

Summary of the WDC Design Policy Conference's second day

The WDC 2014 Design Policy Conference continued on Saturday, 18 October at the Cape Town Stadium, with discussions around the future of design and its role in developing countries...

As the first design policy conference to run in South Africa, the two-day event celebrated the resourcefulness and resilience of people who find solutions to problems by making use of what they have within their immediate environment. [Click here](#) for an overview of the WDC Design Policy Conference's first day, which featured experts exchanging design policy thinking.

Lou Yongqi and Ezio Manzini elaborate on Traditional and new design economies



Dean and Professor of the College of Design and Innovation at Tongji University, Lou Yongqi and Professor at CPUT, Ezio Manzini on 'Traditional and new design economies' asked how developing countries leapfrog the resource-heavy, product-oriented, unsustainable models of production and consumption to light, service-oriented sustainable ones and the implications of that on design.

They also spoke of the benefits of having a design policy in Africa, which would allow the continent to move from an economy of competition and scarcity to a social economy and would see a move to co-design practices that would advance the role of design experts in promoting and supporting relational goods, similar to China's transformation from 'Manufactory China' to 'Creative China'.

Ludo Campbell-Reid on the 'Rise of a design-led city'

Ludo Campbell-Reid, Auckland Council's first ever Design Champion, spoke of Auckland's transformation in 2010, under new Mayor, Len Brown, into 'The world's most liveable city' via The Auckland Plan - an integrated spatial and infrastructure plan for the next 30 years and combines economic, social, cultural and environmental goals.

Auckland's design-led city learnings include having a Mayor or Civic Leader to set a clear vision, the appointment of Design Champions (political and staff) to act as 'agents of change', recruiting and appointing design experts, developing a design policy and working alongside the private and community sectors to provide them with design guidance.

Panel Discussion 1: Tasos Calantzis, Johan Schepers, Dale Dutton, Ian Gourley and Ulrich Meyer-Höllings on 'Business and Design'

The panel discussion featured Tasos Calantzis, CEO of Terrestrial and Arivi; Johan Schepers, Country Lead for Fjord; Dale Dutton, an Independent Software Application and Integration Developer; Ian Gourley, Chief Creative Officer of the Barrows Group, South Africa and Ulrich Meyer-Höllings, Director of Strategy and Innovation at XYZ Design.

They spoke of how product and service companies use design routinely. As well as how using a design approach will transform the way we do business and provide value to customers and the need for service design expertise to be brought to South Africa - these skills should be added to the country's critical skills list.

The crux of the discussion was that designers can redefine the business landscape and inject a more people-centred view."

Panel Discussion 2: Edgar Pieterse, Anabella Rondina, Richie Moalosi, Ricardo Mejia and Alpay Er on Who is getting it right in developing nations and what is driving the

success?'

The next panel comprised Edgar Pieterse, Founding Director of the African Centre for Cities; Anabella Rondina, Metropolitan Design Center Buenos Aires Manager and Professor at the University of Buenos Aires; Richie Moalosi, Associate Professor and Head of the Industrial Design and Technology Department at the University of Botswana; Ricardo Mejia, PhD fellow at IDStudioLab IDE and Former R&D+i Advisor and Design Expert for the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism in Colombia and Alpay Er, Head of the Industrial Design Department at Özyegin University in Istanbul and ICSID Regional Advisor.

The panel provided an Argentinian perspective on its the Metropolitan Design Centre (CMD), created with the purpose of stimulating production through the creation of added value, allowing companies to better compete and adding skilled labour with a high level of training.

Turkey was also presented as an emerging economy where design has been an issue closely related to the international competitiveness of manufacturing industries for the last 12 years, and it was noted that Colombia's National Industrial Design Program (NDesP), launched in 1994, intended to promote design as an innovation driver for Colombian industry,

Asking whether Africa is ready to develop design policies, Moalosi said that while most African Union member states are reviewing the Science and Technology Policies to include innovation, the design component is still missing in these and that it will take decades for each member state to develop or integrate design into their Science, Technology and Innovation Policies.

Panel Discussion 3: Monica Newton, Lorraine Ambole, Gabriel Mothibedi, Ralitsa Diana Debrah, Nkhensani Nkosi on 'Looking into the future - A view from young design professionals'

The next panel discussion featured Monica Newton, Deputy Director General of the Department of Arts, Culture, Promotion and Development; Lorraine Ambole, Tutorial Fellow, PhD Candidate and Director of Promotions at Ogake; Gabriel Mothibedi, Lecturer of Design at the University of Botswana; Ralitsa Diana Debrah, Lecturer at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) and Nkhensani Nkosi, Founding CEO of Stoned Cherrie.

Ambole said: "Design education in Kenya and Africa in general should prepare students for the informal sector," and Debrah stated: "The introduction of technology has revolutionised the design industry in creating jobs for many young people. However they are confronted with some challenges like not having laws that protect them in terms of intellectual property regarding their original ideas..."

Laura Lee on 'Beyond policy - leading by design'

Architect, Professor and Urban Designer Laura Lee shared her expertise in crafting the Integrated Design Strategy for South Australia as model for South Africa and asked: "How do you inject design into policies, across policies and in the design of policies? We need to look at what exists and amplify it with design. In South Africa you have an innovation system and a National Development Plan. You need to take all of that and see how these things are related, how you establish a foundation and how you move forward."

Conference closing by Vuyo Jack, acting DG of the Dept of Arts and Culture

Acting Director-General of the Department of Arts and Culture, Vuyo Jack, officially brought the Conference to a close, saying: "Imagination coupled with design results in clarity of thought which enables you to have a plan which then enables you to have action. Form is a great and necessary principle, without it our task fails and our purpose is not attained. The reality we face today includes economic turbulence, increasing inequality and volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity. Design needs to help us move through that."

"We will use design to shatter the systems that perpetuate poverty and achieve radical socio-economic transformation," concluded Jack.

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