang Hai, Professor

Strengthen University-Enterprise Collaboration (Collaborative Project, Professional Mentor) for Resource Supplementation and Practical Experience

- “Compared to enterprises, we have far less resources available at an academic institution, in terms of both hardware and software: with different projects requiring large number of equipment, we will not be able to finance such large purchases. **Strong research and industry collaboration** is a must both for today and the future, with over a dozen projects in collaboration with Huawei, I sometimes even mistake myself for working at a tech company rather than a university. As of today, our education efforts are falling behind the demand of our society and enterprises, a problem I believe is shared by many others around the world. Our solution for this particular problem was collaboration with enterprises, by inviting working professionals as our part time lecturers and advisors.” He Renke, Dean, College of Design, Hunan University.
- “The teaching of our department has particularly emphasised the application of **practical projects** in our classrooms, the profession and design skills that students learn will help them to gain a better life in the future.” Zhou Liqun, Professor, Shenzhen Polytechnic.

4.4.1 Enterprises should strengthen their communications with universities to bring first-hand experience to classrooms.

Enterprises

Industry elites should participate in university education and share their experience with students

- “It has always been my belief that for a program to take up a leadership and forward-thinking role, **teaching activities participated by industry elites** is more important than the theoretical prospective. They are usually willing to come to universities despite their busy schedule, as they could actually learn and gain feedback from the students. But there still are very few industry elites coming to classrooms, or one can also say such practice is still rare in most universities, most of the time only simple seminars are hosted.” Hang Hai, Professor, College of Design, China Central Academy of Fine Arts.
- “Educational and industry policies are fairly well matched. Compared to other cities, creative industries have access to a wealth of resources and policy support, as well as highly sophisticated creative ecological chain, the demand for creative talents is also naturally great. Shenzhen Polytechnic has done well in terms of industry participation compared to other well performed institutions, with design service collaboration projects with several **creative industry associations**, renowned enterprises, and governments. Strictly speaking, there is still room for improvement, in the future we plan to further strengthen such **all front collaboration**, truly bringing the resource advantage of creative industry into the cultivation of professional talents, supplying our regional creative industry with even more sophisticated creative design talents.” Zhou Liqun, Professor, Shenzhen Polytechnic.

Case Study

- “Currently we are working with Alibaba on a project where we are designing creative consumer products for museums, with digital media, product design, and visual communication majors being the main participants of the project. The university supplies workshops and the Human Resources while Alibaba is responsible for specific project goals and the platform to promote the end product, as well as cross-disciplinary professionals taking up assistive roles. It is our intention to challenge and train our students and faculty through an **open and intertwined project**. Instructors from Alibaba will be giving lectures here at Sichuan Academy of Fine Arts, with experts coming from areas such as intellectual property rights, end user visual design, and technical programming. At the same time, projects with significant social contributions are included in our studio courses where students will receive a share of the project earnings. As of now, all of our university-enterprise collaborative projects have a requirement for enterprises to providing training sessions where our students can learn knowledge from outside the classroom” Duan Shengfeng, Vice President, Sichuan Fine Arts Institute.
- “Here at Zhejiang University of Technology, our College of Industry Design has many horizontal research achievements, such as our **user research survey and product optimization** with DiDi; Other industrial products that we participate in during the design phase include areas such as child care products, health products, and intelligent hardware, examples include automotive child seats, treadmills, and industrial robots” Tang Zhichuan, Associate Professors, College of Industrial Design and Architecture, Zhejiang University of Technology.

4.4.2 Design students for the future: solid professional skills, improved soft skills, broad knowledge scope, and design for positive change.

Design Foundation: Artistic Taste

- “**Artistic appreciation** is an important aspect in our undergraduate education. Our overall artistic environment here at China Central Academy of Arts is actually beneficial to our College of Design, their work is quite fun and imaginative” Hang Hai, Professor, College of Design, China Central Academy of Fine Arts.
- “Students must have an **acute sense of artistic beauty**; our primary education has little support toward art education and the national university entrance exam only trains students in a repetitive pattern. What we need is students with an acute cultural awareness and creativity, and as educators, we in turn need to think from a macro-perspective in order to select and train such talents” Duan Shengfeng, Vice President, Sichuan Fine Arts Institute.

International View and Industry Trend

- “**International viewpoint is important** for our students, they must have a solid understanding of **the global development trend**. Despite wide access to internet and our current globalised age, different institutions do pose a significant influence on their students’ perspective” He Renke, Dean, College of Design, Hunan University.

Fundamental Theories and Knowledge Framework

- “Students should strengthen their **foundational theories** and build a **solid knowledge framework**. Take brand designs for example, clients are most likely looking for a brand design that best characterise their company image, which relies on the underlaying theories of marketing, user memory, and brand recognition.” Guo Guanmin, UEDC Design Director, Netease
- “Students should possess **well-rounded knowledge framework**, meeting modern business demand” Chen Jiang, Dean, College of Design, Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts.

Social Responsibility in Design

- **Social responsibility** is a must in design work. A student of mine was awarded a third prize in a competition for her work and I believe she should have been awarded the first prize precisely for her work’s social responsibility. Her design was intended to streamline delivery workers’ workflow and ease the door-to-door delivery experience, minimising both searching time for individual packages and reducing risk of damage. Designers should try **to improve people's lives** with their work, especially labor workers who do repetitive tasks. Design should bring people happiness that improves our social stability and overall quality of life.” Hang Hai, Professor, College of Design, China Central Academy of Fine Arts.

Communication and Creative Skills

- Writing will help you better understand the logic of a certain design work, **how to communicate** your colours, dynamics, and interactions to your end user, and have them comply with your design logic. I always write my thoughts on my design pieces to include such things. Besides, learn **how to ask questions**.” Lyu Qihuang, Executive Design Director of Greater China, Frog
- “ Students are some of the most creative people, they excel at things like **creative thinking**, and for that they are excellent talent choice for enterprises.” Chen Jiang, Dean, College of Design, Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts.

THANKS!

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This survey report is supported by the data collected from Tencent Questionnaires.



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