



SEE DESIGN
Sharing Experience
on Design Support
for SMEs

SEEdesign Bulletin

Sharing experience on design support

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EDITORIAL

We are seeing ever greater interest in the topics of design support and design policies.

Alongside increased engagement from national and regional governments and design practitioners, more academic research has been conducted in this field than ever before. Groups are forming to study, discuss and bring together interested practitioners and academics. To take one example, the "design policy" internet-based list offers a forum for conversation on design, government, and policy related issues. Associated topics in this field are design management, strategic management, public policy and economy.

Over the last 30 months, SEEdesign has been encouraging the exchange of information, experiences and knowledge on design promotion, support and policies. As part of the INTERREG IIIIC programme, we expect that sharing knowledge and experience within our partnership will enable the regions involved to develop new solutions to economic and social challenges.

This issue of the SEEdesign Bulletin invited Dr Elisabeth Tunstall, from the University of Illinois (USA) to contribute an article in which she sets out a reflective mapping exercise of the design policy context. The interview section features Judith Thompson, Director of the Better by Design programme in New Zealand. Design Support in Practice is illustrated by two case studies: Designing Demand, a design support programme implemented by the Design Council (UK) and Design Center De Winkelhaak, an inspiring project in place in Antwerp (Belgium). Both stories form part of the SEEdesign Library, alongside 26 other examples of strategies adopted for the promotion of design (available at www.seedesign.org).

The news section contains articles about the launch of important initiatives for the promotion of design in several European countries: the Belgian Design Club; the Design Policy for Denmark; the Innovation by Design Programme in Ireland; and the Eastern European Database of design organisations. This short list shows the diversity of models of programmes and tools that have been explored for the promotion of design.

We hope this issue will make interesting reading and help your studies, practice or decisions about design support and promotion.

Gavin Cawood and Gisele Raulik
Design Wales



THE SEE DESIGN PARTNERSHIP

The SEEdesign Bulletin is produced by Design Wales as part of the activities of SEEdesign – a project part-financed by the European Union (ERDF) within the INTERREG IIIIC Programme.

SEEdesign provides a unique opportunity for seven partners from around Europe to share their experiences of delivering design support programmes. As a consequence of developing constructive working relationships over the three years of the programme, the outcome will be the realisation of best practice models and the development of tools to measure the effectiveness of current and future projects.

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Mapping the Design Policy Landscape

Dr. Elizabeth (Dori) Tunstall



Design centres often embody the national and regional design policies of their governments. As such, the priorities and activities of design centres represent the tangible experiences of design as a value-add for government, business and society. But does the current scope of design programmes and activities address the myriad ways that design can add value to government, business and society? John Heskett, a leading consultant on design policy, characterised design policy as the promotion of “technology and design as a means of gaining economic advantage by enhancing national competitiveness.”¹ Although an accurate description of the current priorities of design policy, my research has shown that this definition is too narrow. While it addresses the government’s responsibility to support national economic development; it elides design’s role in government’s other core function – the effective internal governance of its people. My research on design, government, and policy over the past two years has mapped a broader landscape of design policy. I characterise design policy as having four key contexts: (1) design promotion, (2) innovation policy, (3) policy as designed and (4) design standards: figure 1.

Design promotion and innovation policy represent design policy for the value-add of national competitive economic advantage. Policy as designed and design standards represent design policy for the value-add of effective internal governance. By mapping the landscape of design policy, I pose two questions to design centres, “In which of the four contexts does the majority of your design priorities and activities reside? How could you increase the value-add of your centre by expanding into other areas beyond economic competitiveness?”

The Context of Design Promotion

Design promotion represents the original context of much formal or informal design policy. Found mostly in advanced or moderately “industrialised” nations in Europe, North America, and Pacific-Asia, with the additions of Brazil, South Africa, Colombia, and Cuba, national and regional design promotion policies reflect the outgrowth of government general industrial policies in the post-World War II era. As in much of your own programme’s history, design promotion policy often culminates in the

