Sophie Weston Chien is a designer-organizer.

Her practice involves organizing in the design fields, participatory textile research and fabrication, theorizing on contemporary design practice, and teaching. Sophie builds spatial and social relationships to ensure people can shape their own spaces. Her work is in the permanent collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture and the MIT Museum.

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Education

Harvard Graduate School of Design	Master in Landscape Architecture Master in Urban Planning
Rhode Island School	Bachelor of Architecture
of Design	Bachelor of Fine Arts
	European Honors Program

University of Colorado, Boulder
Environmental Design Program
Boulder, CO

2024-26 Chancellor's Postdoctoral Fellow for Faculty Diversity

> Postdoc research with community members in San Lazaro to create Colorado-specific ecological communication devices, using tufted textiles to record narratives of climate and migration.

Lecturer

2025	Fundamentals of Design Studio
2025	Ecological Systems of Design Lecture
2025	Intro to Landscape Architecture Studio
2024	Intro to Environmental Product Design Studio

Publications

2025 Urban Innovation for the Climate Crisis: Design, Policy and Practice*

(forthcoming, Routledge, Co-Author with Simone Delaney and christin hu, edited by Gabriel Kaprielian and Julie Ulrich)

Chapter: Bias Towards Action: Design As Protest Collective Works

Building Ground for Climate Collectivism*

(forthcoming, Routledge, Co-Author with Emily Wettstein and MK Smaby, edited by Alicia Imperiale and Emily Martin)

Chapter: From Competition to Mutualism: Model Migration in Design

Pedagogy

A-Z: Harvard University Graduate School of Design

Harvard Design Press

^{*} indicates peer-reviewed

Design As Protest Chapbooks

(forthcoming, co-edited with Tonia Sing Chi, G Laster, Kiki Cooper, Simone Delaney)

Four editions: Surveillance + Suppression, Energy + Environment, Land + Labor, Voice + Vision

Aqua Incognita III, IV: Designing for Extreme Climate Resilience in Monterrey, Mexico

Harvard Design Press

2024 Storytelling Spaces of Solidarity in the Asian Diaspora

Interviewed by Tonia Sing Chi

PAIRS Journal 05

Interview with Taylor Holloway and Tya Winn

2023 Paprika! Volume 9, Issue 3

Design-Organizing Abolitionist Futures

Architect Magazine

Co-Author with Dark Matter U

Context: A Subversive Act of Communing

PLOT Journal 12: Edge

Co-Author with Dark Matter U

Reimagining the Ground to Recognize the Periphery

Harvard Urban Review

Complicit Construction: The Role Of Architects In The Prison Industrial Complex (A Ten-Year Overview, 2012-2022)

PAIRS Journal 04

Interview with Emily Wettstein

"Femiknits: Sew You Wanna Weave a Revolution?"

Interviewed by Claire Richey

2022 Disc Journal 02: Intimacy

Co-Author with Amanda Ugorji

Soft City

Canadian Centre for Architecture

How To: Do No Harm

Log 54: Coauthoring

Co-Editor And Co-Author With Dark Matter U

"The Other Day We Started A Shared Doc ... "

