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EDITORIAL

Over the last few years, design has been continuously broadening in scope, from product and graphic design to a more strategic role, and recently we have also witnessed some fundamental changes in the field of design promotion. Most significantly, design is becoming a key mechanism in engaging citizens and stakeholders in social innovation initiatives. Moreover, in the context of the enduring economic uncertainty, the public sector is looking around for new ways to make public administration more efficient and inclusive. These two issues are bringing design promotion initiatives closer to the public sector, which is no longer just a source of funding, but one of the most important targets for design initiatives.

This third edition of the SEE bulletin reflects this trend. We have invited Ezio Manzini, Professor of Design at *Politecnico di Milano* and a leading expert on sustainable design, to contribute the research paper. His article explains social innovation and how design can play a role in this context. Jean Schneider, from the *Agence pour la Promotion de la Création Industrielle* (APCI), provides a summary of the 7th European Conference on the 'Challenges of Design Promotion', which debated the role of design in empowering citizens and stakeholders to facilitate grassroots initiatives and in informing new policies.

Nevertheless, despite this trend, traditional models of design programmes and policies are still very prevalent and are spreading across the globe. This is illustrated in the Design Policy and Promotion Map which, in this edition, presents two countries from Africa, Botswana and Kenya as well as interviews from Brazil, Latvia and Poland. The case studies also reflect the fact that enabling companies to make the best use of design resources remains the very core activity of design support programmes. The Irish programme 'Innovation by Design' guided six SMEs through a design approach to understanding client needs and identifying the right ideas to commercialise. The second case study illustrates how design is making an impact on the public sector. The Public Waste Agency of Flanders has launched the Ecolizer 2.0, a smart tool that enables designers to incorporate eco-design into innovative products. Finally, in the SEE Library, which presents a summary of key publications from the library available online (www.seeproject.org/seelibrary), we provide references that could be useful for practitioners and policy-makers.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue of the SEE bulletin.

Gisele Raulik-Murphy and Anna Whicher

THE SEE PARTNERSHIP

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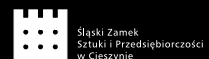
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Design for Social Innovation: Creative Communities and Design-Oriented Networks

The transition towards sustainability, and in particular towards sustainable ways of living, will be a wide-reaching social learning process in which the most diversified forms of creativity, knowledge and organisational ability will have to be valorised in the most open and flexible ways.¹ Among these, a particular role will be allotted to local ventures that, for several reasons, can be seen as signals of new behaviours and new ways of thinking. These grass-roots innovations in everyday life are promoted and managed by creative and enterprising groups of people in the framework of a wide, emerging wave of social innovation.

Ezio Manzini, Professor of Design, Politecnico di Milano; Coordinator of DESIS – Design for Social Innovation and Sustainability

SOCIAL INNOVATION

The term *social innovation* refers to changes in the way individuals or communities act to solve a problem or generate new opportunities. These innovations are driven more by changes in behaviour than by changes in technology or the marketplace and typically emerge from bottom-up rather than top-down processes. Looking at the past, we can see that there tend to be particularly intense periods of social innovation in the time after new technologies have penetrated society when there are widespread or especially urgent problems that need to be addressed. Over the past few decades, numerous and widely used new technologies have, certainly, penetrated our societies, creating a technological potential that is as yet largely unexploited. At the same time, the enormous number of environmental and social problems that pervade our daily lives is apparent to all. It is therefore easy to predict a huge new wave of social innovation.² Our main underlying hypothesis is that this emerging wave of social innovation can serve as a forceful engine in the transition towards sustainability. In fact, in its complexity and contradictoriness, the whole of contemporary society can be seen as a huge laboratory of ideas for everyday life – ways of being and doing that express a capacity to formulate new questions and find new answers. And this is exactly what we have defined as *social innovation*: changes in the way individuals and communities act to solve problems or exploit new opportunities.³

Among such cases, there are some where such diffuse design creativity has found a way of converging in collaborative activities. Examples include ways of living together where spaces and services are shared in order to live better (as in examples of co-housing); production activities that are based on local capabilities and resources but are also linked to wider global networks (as with certain typical local products); various initiatives concerned with healthy, natural food (from the international ‘slow food’ movement to the

new generation of farmers’ markets developing in many cities); various self-managed services, from child care (such as ‘micro-nurseries’, small playgroups run by the parents themselves) to services for the elderly (such as ‘home sharing’, where the young and the elderly live together); new forms of socialisation and exchange (such as local exchange trading systems, or LETS, and ‘time banks’); transport systems that provide an alternative to the culture of the individual car (from car sharing and car pooling to the rediscovery of the bicycle’s potential); and networks that link producers and consumers both directly and ethically (such as worldwide ‘fair trade’ activities). The list could go on and on.

Looking at such examples, we can observe that, although they are diverse in nature and in the way they operate, they have at the same time a very meaningful common denominator: they are all discontinuities with their given contexts in the sense that they challenge traditional ways of doing things and introduce new and very different (and intrinsically more sustainable) methods. This is as true of organising advanced systems of sharing space and equipment in places where individual use normally prevails, as it is of recovering the quality of healthy biological foods in areas where it is considered normal to ingest other types of produce, or of developing systems of participatory services in localities where these services are usually provided in a way that entails the user’s total passivity.⁴

CREATIVE COMMUNITIES

Behind all of these promising cases are groups of people who have been able to imagine, develop and manage them. An initial glance shows they have several fundamental traits in common. First, they are all groups who co-operatively invent, enhance and manage innovative solutions for new ways of living and do this by recombining things that already exist, without waiting for a general change in the system (in the economy, in institutions, in large infrastructures).