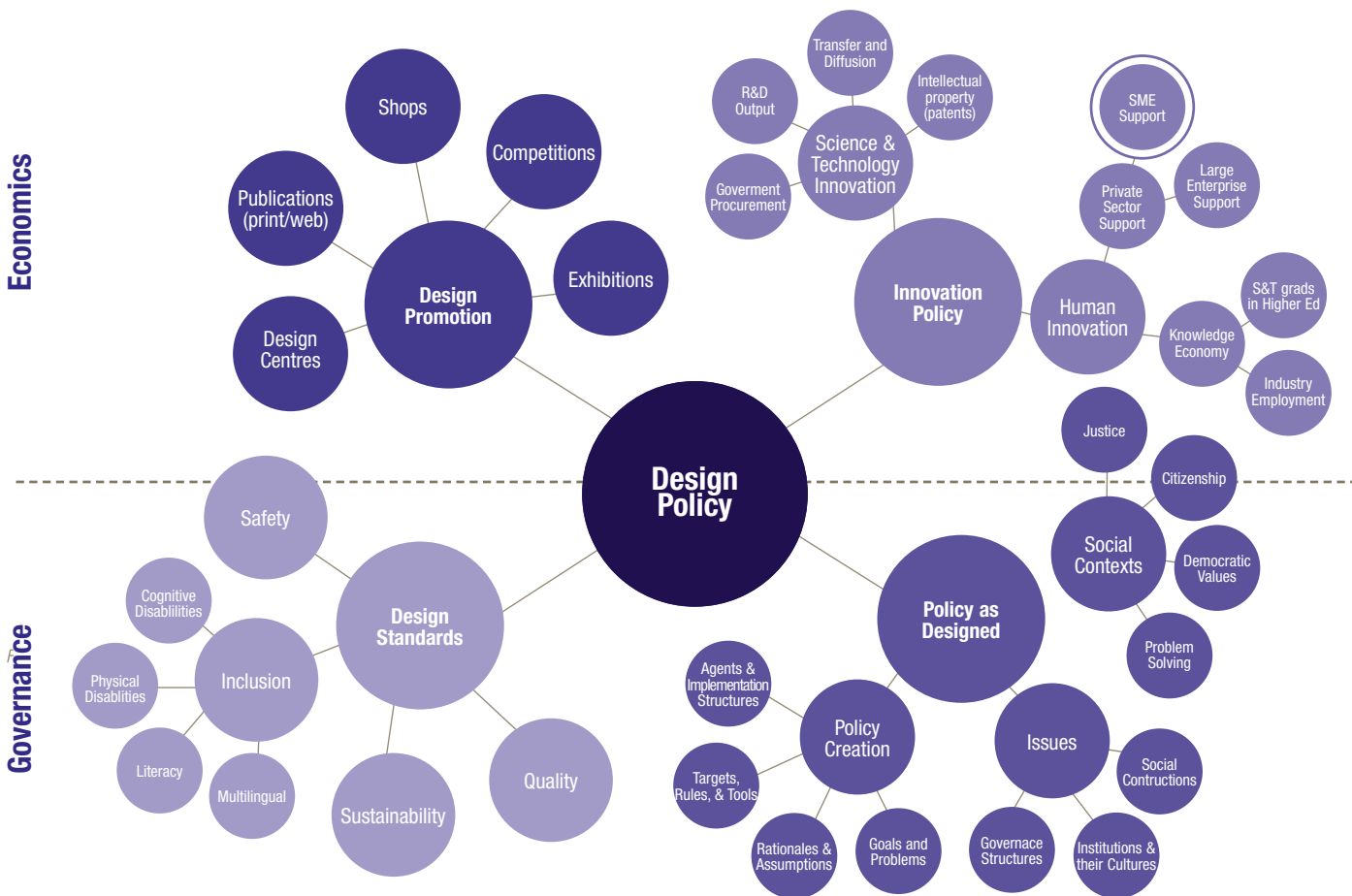


Figure 1: Mindmap of design policy landscape

establishment and funding of design centres and promotion agencies. Through centres, exhibitions, competitions, publications and shops, the role of design within national symbolic and economic interests is promoted. The key intentions of these promotional policies were and continue to be the (1) consolidation of the multiple design specialties into a unified industry, (2) tangible demonstration of the contributions of design, as an industry, to the nation's business, government, and the public, (3) highlighting of exemplary designers and (4) training of designers with the skills necessary to demonstrate the industry's value. Consolidation establishes the design industry as a sizable interest group and, in some cases, a powerful lobby. Demonstration is always required to persuade key decision-makers and stakeholders. The British Design Council's Cox report is the often-cited example of a successful demonstration of design's value to business. Highlighting the work of individual designers communicates the standards of excellence for the design community, business, government and the wider public. Nearly every nation with a design promotion policy has a "Design Excellence" award. Training reproduces the evolving standards of excellence in the next generations. Key questions to ask are: What are the priorities of my centre in relationship to these four intentions? Where is my centre in meeting these priorities?

The implementation of design promotion intentions is carried out through several core activities. Consolidation activities include coordination of joint studies across all design sectors, holding design-wide multi-sponsored events and sometimes, organisational acquisitions or mergers. Demonstration activities include publishing audits and reports, organising competitions and exhibitions and managing design centres' sites and shops. Highlighting the work of individual designers is also achieved through competitions, exhibitions (travelling and on site), glossy print and digital publications and selling in shops. Training activities often take the form of workshops, portfolio reviews and curriculum development for universities. See the design promotion intentions to activities matrix: table 1.

DESIGN PROMOTION	
Intentions	Activities
Consolidation	Coordinate studies across engineering
	Merge with or acquire organisation
	Hold interdisciplinary events
Demonstration	Organize traveling and onsite exhibits
	Organize Competitions
	Manage retail shops
	Manage design centre
	Publish audits and reports
Highlighting	Curate innovation exhibitions
	Sponsor innovation competitions
	Create innovation print publications
	Create innovation digital publications
	Promote designer work in shop
Training	Provide workshops
	Host portfolio reviews
	Develop curricula with educators

Table 1: Design Promotion intentions and activities

This is not an exclusive set of intentions or activities, but rather provides a framework. Governments, economies and thus design promotion policy have evolved away from the post-World War II industrial focus. While design promotion continues to exist as a core focus of design policy, for many, it has evolved into innovation policy.

The Context of Innovation Policy

Innovation policy is the contemporary version of industrial policy, as economies have shifted from being manufacturing-based to service-based. It builds on the core intentions of design promotion: consolidation, demonstration, highlighting and training, yet with differences deriving from the innovation context. Design centres

for SME support inhabit the context of innovation policy. In fact, some of you may represent industrial design centres that were converted to innovation centres, for example, the Bizkaia Agency for Innovation, BAI².

In 1996, the EU developed its first action plan for innovation in Europe. Since then, innovation policy has become globally popular. According to the European Commission's Trendcharts Innovation reports², as of June 2007, every country in Europe, except for three, has an official innovation policy document. The Americas, Brazil, Mexico and Canada all have strong federal innovation policies. The exception is the US, who failed to pass a national innovation policy bill in 2005. In the Middle Eastern region, only Morocco and Tunisia have clear innovation initiatives, while others have innovation related projects. Japan and Korea maintain multiple editions of national innovation policies. Most other Asian countries, including China, have documented national innovation policies. Two are in the research phase of their development. Official innovation policies in Sub-Saharan Africa are lacking, but the World Bank Foundation, in partnership with African Universities and European Governments, has conducted a series of workshops to promote innovation policy in Africa. The point is that if a nation does not have an innovation policy, it is expected to be crafting one.

Innovation policies often have two high-level foci: science and technology innovation and human innovation. Innovation policy for science and technology has the primary intention of encouraging and demonstrating: (1) increases in the nation's intellectual property claims or patents, (2) advantageous control of the transfer and diffusion of technologies, (3) increases in the R&D output of all its industries and (4) greater efficiencies in government procurement procedures. Again, the core intention of S&T innovation is the demonstration of measurable positive results and patentable outputs for the nation. The core activities consist of enhancing legal procedures for patents, crafting or managing research reports and disseminating research reports. All of this is sometimes accomplished without any explicit mention of design.