Harvard GSD Field Guide

Apocalypse Now J-Term

2021 Portals: Pedagogy, Practice, And Architecture's Future Imaginary

Actar, edited by Amy Catania Kulper, Kevin Crouse, Jennifer Liese

Thesis Project: Practice

Anti-Racist Design Justice Newspaper

Co-Author with Design As Protest Collective

2019 v1 RISD Journal

Index of Agency

2017 Visions Brown And RISD Asian/Asian-American Literary Art Publication Spatialized Protest

Residencies

2025 Art Omi

Ghent, New York

Architecture Residency

2023 I-Park Foundation

East Haddam, Connecticut

Landscape + Ecology Residency

2022 Canadian Centre for Architecture

Montreal, Canada

How To: Do No Harm Research Residency

Solo Exhibitions

* indicates curator

2026 Objects of Abolition

Washington, DC

District Architecture Center, Suman Sorg Gallery

2025 Making Homelands

Boulder, Colorado

Boulder Public Library, Arapahoe Gallery

Making Homelands

Boulder, Colorado

CU Boulder Sustainability, Energy and Environment Complex Gallery

2024 Soft City

Cambridge, Massachusetts

MIT Museum

2023 Planning at 100 Years*

Cambridge, Massachusetts

Harvard GSD, Frances Loeb Library

DAP Collective Projects

New Orleans, Louisiana

Contemporary Arts Center Gallery

DMU Constellation

Starkville, Mississippi

Mississippi State University, Architecture Gallery

2022 Soft City

Boston, Massachusetts

Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library

You are a (Anti)Racist: DAP Collective Projects

Chicago, Illinois

Columbia College, Glass Curtain Gallery

Soft City

Cambridge, Massachusetts

MIT, Rotch Library Gallery

Group Exhibitions

* indicates curator and participant

2026 The Data at Hand: Data Physicalizations of Earth and Space

Oakland, California

Mills College Art Museum

The Data at Hand: Data Physicalizations of Earth and Space

Boston, Massachusetts

Northeastern University, Gallery 360

2025 Time - Space - Existence (cancelled)

Venice, Italy

Global Art Affairs Foundation during 19th Biennale di Architettura in Venice

Organizing in the Lobby - Design As Protest

Venice, Italy

19th Biennale di Architettura in Venice

The Threads that Tie Us

Medford, Massachusetts

Arts Collaborative

Becoming Chinatown

Denver, Colorado

CU Denver, Fishbowl Gallery

Global Dialogues in Planning Education: 100 Years of Tongji and Harvard*

Shanghai, China

Tongji University

2024 Cover Me Softly

Timișoara, Romania

Beta Architecture Biennial

Data Through Design: Aftermath

New York, New York

New York City's Open Data Week at Bric House Gallery

Harvard Arts First Festival

Cambridge, Massachusetts

Harvard University Yard

Faculty Exhibition

Boulder, Colorado

CU Boulder, Environmental Design Gallery

2023 DAP Collective Projects

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Drexel University, Pearlstein Gallery

10 Years of DesignxRI

Pawtucket, Rhode Island

Machines with Magnets Gallery

100% Real Fakes

Brooklyn, New York

Roots Cafe + Gallery

Open Studios

East Haddam, Connecticut

I-Park Residency

The City Talks

Online

SLAB at the University of Southern California

3rd Space*

Boston, Massachusetts

Downtown Crossing Pop-up Gallery

2022 Lisbon Architecture Triennale: DMU Constellation

Lisbon, Portugal

National Museum Of Contemporary Art, Lisbon

Now What?! Advocacy, Activism, and Alliances in American Architecture Since 1968

Boston, Massachusetts

Boston Society Of Architects Gallery

No White Walls

New Haven, Connecticut

Yale E.I.K. Gallery

GSD End of Year Show

Cambridge, Massachusetts

Harvard Druker Design Gallery

2020 RISD Undergraduate Senior Show

Online

RISD Class of 2020

Architecture(ish) Senior Show*

Providence, Rhode Island

RISD Architecture Gallery

{re}position

Providence, Rhode Island

RISD Gelman Gallery

2019 ___scapes

Providence, Rhode Island

RISD Gelman Gallery

2018 Allora

Rome, Italy

Palazzo Cenci

Eruption

Rome, Italy

Bibliothe Galleria

Polar Opposites

Providence, Rhode Island

Granoff Center Brown University

2016 Alaska Centennial Science and Stewardship Symposium

Fairbanks, Alaska

National Park Service

Experimental + Foundation Studies Triennial

Providence, Rhode Island

RISD Woods-Gerry Gallery

Honors + Awards

2026	Cameron Visiting Architect Middlebury College
2025	Architecture Residency Award Art Omi
2021-24	Dean's Merit Scholarship (full funding) Harvard Graduate School of Design
2024	Artist Residency Finalist Wassaic Project
2023	The City Talks Digital Gallery Award SLAB at the University of Southern California
2023	Radcliffe Institute Public Art Competition Finalist Harvard University
2023	Landscape Residency Award I-Park Foundation
2022	Research Residency Award Canadian Centre for Architecture
2022	ASLA Student Award Nomination Harvard Graduate School of Design
2020	Leadership Legacy Award RISD Center for Student Involvement
2020	Warren Family Social Engagement Award RISD Graduation Class of 2020
2015-20	Diversity Advancement Scholarship American Institute of Architects
2018	Steven Lerner Scholarship RISD Architecture Department
2017	Peter Guimond Memorial Scholarship RISD Architecture Department
2016	Outstanding New Leader Award RISD Center for Student Involvement
Funding	
2025	CU Boulder Arts & Humanities Grant (with co-PI Shawhin Roudbari) Research + Innovation Office \$7,250
2025	Professional Development Fund CU Boulder Chancellor's Postdoctoral Fellowship for Faculty Diversity \$5,000
2025	CU Boulder Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program Team Grant Office of Undergraduate Education \$4,000
2025	BIPOC Educator Research Grant National Organization of Minority Landscape Architects \$2,500

2025 Scott Opler Emerging Scholar Fellowship Society for Architectural Historians Annual Conference \$1,000 2024 CU Boulder Center for Humanities & the Arts Center for Humanities & the Arts Small Grant \$1,200 2024 CU Boulder Office for Public and Community-Engaged Scholarship Public and Community-Engaged Scholarship Grants: Tier 1 \$2,000 2024 Professional Development Fund CU Boulder Chancellor's Postdoctoral Fellowship for Faculty Diversity \$5,000 2023 Design Justice Summit Fellowship Design Justice Summit \$1,000 2023 GSD Racial Equity + Anti-Racist Fund Planning Abolitionist Futures Workshop with UCLA + GSD Planning \$1,500 2022 GSD Conference Attendance Fund Harvard GSD \$500 2021 GSD Racial Equity + Anti-Racist Fund Complicit Construction: Ten Years of the Prison Industrial Complex \$1,200 2021 Council for the Arts at MIT Award Soft City: Texture Mapping Black Boston with Amanda Ugorji \$6,800 **RISD Architecture Travel Studies Award** Design Research in Mexico \$1,000 2018 Textron Design Fellowship Internship with La Más \$2,500 2018 RISD Global Travel Grant European Honors Program \$5,000 2017 Maharam Design Fellowship Research in the Providence Mayor's Office \$5,000

Teaching

University of Colorado, Boulder Environmental Design Program Boulder, CO	2025 2024	Ecological Systems of Design Lecture
Harvard Graduate School of Design Cambridge, MA	2022	Instructor Apocalypse Now, a seminar rethinking necessary "survival methods" for traumatic times, 2-week course
	2023 2022 2022	Danielle Choi

RISD Architecture Department Providence, RI	2021	Teaching Fellow Assisted studios taught by Cara Liberatore and Zachary Schumacher through workshops and lectures to deliver curriculum to students. Focus on design principles and drawing through the consideration and creation of form, experience, and culture.
	2018, 19	Cara Liberatore and Manuel Cordero Alvarado
Seeding Pedagogies/ University of Virginia Charlottesville, VA	2022- Present	
just practice Cambridge, MA	2021- Present	
Dark Matter U	2021- Present	Core Organizer Dark Matter U is an anti-racist design justice network collectively seeking the radical transformation of education & practice toward a just future.
Invited Reviews	2025	RISD Undergrad Industrial Design Final Review CU Boulder Undergrad Architecture Mid Review CU Boulder Undergrad Landscape Mid Review
	2024	RISD Undergrad Industrial Design Final Review CU Boulder Undergrad Architecture Final Review CU Denver Undergrad Architecture Final Review CU Denver Graduate Architecture Final Review Syracuse Undergrad Architecture Mid Review Pratt Undergrad Architecture Final Review MIT Graduate Landscape of Urbanism Seminar Final Review Pratt Undergrad Architecture Representation Final Review
	2023	Morgan State Graduate Landscape Architecture Final Review MIT Graduate Architecture Thesis Mid Review CUNY Staten Island Undergraduate Public Interest Technology Final Review
	2022	NY City College of Technology Undergraduate Architecture Final Review Wentworth Undergraduate Architecture Final Review Cornell Graduate Landscape Architecture Final Review