Great variation exists in the range of design promotion centres' alignment with S&T innovation policy. Some design promotion centres are aligned with the arts and culture. For example, the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic supports the Slovak Design Centre. Centres, such as these, may miss out on the greater economic support and social prestige associated with alignment with national innovation policies supported by a Ministry of Trade or Federal government centre. Other centres craft their formal or informal priorities guided by their national innovation policy, regardless of any absence of design in the innovation policy. In other nations, Korea for example, the industrial design policy is explicitly included in the nation's innovation policy. Whether one's design policies are merely guided by, or explicitly form part of, innovation policy, design centres have to reposition themselves vis-à-vis the engineering and business strategy communities that dominate innovation thinking. As addressed by Bruce Tether's article on interdisciplinary S&T innovation in the August 2005 SEEdesign Bulletin does your centre spend more time explaining how design fits within the engineering process or has begun emphasising design management over design objects?

While S&T innovation policy centres the design patent as the demonstration of the value of design, human innovation policy focuses on the producers of S&T innovations. It emphasises the consolidation, demonstration and training intentions of design promotion policy, but within the innovation context. Human innovation policy divides into (1) private sector support, which further divides into that for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and large enterprises and (2) knowledge economy education as measured through graduates in higher education and their industry employment.

Private sector support carries out the tangible demonstration of the contributions of design to the nation's economy through precise market-segment targeting of SMEs and large enterprises. The interdisciplinary context of innovation policy expands the scope of a centre's consolidation activities. Design centres must reach out to the engineers, business strategists and social scientists also involved in the innovation process. Some questions to ask are: Has your centre added social scientists and business management staff to your organisation? Do you have a wider range of participants in your design events? Innovation policy changes the content of training

activities offered through workshops, publications and symposiums. Workshops on design management, service design and a new emphasis on design thinking, as distinct from making, characterise the innovation policy curriculum.

The training and preparation of current and future professional designers follow these new trajectories as well. How to work in interdisciplinary teams? What is design thinking? These are some of the design education topics required by the innovation focus. Human innovation policy focuses on the evaluation of the number and quality of graduates and professionals engaged in the innovation industry. Thus, the core activities are the crafting and disseminating of research reports, conducting workshops and sponsorship of innovation competitions and exhibitions for design students. See the innovation policy intentions to activities matrix: table 2.

INNOVATION POLICY	
Intentions	Activities
Consolidation	Coordinate studies across engineering, design, business, and social sciences
	Hold interdisciplinary events
Demonstration	Enhance procedures for patents
	Establish metrics for innovation
	Publish audits and reports
	Disseminate research of others
	Monitor # of graduates and employees
Highlighting	Curate innovation exhibitions
	Sponsor innovation competitions
	Create innovation print publications
	Create innovation digital publications
Training	Provide workshops on design thinking, ROI, and design management
	Develop interdisciplinary curricula

Table 2: Intentions and activities for innovation policy

Both S&T and human forms of innovation policy pose specific challenges for design centres needing to demonstrate the value-add of design to business, government and society. First, innovation policies contain an inherent bias toward patentable knowledge for economic competition, which often excludes the non-industrial based design sectors. One may copyright a poster or logo, but it is not patentable knowledge. This bias, then, limits the perception of the value-add of design to business and undercuts consolidation efforts, because only certain design sectors dominate. Secondly, innovation, and even design promotion, policies frame design as an industry-based special interest group, separate from the everyday practices of government. Design's perceived separateness from the structures, training, information, environments, procedures, methods, forms and communications of government – where they can prove their everyday value-add – leaves design centres vulnerable to the vagaries of political budget reductions. Many of you currently feel these budget pressures. Lastly, innovation policy promotes a public image of design as "cool" perhaps even trendy. Could an additional and more sustainable public image of design portray it as necessary to the everyday self-governance and trust in the government?

The Context of Policy as Designed

My introduction to the concept of *policy as designed* came from the work of American political scientists, Ann Schneider and Helen Ingram. In their edited volume *Policy Design for Democracy*, they characterise policy design as having "observable elements" made up of targets, goals or problems to be solved, rules, rationales and assumptions³. These take the form of "blueprints, architecture, discourses, and aesthetics... in both its instrumental and symbolic forms"⁴. Policy as design exist within specific national, and supranational in the case of the European Union, United Nations or the African Union, social contexts of justice, citizenship, democratic values and problem solving. Governance structures, institutions and their cultures and lastly the social constructions of those who are affected by policies frame the issues of policy design. Schneider and Ingram's approach to policy opens up a field of possibilities for understanding and changing the role of design in policy creation,

policy implementation and the reactions to policy by people. In policy creation, design provides the tangible models and visualisations that help policy analysts and decision-makers interpret the scope of the problem and its solutions. The designs are the tangible manifestations of policy implementation in a given context: the form one fills out, the ID card one carries or the municipal parking meter one uses. People formulate their reactions to policies through the symbolic attachments they give to these tangible forms; filling out accurately a tax form, burning an ID card or ignoring a parking meter. Design makes manifest the practice of governance.

The model of design policy for governance differs from that of design policy for economic competition. The primary intentions require integration into governmental institutions and governance structures, championing the expertise of lay citizens and training designers in the methods for understanding social systems. In terms of integration, many government agencies already have designers on staff in their communication departments. The intention would be to expand designers' integration into strategy and policy departments as well. Core activities for governmental integration include seeding designers and design managers in every government sector, supporting communities of practice for designers in government and defining design skill sets and rank levels for government HR departments. Championing the expertise of lay citizens requires the adaptation of user-centred design processes effective in business to citizen-centred design processes in government. Denmark's Centre for Excellence for User-Centred Policy seeks to accomplish this, but on a consultancy basis as distinct from direct integration within the Danish Ministry of Economic and Business Affairs, the Ministry of Taxation and the Ministry of Employment. There are two phases of core citizen-centred design activities. The first is to build awareness by adapting your design centre's programming to include these kinds of projects. The British Design Council's RED initiative was a good example. The second is partnering with civic organisations to place on their staffs experts on citizen-centred design processes. The Design Council and One NorthEast regional development corporation's current Designs of the Times (DOT) 07 project is experimenting with that model of engagement. Interdisciplinary training in political science, sociology and anthropology would prepare designers to understand the complex social issues at stake in government policy. Changes in core training activities lie in the content of workshops, curriculum development, publications and symposiums, rather than in the activities themselves.

Engaging in policy as designed requires you to rethink your design centre's relationship to government. Are you a client of your government or an active participant in shaping the translation of its values into tangible experiences for citizens? This is a significant question that most design centres are not contemplating. Nor really want to contemplate, do you? While complete immersion within the government structure may or may not be desirable, the range of activities in understanding policy as designed and establishing design standards, as I will address next, can help formulate a hybrid approach. See the policy as designed intentions to activities matrix: table 3.

POLICY AS DESIGNED	
Intentions	Activities
Integration	Seed designers and design managers in all government sectors
	Support government designer community
	Define skill set for gov. designers
Championing citizens	Advocate citizen-centred design
	Partners with civic organisations
	Seed designers in civic organisations
	Include citizens in own policy projects
Demonstrate	Sponsor competitions and awards
	Create publications on policy and design
Training	Provide workshops on citizen-centred design and gov. design management
	Develop curricula with educators

Table 3: Intentions and activities for policy as designed

The Context of Design Standards

If your centre is not ready to integrate with government departments, another way to engage is through the establishment of design standards for government products, communications, built environments and experiences. AIGA states that design is the intermediary between information and experience. My research with US government agencies has shown that design functions specifically as the translator of social and government values into people’s tangible experiences of them. While policy as designed focuses on identifying the social and government values, design standards provide guidelines for optimising the translation of those values into experiences. Design for safety, sustainability, inclusion and quality is often the most effective way to engage with design policy on all governmental levels.

Design standards function at the level of policy. As such, they become embedded in the everyday practices of governance. Because design standards have the force of “rules”, design expertise and skill become harder to ignore or cut out of the budget when there is an economic downturn. Design standards for safety are more established in government. Design standards for sustainability have reached a tipping point. Great variation exists in the creation and adoption of design standards for literacy, disabilities and multi-lingual inclusion. Standards for quality (technical and aesthetic), beyond national stylistic preferences, are just emerging.

As I stated before, design standards for safety already exist as a core function of every government, yet they are often conceptualised as the domain of engineering and human factors. Design centres can play a larger role in the establishing of specificity of “design” standards for safety. Design centres have taken the lead on sustainable design. The concept of “green design” has become a government and industry buzzword. Yet, one of the most successful case studies of a design organisation developing effective design standards is the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification programme developed by the US Green Building Council. Their success in promoting sustainable design standards for the built environment provides a model for developing sustainable design standards for other design sectors. Design standards for inclusion originate from social issues that exert government pressure to provide law. The plain language and universal/inclusive design movements represent greater opportunities for design centres to compile guidelines about practices that can be integrated into government policy. Design standards of technical and aesthetic quality can be difficult and ineffective if they are based solely on the expert opinions of designers. Design standards for technical and aesthetic quality are more effectively determined through a citizen-centred design process, in which design decisions can be grounded in their successful translation of the functional and symbolic values of the diverse citizenry. A good example of this kind of engagement is AIGA’s Design for Democracy project with the US Election Assistance Commission to produce best practice design standards for ballots and voter information.

Through all of these examples, clearly, the core intentions of design standards are integration with government standards bodies; demonstration of best practices in design standards across safety, sustainability, inclusion and quality; and training designers and non-designers on the use of the best practices and standards. Thus, the key activity for design centres regarding integration intentions is seeding designers on government standards boards, even in domains where the design aspect is unclear. Although design may not have a direct role in the safety, inclusiveness, sustainability or quality of a product or process; design plays a significant role in the communication of standards, with inclusiveness and quality. Activities related to demonstration intentions are crafting design standards guidelines, codifying design standards into legal policy, and compiling and disseminating citizen-centred design best practices that are tangible embodiments of those guidelines. Training intentions must address designers and non-designers who may need to use the standards. Adapting the content of workshops, symposiums and educational curriculums is the main requirement to address the context of design standards for safety, inclusion, sustainability and quality. See the design standards intentions to activities matrix: table 4

DESIGN STANDARDS	
Intentions	Activities
Integration	Seed designers on government design standards boards and agencies
Championing citizens	Advocate citizen-centred design
	Partners with civic organisations
	Seed designers in civic organisations
	Include citizens in own policy projects
Demonstrate	Craft design standards guidelines
	Codify design standards into policy
	Compile & disseminate citizen-centred design best practices
Training	Adapt training activities to include use and evaluation of design standards
	Develop curricula with educators

Table 4: Intentions and activities for design standards

Conclusion: Design’s Value-Add for Economics and Governance

Like any mapping exercise, this discussion frames only a partial view of the possibilities for design policy. The goal of my research has been to expand the understanding of design policy’s engagement from the focus on economic competition to that of governance as well. Hopefully, for many of you, this is just a review of all your current activities. For others, it may offer new ideas for programmes and your relationship to your government. As a design centre, you may not have the capacity or desire to embrace all the intentions and activities of the four design policy contexts: (1) design promotion, (2) innovation policy, (3) policy as designed and (4) design standards. Some activities might require only slight alterations in the content of one’s programming. Others might threaten the very existence of design centres as separate entities. Yet by mapping the landscape of possibilities, I hope I’ve offered additional areas of exploration that can further your centre’s mission to promote the value-add of design to business, government and society through its role in national economic development and internal governance. ■

References

- 1 See John Heskett (1999). *Toothpicks & Logos: Design in Everyday Life*. New York: Oxford University Press. p. 180.
- 2 See European Commission. (2007). *Innovation Policy Information Chart*. European Trendchart on Innovation in Europe Retrieved May 15, 2007, from http://www.trendchart.org/tc_policy_information_overview2.cfm
- 3 See Ann Schneider & Helen Ingram. (1997). *Policy Design for Democracy*. Kansas City, MO: University of Kansas Press.
- 4 Ibid. p. 2.

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Judith Thompson

In this interview, Judith Thompson, Director of Better by Design, tells us about the challenging targets that the programme was set at the start. The programme focuses on exports and economic development and Judith also describes how it was set up in New Zealand.



Judith, is Better by Design the only design support programme in New Zealand?

This is the only design programme for business. There is an industry body for designers, the Designers Institute of New Zealand, which supports the design sector and there are a number of tertiary institutions offering design education and design degrees.