		Pratt Undergraduate Architecture Final Review University of Buffalo Undergraduate Architecture Review
	2021	Cal Poly Pomona Undergraduate Architecture Final Review UC Berkeley [IN]ARCH Mid Review Carleton Undergraduate Architecture Final Review RISD Undergraduate Architecture Final Review
	2018	RISD in Richelieu Printmaking Final Review
Coauthored Syllabi	2022	operation and a congruing reading green and accompany
		taught at UVA by Emily Wettstein (Seeding Pedagogies)
Spalter Teaching Fellow RISD Museum	2018-20	Teach weekly art and design workshops to high schoolers focused on contextualizing the museum's collection through theory and technique.
Leadership + Community Engagement Fellow	2016-17 2015-16	Dorcas International Institute of Rhode Island Mount Hope Learning Center Responsible for teaching weekly art and literacy class (K-12 and all ages), managing work-study students, volunteers, and planning community events.

Conferences + Workshops

* indicates peer-reviewed

2026 Unpacking Material Vernaculars of Environmental Design Across Disciplines (panel moderator)

University of Colorado Boulder Environmental Design (conference co-organizer)

2025 Soft Sites: Textiles as Feminist Praxis*

Information+ Conference

Making Homelands: Tufting San Lazaro Lifeways*

Urban Humanities Conference

Analyzing Cop City through the Complicit Construction Model*

Society for Architectural Historians Annual Conference

Soft Sites: Textiles as Feminist Praxis*

Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture Annual Conference

Mapping the Slow Violence of the Cop City*

Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture Annual Conference

A Roundtable for Chinatowns Symposium

University of Colorado Denver College of Architecture and Planning

Lecture Series

2024 Place and Space: Soft Grounds

Architecture and Urbanism MITES Program MIT

Fuzzy Futures: Developing Ecological Communication Devices

Landscape Technology Colloquium Harvard GSD

2023 Speculative Pedagogies

Setting the Course: Future Core Studio Pedagogies in Landscape Architecture Symposium Harvard GSD

Centering Community Leadership in Design

Design Justice Summit

2022 Designer-Organizer: Practicing Just Futures in Landscape Architecture*

Architectural Humanities Research Association Annual Conference

Reframe: Organizing by Design

Brown/RISD Better World By Design Conference

DAP National Call - Call to Organize

Design As Protest Collective

DAP Care + Coordination Annual Retreat

Design as Protest Collective

2021 Showing Up: Activism Across Life Domains

Black in Design Conference Harvard GSD

Anti-Racist Design Justice Workshop

Womxn In Design Week Harvard GSD

Bias Towards Action: Applying the Design As Protest Anti-Racist Design Justice Index to Your Design Practice

ASLA Conference (declined due to COVID-19)

DAP Care + Coordination Annual Retreat

Design As Protest Collective

2020 Day of Action - Election 2020

Design As Protest Collective

2019 Merrow Visioning Workshop

Fall River Community

Mapping Context Workshop

RISD/Brown Nth Degree Conference

2018 RISD Strategic Plan Workshop

RISD Community

2017 Wayfinding as Equity Workshop

City of Providence

RISD x National Park Service Workshop

Delaware Water Gap National Park + Recreation Area

Lectures + Speeches

2026 Just Practice

Lecture

Middlebury College, Cameron Visiting Architect Program

2025 Making Homelands

Lecture

Community Engagement, Design and Research Center, University of Colorado Boulder

Soft City

Lecture

Smith Group, Boston Office

2024 Soft Sites: Textiles as Feminist Design Praxis

Lecture

ATLAS Institute, University of Colorado Boulder

2023 "Practicing Architects"