The New Zealand government has a very clear strategy on design support for business. It is completely focused on building the design capability of companies to enable them to improve export performance and to compete in the global market. Better by Design is linked to New Zealand Trade & Enterprise and the Government's Economic Development Agency. So in terms of design support for businesses, Better by Design is the agency which delivers the government's policy.

What is the strategy for design in New Zealand?

There was a very purposeful decision on the part of the government that the design policy is not about providing support for the design sector. It is not what the policy is about. The policy is about integrating design into the export sector so companies will use design to differentiate themselves in the global market and become more globally successful. For that reason Better by Design, which implements the government strategy, is part of the Economic Development Agency whose focus is export.

It is important to highlight that NZ is a nation of four million people. The home market is small enough not to be significant in terms of economic scale. A company is not going to be successful by competing in our home market and we do not have any big countries on our doorstep. So for NZ companies to be successful they must be globally focused and that is why we focus on exports.

This strategy was published by the Design Task Force, as the Success by Design Report¹. The Report forms the strategy and was published four years ago.

Did it mark the beginning of Better by Design?

Yes, this set the beginning of the programme, which actually started in 2003.

How does the programme operate?

We have three key areas: communication, education and the Design Integration Programme. This programme is the main initiative and is specifically focused on providing support to businesses. The Design Integration Programme is a six-stage model that aims to help companies integrate design through all aspects of their business. It is devised as a stage gate process and is targeted on companies that we believe have the most potential to benefit from design.

Once we accept a company into the programme, our team of private sector experts with expertise in all areas of design - including brand design, product design, process design and business planning for design and business - will work with the company to assess its design capability, identify opportunities and then plan with them what changes they are going to make. The programme, through government funds, covers all the costs of bringing the experts into the company. The Better by Design team then works with the company to implement the changes.

How many companies have already engaged on the programme?

Currently 80 and we will take about 30 or 35 a year. It is very, very targeted.

What kind of companies are they?

The companies have to be of a certain scale. The minimum size would have a turnover of about three million dollars. The majority of companies would have over 20 million dollars turnover with several of them having over 100 million dollars turnover. The company must have sufficient scale to be able to meet the ambitions of the programme. So we are not working with start-ups and we are not working with very small companies. In terms of sectors we work across a wide range, from product manufacturers to technology providers, not focusing just on industrial design. We are confident that our methodology works across a wide range of sectors and can be valuable for a range of companies from small to large.

Talking about targets, what are the targets and objectives set for Better by Design?

The objective of the programme is to increase success in the global market. The single measure of success is the performance of the companies in this context. That is what we want to achieve and that will be demonstrated by our 5x50x500x5 goal, as defined in the Task Force Report: in five years, the top 50 companies that we work with will be generating an additional 500 million dollars in export earnings per annum and growing by five times the targeted GDP. We are purely focused on the performance of those companies.

In looking forward to achieve these goals how was the programme developed? Was it adapted over time or implemented according to an original plan?

The programme started in 2003 but the first 18 months were really spent in building the programme model and infra-structure. Initially we implemented the design audit. It was about undertaking an audit with the company, assessing the design capability and recommending changes. However, it was just one tool. We soon realised it was not enough; it didn't have enough impact. From there we developed the 6 Stage model. After the first year of operation we reviewed how it was going and the need for changes. The main changes were at the two ends of the programme. At one end we are now much clearer about how to select the companies, and we have much more understanding of which companies are likely to benefit most from the programme. And at the other end we now provide more support - including the phases Resource, Execute, Extend. This is about helping the company to resource themselves to make changes, execute those changes and continue to make changes in the company to achieve design integration. We provide a lot more support in terms of mentoring, funding for projects, education about design and workshops on design in business. We are now very clear about each stage and work with the company for much longer to provide an extended form of support.

How is the Better by Design team structured?

We are a small team of nine people. Four of us work on the Design Integration Programme, directly with companies. Two members of this team are very

experienced business people, mainly focused on helping the company to integrate changes. Another part of the Better by Design Programme is the creation of what we call the design hub. It is all about communication and resources and is largely done through our website as a hub of information about design integration for export businesses. This area is run by a key member of the team, the Marketing and Communication Manager. The third part of what we do is education. It is about providing executive education to companies and internships to recent graduates. It helps to provide a career path for them, working on actual design projects within a company.

The majority of your team is not from design background...

What differentiates us from other design programmes is that we do not undertake any activities around design promotion of individual designers, design companies or design objects. We do not run exhibitions, we do not produce design publications. Support for the design sector is undertaken by the Designers Institute of New Zealand - DINZ. Our role is to focus on integrating design in the export sector through the business programme which will in turn generate a demand for design services. Therefore, it makes sense that the majority of people on the team are not from a design background. They have commercial expertise. We have one position, the design specialist, whose role is to work between the exports sector and the design sector.

What do you consider to be the strength of Better by Design?

We have a single goal: the 5x50x500x5. Having this goal and a very clear focus is very much our strength. We know where we are aiming, our clients know what is expected of them and we know what is expected of us.

And the weakness?

The fact that we are relatively small. We could potentially provide assistance to a wider range of companies. However, it is almost the case that our strength is also our weakness - being relatively small forces us to be totally focused on our goal but it also means that we are probably missing some opportunities with smaller companies.

Would you consider expanding the project?

At least for the next couple of years we have to focus on our core goals. However, we have to reassess regularly our strategy and activities. New Zealand is a very dynamic economy. The world is a very dynamic economy. It requires constant assessment. We are committed to constantly improving the programme. This is part of our team philosophy. Every week, every month we ask ourselves what we could do better, and we try to improve our work. Having said that, in a year or two there will be a need to do a more strategic and formal review.

Do you assess the impact of the programme with companies?

The companies undergo a measured performance every year, in terms of qualitative and quantitative data. Yes, we are monitoring the impact. We are already starting to see results. Our first independent evaluation of the programme has shown that companies have grown 23% per annum. This rate is much higher than the New Zealand average and we have started seeing the success of individual companies. However, we have to be cautious about this result. This was measured after the first year and we need to see the impact over the long term to make an accurate assessment.

The programme started in 2003. Is this a short term or an ongoing initiative?

We have a goal for the first five years of operation but the programme is ongoing.

What are the challenges ahead?

Our challenge is tied into the big economic challenge of the country. New Zealand is a very fast moving, relatively small economy. It needs to move faster than the

rest of the world in order just to keep up. At Better by Design our challenge is to continue to be able to work with companies that have the most potential to benefit the economy, not just in terms of what they earn, but also in terms of providing interesting, high-value jobs. So our challenge is to provide the right service to these companies to really help them lift their performance in the global market. So it is always dynamic for us. It is about always watching what is happening with the companies, watching what is happening with the world and trying to stay one step ahead. ■

For further information about Better by Design, check www.betterbydesign.org.nz

¹The document *Success by Design* is available for download from the SEEdesign website (news section).



CEO Summit, May 2007: Better by Design holds conferences and events to increase awareness and knowledge of design in business.

Design Center De Winkelhaak

(Antwerp, Belgium)

At the end of the 20th Century, the area around Lange Winkelhaakstraat, near the central train station in Antwerp, Belgium, was known as a centre for drugs, prostitution and other kinds of urban trouble. The City government was committed to resolving some of these problems and the idea for a design centre was warmly received.

The plan was to provide a generator of activity and creativity in this run-down area of the city where product designers, architects, graphic and multimedia designers would communicate with the neighbourhood through the open façade of the structure in order to inspire, create confidence and bring about a regeneration. With all the studios on the outside, the building façade would become a constantly changing display of the residents' work. At the same time, external sunblinds and internal curtains would add more options for visibility, privacy and comfort. The central areas would be communal spaces in which cross-pollination of disciplines and ideas would occur. This was fundamental to the design of the building – enabling different disciplines to share ideas and opportunities and increase the likelihood of them coming together to form larger design studios which would then move out of the Center into other buildings in the area.

In May 2000 a group of derelict houses were demolished to create space for the Center. The building that replaced them, which opened in September 2001, has a pure and clear structure, functional and transparent, with special attention given to the use of durable materials, internal flexibility of space and environmentally friendly systems. The building's design enhances the interaction of the designers within the building and offers an ever-changing view to those in the surrounding area.

Funding for the project came from the European Union, the Flemish District and the City of Antwerp, but these funds only covered the building construction – not the interior or the running costs. In addition, then, a number of private investors were asked to become shareholders in the public limited company 'Design Center De Winkelhaak'. It was important to the vision of the Center that these shareholders be actively involved in the design industries and willing to invest in the social and professional impact of the Center, not just the economics. These private funds ensured the completion of the building interior and guaranteed the Center's operation until it became self-financing. The active commitment of these shareholders is considered at least as important as their financial support.

The Center houses a reception area, exhibition space, library, photo studio, lounge, 18 studios for rent and is now a self-financing business centre for young designers. The fabric of the building is a combination of permanence and flexibility. The concrete finish creates a unified feel and the spaces adapt easily to different requirements. Access to each studio space is through a large sliding door off the internal corridors. The design of these doors encourages the designers to leave them open, so increasing the interaction which is such a vital part of the Center's effectiveness in the longer term.

Tenants pay an inclusive rent which covers space, light, heat, internet access, print facilities, tea/coffee and use of the communal spaces for meetings, presentations, press conferences, etc. De Winkelhaak operates as an incubator, providing both administrative and promotional support to the designers who are expected to move on to other premises as soon as this becomes appropriate. The hope is that they will remain in the area and the Center actively promotes this, offering continued use



*Design Center De Winkelhaak, Architect: Coby Manders and Filip Pittilion
(Photo by Toon Grobet)*

of various facilities for an agreed fee, negotiating with landlords on their behalf and encouraging other design companies and new and specialised trades (for example a computer shop and an art materials supplier) to move into the area.

In addition, the building adjacent to the Center was bought and renovated by the City of Antwerp and given, as a bare shell, to De Winkelhaak who then found investors willing to finance the completion of the building and rent part of it as their own business premises. De Winkelhaak do not deliver any services to these businesses and the rent goes directly to help finance the Center. When space becomes available the designers in De Winkelhaak are given first refusal should they be ready to move on. The long established Belgian design retailer, Scoonwoon, occupies the main floor, selling Kartell and other high quality products.

Since the Center opened, the safety and general environment of the area has improved. Prostitution and the other industries that once defined it have generally moved elsewhere. The Design Center De Winkelhaak has already made a significant and lasting contribution to both Antwerp and the design industry, and it continues to expand. The second phase of the building will be completed by the end of August 2007, providing a new meeting room, administration area, coffee shop, an archive and a library for innovative materials (www.materio.com). It is also committed to growing as an independent business, expanding the team to provide a range of training, both short and long term, to designers in the Center and the wider design community. In the long term they plan to attract more design retailers and businesses to the area and so establish the neighbourhood around De Winkelhaak as the design district of Antwerp. ■

*For more information please email the Center at info@winkelhaak.be
or visit: www.winkelhaak.be*

Designing Demand

(Design Council, UK)



Designing Demand is a national programme developed by the Design Council in England and delivered by the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs), to support businesses in becoming better purchasers and regular users of design through a number of business growth services. The main objective is to help businesses become more competitive, increase their profits and boost performance through the strategic, effective use of design.

Pilot programmes ran from 2002 – 2005 with the programme rolling out nationally in 2006. Initially delivered by four regions (South Yorkshire, South West, West Midlands and South East) the remaining five have now signed up to deliver it before 2010.

The programme deals with both the demand and supply areas of design, helping to embed design understanding, design management skills and design processes into the companies involved, all of which can provide both short and long term benefits. Clients are then better able to purchase and manage design projects and understand all the areas where design can provide business benefits.

To meet the demands of different businesses the programme consists of four elements:

Designing Demand Workshops

Fast-paced, practical one-day sessions showing SMEs what design investment could do for them. There are three sets of workshops: Workshops for Designers; Business Advisors; and businesses. These workshops raise awareness of the value of design and what it can do for business.

Designing Demand Generate

A support service helping businesses to make strategic design decisions, set up and manage design processes and run successful design projects. Companies get up to five days free one-to-one support from a Design Associate, an experienced design manager appointed from a Design Council approved roster. They help the company identify and run the right project to move the business forward. With them, the management team explores potential design opportunities and chooses a design project to exploit. The Design Associate advises on how to choose, brief and work with designers, and works with the company to keep the project on track. This can take up to six months.