Lecture

Mississippi State University Harrison Lecture Series

2022 Praxes of Care

Lecture/Workshop

University of Waterloo Architecture Arriscraft Speaker Series

2021 Organizing in Design

Lecture

DesignxRI Clambake Series

On Contradiction and Care

Speech

RISD Commencement Class of 2020 Undergraduate Speaker

2020 Just Patterns

Lecture

RISD Civic Engagement Series

Waterbodies

Lecture

RISD Remote Student Lecture Series

2018 New Student Welcome Address

Speech

RISD First-Year Orientation

Panels + Podcasts + Class Talks

2025 Soft Sites: Ecological Communication Devices

Guest Speaker

Information Science Seminar, University of Colorado Boulder

Life after GSD

Guest Speaker

Harvard GSD Career Services

Cultural Cartographies: Visualizing Cultural Narratives in the Built

Environment

Guest Speaker

Harvard GSD Seminar

Navigating Identity

Panelist

University of Colorado Boulder Environmental Design

Beyond Conventional Practice: Aligning Values and Process

Guest Speaker

Pratt Institute Graduate Architecture Seminar

Professional Practice: Alumni

Guest Speaker

RISD Architecture Department

Unpacking Material Vernaculars of Environmental Design Across

Disciplines

Moderator

University of Colorado Boulder Environmental Design

2024 Storytelling + Space

Moderator + Panelist

MIT Museum

Housing Ecologies

Guest Speaker

Syracuse University Graduate Architecture Studio

Ecology in Speculative Design

Guest Speaker

CU Boulder Undergraduate Seminar

Professional Practice: Advocacy

Guest Speaker

RISD Architecture Department

Landscape of Teaching

Guest Speaker

Harvard GSD Career Services

2023 Planning at 100 Years

Panelist

Harvard GSD Loeb Library

Thesis Retrospective

Guest Speaker

RISD Architecture Department

3rd Space Closing: Head, Heart, Hand

Panelist

3rd Space Gallery

Participatory Mapping

Guest Speaker

Northeastern University Graduate Seminar

3rd Space Opening: Architectural Imaginaries

Panelist

3rd Space Gallery

2022 Race and Space

Guest Speaker

University of Buffalo Graduate Architecture Seminar

Practice

Guest Speaker

Tecnológico De Monterrey - Querétaro Graduate Architecture Studio

Equity x Design

Panel Moderator

DesignxRI Design Week

2021 Architecture + Advocacy

Panelist

University of Buffalo AIAS

Practice

Guest Speaker

University Of Tennessee Graduate Thesis Seminar

Grounds

Podcast

MIT Architecture WAWD? Radio Station

Architecture Across the Ecological Continuum

Guest Speaker

University Of Waterloo Graduate Seminar

2020 Design & Covid-19: What Now?

Panelist

Design Week Rhode Island

2019 Creativity is Core Episode #107

Podcast

Clever Podcast

Student Health + Wellness

Panelist

RISD Board Of Trustees

2018 Thought Diversity

Panelist

RISD Career Center

Press

2025 CU Boulder Press

RIO Grant

2025 Design Makes Sense

Profile

2025 Fine Gardening Magazine

National Association of Minority Landscape Architects

2025 Tufts Daily Press

The Threads that Tie Us

2024 CU Boulder Press

Profile

2024 Madame Architect

Days With Feature

2024 Ouvert Magazine

Soil on the Move in Data Through Design Exhibition

2024 The Harvard Gazette

Leaf Litter in Arts First Festival

2024 ENSPIRE Magazine

Soft City at Downtown Crossing

2023 Architect's Newspaper

DMU at Lisbon Architecture Triennale

2022 Madame Architect

Next Gen Feature

2022 Boston University

Soft City at MIT Rotch Gallery

2022 RISD Media

Class of 2020 Commencement Speaker

2021 Hyperallergic

RISD Senior Show Coverage

2020 RISD Media

Warren Family Social Engagement Award

2020 Architect's Foundation

Grad Series

2020 RISD Media

Architecture Senior Show

2020 Campus Compact

Newman Civic Fellowship Announcement

2019 RISD Media

Design Week Keynote Panel

Leadership + Service