Designing Demand Innovate

Specifically aimed at technology start-ups to help them use design to turn their ideas and technology into products, reduce time to market, create compelling brands and attract investment. A Design Associate provides support across the business, helping to embed design thinking and management skills over a one year to 18 month period. This programme begins with the one-day Technology Venture Workshop which, through case studies and exercises, introduces companies to how design can turn their business into a better investment prospect. Participants who apply successfully for the next level of Innovate begin with a three-day workshop. They work with their peers and a Design Associate to explore potential design opportunities and prepare 'innovation roadmaps' to implement projects over the short, medium and long term. During the workshop, participants are introduced to Matchbox, a unique Design Council tool to help integrate design into decision making and receive a set to use with colleagues. The business then works on its design project for 12 months with help from the Design Associate, who advises them on choosing and briefing designers and keeping the project on track.

Designing Demand Immerse

An intensive support service which helps businesses grow by using design as a

business development tool. It gives companies the chance to work with leading designers to investigate how design can tackle core strategic issues and make a lasting impact on performance. Immerse begins with a high-impact Immersion Day, held at the company premises. It is run by a Design Associate – a Design Council approved design manager selected for experience in tackling business issues. The management team works with a group of design experts to examine key aspects of the business in depth, from its strategy, offerings and markets to its objectives, challenges and working culture. The day ends with the design team highlighting a range of opportunities for design to improve the company's performance. This is followed up by a formal report on the design team's recommendations and the thinking behind them. In the next stage of Immerse, the company decides which opportunities to take forward. Then, all businesses taking part in Immerse in the region come together to share their plans and objectives. Over the next 12 to 18 months, the companies implement design projects with close support from the Design Associate. During this phase, a series of NetWorkshops™ cover key design themes such as brand, new product development and customer focus. In all, the companies receive eight days of face-to-face support from the Design Associate.

Designing Demand is a £20m programme funded by the RDAs (with some EU grant funding) and one of the major programmes being run by the Design Council. It is essential to their four year plan. The core team based at the Design Council continue the management and development of the programme content and the service experience. In addition, a regional delivery team appointed by each RDA implements the programme delivery and day-to-day management.

To date over 700 companies across all sectors have participated and many confirm a positive effect on their bottom line as a direct result. Business Advisors are made aware of how design is best viewed as a necessary investment rather than an optional extra and designers are becoming more aware of how to deliver what businesses really need from them.

Key factors in the success of the programme are the tools and methodologies provided to the Design Associates and the use of Design Associates themselves, although the resource intensive nature of the programme is potentially an issue.

An evaluation framework developed for use in each of the regions will capture the qualitative and quantitative impact of the programmes and it is clear that significant results are being achieved.

From recent workshops 100% of attendees stated that the workshop convinced them of the business benefits of design and provided ideas of how to integrate design into their business. 100% stated it broadened their understanding of design with 95% of delegates agreeing the workshop had made them look at design in a new way.

80% of companies participating in the Innovate service changed the strategic direction of their business – moving toward being customer rather than technology focused. 50% of the companies increased their ability to raise investment finance whilst 65% changed branding and communication which resulted in a stronger market position.

More than 90% of companies participating in Immerse stated that their involvement had a positive impact on their business, whether that was in respect of confidence, sharper processes or evident success in the market place. 50% of participants reported that Immerse-inspired changes and activity had already translated into improved financial performance. 88% rated one or more of the projects undertaken as part of the programme as critical to business success. ■

For more information please visit www.designingdemand.org.uk

A full version of this case study is available at www.seedesign.org

SEEdesign partners meet in Brussels

The 4th European Workshop on Design Support took place in Brussels in May 2007, hosted by Design Flanders.

The seven SEEdesign partners met for three days of events beginning with the 5th SEEdesign Steering Committee meeting. Partners were given an update on the project and took part in a workshop run by Shan Preddy. This assessed the support offered to design and designers in each of their countries.

On the second day Design Flanders launched the Belgian Design Club with a successful event at the Flemish Parliament attended by 160 designers and local companies.

Day three was given over to the 5th European Workshop on Design Support, held at the Design Flanders Gallery. Johan Valcke gave an innovative presentation on the work of Design Flanders and Klara de Smedt gave an innovative presentation on the Design Center De Winkelhaak in Antwerp. Kristina Noor from the Design Forum Finland detailed the design support and promotion available there. This was followed by Justin Knecht who outlined the work of the Centre for Design Innovation in Sligo, Ireland. The workshop concluded with a presentation by Jonathan Ball and Richelle Harun on the UK Design Council's Designing Demand programme. ■

For more information transcriptions of the 5th EWDS are available on www.seedesign.org.



The SEEdesign partners (from left to right: Johan Valcke, Dr Bruce Tether, Gavin Cawood, Susie Ruff, Gisele Raulik Murphy, Ingrid Vandenhoudt, Charlotte Nicolaisen, Frances Haynes, Dr Zbynek Vokrouhlicky, Ilaria Bedeschi, Irene Burroni, Franck Bercegeay)

Danish Design Policy launched in April 2007

On 25 April 2007 the Danish Minister of Economy and Business launched the Danish design policy. Entitled 'DesignDenmark', the policy addresses the need for Danish design to move beyond its current image to better its global market position. It also aims to help the design community become more professional so they can promote their unique skills and improve their export potential.

The policy will address this issue in a number of ways. In the autumn of 2009 the first Danish Design Week, combined with the INDEX design awards, will take place. There will also be an increased emphasis on Danish fashion. With some Danish designers already achieving international success, the policy stresses the importance of expanding this industry both at home and abroad.

The Danish Design Centre, a partner in the SEEdesign programme, will be involved in the implementation of this policy as part of the Design Week team. They will also be more involved with the INDEX awards which will form part of the DDC by January 2008. ■

An English translation of the policy, funded by the SEEdesign programme, is available at www.seedesign.org.

Belgian Design Club

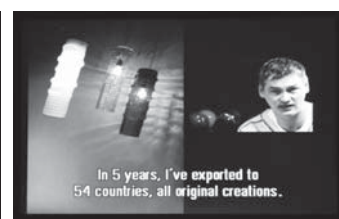
Design Flanders held the inaugural meeting of the Belgian Design Club on May 15, 2007. The strategy is to promote high-quality design and design management through network-building and substantive activities for designers and design firms.