CU Boulder	2025-26 2025 2024-25 2025 2025	for Z. Steiner Mentor for Z. Steiner Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program Grant
Design As Protest Collective	2020- Present	
Design x Rhode Island	2021- Present	
Built Environment Deans Advancing Change	2025-26	Fellow Member of a cohort of early career fellows from schools dedicated to the built environment professions and practices, selected based on interest in engaging in an academic career, while also contributing to the pursuit of equity and inclusion in the built environment.
Association for Community Design	2024-25	Circles of Practice Fellow ACD envisions a practice of design that dismantles systemic injustice and creates an equitable built environment. Fellowship is for practitioners to increase their knowledge and skills in community-engaged design.

Juries / Selection Committee Member	2023 2021-25 2023	RISD Craft Selection Committee RISD Maharam Fellowship Selection Committee RISD Museum Artist Residency Selection Committee
Harvard GSD	2022-23 2021-22	Urban Planning Diversity, Inclusion & Equity Committee Landscape Architecture Diversity, Inclusion & Equity Committee
	2021-22	Landscape Architecture Class Representative
Newman Civic Fellowship	2019-20	National fellowship recognizes community-committed students who are changemakers, one per university—mentored by RISD President Rosanne Somerson.
RISD	2019-20 2018-19 2019	Community Engagement Working Group Student Body President Honorary Degree Committee
Work Experience		
Harvard Graduate School of Design Cambridge, MA	2021- 24	Career Liaison Collaborate with Alistair McIntosh in shaping Landscape Architecture career programming, including panels and workshops, and create career resources.
	2022-23	Project Associate Collaborate with Jill Desimini on creating the Climate Justice Design Fellowship supported by Google+Harvard Data+Climate.
Agency Landscape + Planning Cambridge, MA	2020-21	Urban Designer Contribute design ideas, analytic skills, public engagement strategies and execution, representation, research, and writing for projects at many scales.
		Projects: Albina Vision Trust Community Investment Plan Portland, OR, Perkins Pier Siting Study Burlington, VT
Biden for President/ Democratic Coordinated Campaign Charlotte, NC	2020	Field Organizer Organize community initiatives, including voting education, outreach, registration, Get Out the Vote, and manage and recruit fellows and volunteers.
LA Más (Office of: Office) Los Angeles, CA	2019	Design + Engagement Fellow Responsible for schematic design parts, field research, assembling design proposals, graphic documents, and mode making.

Oualalou + Choi Paris, France	2018	Architectural Design Intern Responsible for drawing, drafting, models (physical and CAD models), and urban strategies.
op.AL / American Academy Rome Rome, Italy	2018	Architectural Design Intern Assisted with installation in Cinque Mostre and research on optics and trump l'oeil with Jonathan Scelsa and Jennifer Birkeland.
Providence Mayor's Office Providence, RI	2017	Maharam Design Fellow Designed constituent advocacy and systemic analysis of interdepartmental municipal functions.
DESINE Lab Central Falls, RI	2014	Design Build Participant Constructed a public plaza, transforming a parking lot into a revitalized community space with reclaimed materials and neighborhood-crafted art lab directed by Dr. Elizabeth Dean Hermann.

Collections

Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, MIT Museum, and Private Collections across the United States.

Affiliations

Society for Architectural Historians
 Association for Community Design
 Community Engagement, Design, and Research Center at CU Boulder
 Dark Matter U
 Design x Rhode Island
 Design As Protest Collective