This first event, built around the theme 'Experience Design – Design Experience', brought together design strategists from all over the world to highlight the importance of end-user experience to design. Nathan Shedroff (US), Patrick W. Jordan (UK) and Simon Hadjimidoff (LU) gave presentations. Peter Leyder described the public investment opportunities of the CultuurInvest programme for the creative industries. Design Flanders outlined the results of its second study on the economic impact of design on Flemish businesses and the 'Design Management Europe Award', a project in which they are a partner. The final word went to Gisele Raulik Murphy, coordinator of the SEEdesign project, of which this event formed a part.

Presentations and discussions were interspersed with 10 short films about top design-driven companies from various sectors, giving a clear, dynamic picture of each, their strategy and design process. During preparations for the BDC these 10 firms acted as 'godfathers' to the new club, helping to determine its form and content. They were: Extremis (outdoor furniture), Unic Design (tubular furniture), Modular (lighting), Indera (seating), Wolters (outdoor furniture), Dark (lighting), Juventa (furniture), De Ster (in-flight tableware), B.I.C. (carpets) and Jaga (radiators). The films, royalty free and with English subtitles, are available for free from Design Flanders (info@designvlaanderen.be)

The purpose of the Belgian Design Club is to build a network of Flemish design and business talent in order to create and sustain a more dynamic economy. This event demonstrated the model being advocated: an open network with stimulating activities, cross-fertilisation between sectors, responsible and durable design, creative corporate culture and the promotion of Flemish brands abroad.

Upcoming events include an evaluation and planning meeting in August, attended by the 'godfathers' and eight design bureaus. A Service Design event will be held on December 18 at the Flemish Parliament for BDC members and representatives of banks and insurance companies. ■



Short films commissioned by Design Flanders, co-funded by SEEdesign, an INTERREG IILC project, produced by Mark Goris and Stef Stes.

Launch of Innovation by Design programme in Ireland

Innovation by Design – a mentor-led programme based on best practice in Europe and the US – has been launched by the Centre for Design Innovation in Sligo, Ireland. The structure of the programme was developed by design practitioners with extensive relevant experience in the UK, Ireland and the USA. It is influenced by the user centred work done by IDEO and Ziba, the D-School in the States and the Design Council's Immersion Programme in the UK.

Six SMEs across a spread of sectors were selected from a shortlist of 200 companies to participate in a tailored programme to help them develop innovative products and services and a competitive advantage. The shortlist of SMEs was compiled with help from regional government support agencies and individual responses to a mailshot sent to SMEs in the area.

The programme began with a User Centred Design workshop in June 2007. Over the three years of the project two Design Associates will provide each of the companies with five mentoring sessions and there will also be five network events on specific issues.

The three year programme has a total budget of 1.25 million euros. It aims to increase competitiveness of SMEs in the region through the application of user centred design principles which will allow them to innovate more effectively.

Each company's performance will be assessed at the beginning, middle and end of the programme by defined sets of key performance indicators (KPIs). This will provide ongoing evaluation and validation of the programme. It will also help to quantify the impact of design innovation on companies in the region. ■

For more information please contact info@designinnovation.ie or visit the SEEdesign Library at www.seedesign.org.

Eastern European Directory of Design Organisations

The Hungarian Design Council, a member of BEDA and Icsid, has recently launched an online database of design-related organisations in central and eastern Europe. The database contains contact details of professional associations, promotional bodies, design schools, museums and magazines from 20 countries in the region.

Judit Várhelyi, Director of the Hungarian Design Council, started collecting data in 2004 when she initiated a Regional Meeting for Design Organisations. Now a yearly event, the 2007 meeting will be hosted by the Estonian Design Association in Tallinn.

"It was most interesting to research the various websites of the design organisations in our region. Some countries provide a consistently high quality image of themselves, while others have little presence on the web. Not only that; what is there is only available in the local language. My update team now includes Russian and German speakers and I receive much help from colleagues from around the region, whom I met at the regional meetings" says Judit.

Research shows design improves performance

In 2003, Design Flanders commissioned the research agency Compagnie to investigate whether design implementation had an influence on the economic performance of manufacturing companies in Flanders. This first study showed that a high degree of design implementation produced a positive economic result in terms of profitability, solvency and liquidity.

In 2007, Design Flanders commissioned Compagnie to re-examine the question at the same companies, with the addition of a new random check among manufacturing firms and a small number of service companies.

The study examined the nature and extent of design implementation and attitudes to design, all in relation to economic parameters. The application of design was examined in several ways; directly, by means of the European standard framework and Danish Design Ladder, and indirectly, via 28 design indicators.

The results of the 2007 study not only reconfirm the findings of 2003, they reinforce them: businesses which use design strategically are doing better than those which do not.

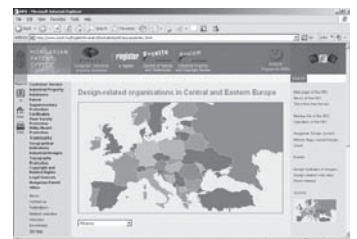
They discovered a positive correlation between economic results and the nature of the design implementation. The use of multimedia, communicative design, branding, workplace design, exhibition design and service design resulted in better scores on the economic parameters. It showed that simply placing a new product on the market is not enough; more is needed if a company is to succeed on the global markets. Design has to be approached professionally at all stages from concept to customer.

There has also been a shift in what is understood as design. In 2003, the term was mainly associated with product form. In 2007, design is being linked with innovation and development. The study shows that attitudes and ideas towards design have broadened significantly over the past four years. ■

For more information go to www.designflanders.be.

The intention and hope of the Hungarian Design Council is that the database will prove a useful tool for building contacts and will show the variety and depth of design in the central and eastern European region. A yearly update will ensure that the list remains up to speed.

The database is at: www.mft.org.hu/database. ■



The SEEdesign Bulletin is the communication platform of the SEEdesign partnership and is devoted to publishing material – articles, interviews, case studies – related to the practice of design support in different countries.

The opinions expressed in the articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the SEEdesign partners.

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