Given that the ability to re-organise existing elements into new, meaningful combinations is one of the possible definitions of creativity, we can define such groups as *creative communities* – people who co-operatively invent, enhance and manage innovative solutions for new ways of living.⁵

A second characteristic common to these promising cases is the fact they have all grown out of problems posed by contemporary everyday life, such as: How can we overcome the isolation caused by exasperated individualism? How can we organise daily functions if the family and the neighbourhood no longer provide the support they have traditionally offered? How can we respond to the need for natural food and healthy living conditions when we live in a global metropolis? And how can we support local production without being trampled by the mighty apparatus of global trade?

What can designers do to stimulate social innovation and point it in the right direction?

Creative communities generate solutions that are able to answer all these questions – questions that are as mundane as they are radical; questions for which the dominant system of production and consumption, despite its overwhelming offer of products and services, is unable to provide answers and, most importantly, is unable to provide satisfactory answers from the perspective of sustainability. At this point, we can say that creative communities use their creativity to break with the established mainstream models of thinking and acting, and as a result, whether consciously or not, they generate the local discontinuities we have mentioned.

A third common characteristic is that creative communities arise from an original combination of demands and opportunities. As we have seen, the demands are always posed by problems of contemporary everyday life; the opportunities, meanwhile, emerge from different combinations of three basic elements: the existence (or at least the memory) of traditions; the possibility of using (in an appropriate way) an existing set of products, services and infrastructures; and the existence of social and political conditions favourable to (or at least capable of accepting) the development of a diffuse creativity.

BOTTOM-UP, TOP-DOWN, PEER-TO-PEER

Creative communities have so far been described as *bottom-up* initiatives: actions from ‘the bottom’ that give rise to promising cases of social innovation. A closer look at their evolution from initial idea to more mature forms of organisation indicates, however, that the possibility of their long-term existence, and often even of their initiation, depends on complex mechanisms. What is more, initiatives

begun directly by the people most concerned (bottom-up interaction) are often supported by information exchanges with other similar organisations (peer-to-peer interaction) and by different kinds of intervention by institutions, civic organisations or companies (top-down interaction).

In other words, creative communities and collaborative services should be viewed as bottom-up initiatives not because everything happens at the grass-roots level, but because the precondition for their existence is the active involvement of those who are directly interested in them. Consequently, their initiation, day-to-day operations and potential improvement usually emerge out of *favourable contexts* where a positive interplay between bottom-up, top-down and peer-to-peer interactions takes place.

These favourable contexts are highly complex socio-technical systems that cannot be ‘designed’; nevertheless, some of their characteristic elements can be conceived and realised. It is possible to identify and cultivate the material and non-material elements that in combination improve the chances that a given context will be fertile ground for creative, bottom-up initiatives. In other words, it is possible to improve a context’s capacity to support creative communities and collaborative organisations and enable a large number of potentially innovative citizens to move in the same direction.⁶

To do this, it is necessary to develop innovative *governance tools* and a *tolerant environment* – governance tools that specifically aim at facilitating the existence of creative communities, and a cultural and legal framework that is able to deal with the kind of (legal) ‘grey area’ that frequently emerges at the start of radically new ventures. The latter is a crucial point that requires further explanation.

Tolerant environments. The most favourable environment for creative communities and collaborative organisations is characterised by a high degree of tolerance.⁷ Since the promising cases we are talking about here are by definition forms of organisation that differ radically from the norm, fostering them means accepting something that will probably not fit into the existing norms and regulations. Consequently, the tolerance required for them to thrive must be expressed in social, political and administrative terms. For while it is true that a nascent creative community may be destroyed by the incomprehension of others and political hostility, it can also be destroyed (and in fact this often happens) by an administrative inability to accept the proposed innovation.

From the practical point of view, bottom-up initiatives require a variety of new regulations that allow for activities that are difficult to classify in conventional terms (e.g. the innovative use of public spaces, working at home, family companies and new forms of collective living). New taxation systems need to be developed that cater to economic models in which the exchange of labour and bartering may replace conventional monetary transactions.

Participatory governance. Creative communities reinforce the social fabric by creating new social and physical

spaces. In this way, they can become major stakeholders in government efforts to achieve the desired results. To increase this possibility, new governance tools are needed to facilitate the regeneration of specific local traditions, foster an appropriate technological infrastructure, cultivate new talents (new skills and abilities) and, above all, generate a favourable social, political and administrative context. How can all of this be done? Obviously, there is no single simple answer to this question. There is, however, one phenomenon in particular that is worth mentioning here; namely, the new organisational models we see emerging from Internet-based social networks (the so-called Web 2.0). In fact, such social networks could become the enabling technology behind a shift from the present rigid, hierarchical governance models to the flexible, open and horizontal ones that are needed to support creative communities and collaborative services.

DESIGN-ORIENTED NETWORKS


What can designers do to stimulate social innovation and point it in the right direction? How can they bridge emerging social demands with new technological possibilities? How can they conceive and develop favourable contexts and enabling solutions?

Designers have always created bridges between society and technology. Up to now they have mainly looked at technical innovation and, using the new opportunities it offered, developed artefacts that had a certain meaning for society. This way of operating – that is, crossing the bridge in this direction – remains valid today. But now, the same bridge must also be crossed in the opposite direction: we must look at social innovation, identify promising cases, and use our design sensitivities, capabilities and skills to design new artefacts and indicate new directions for technical innovation. In order to do this, designers must rethink their role and the way they operate.⁸

Let's take a step back and consider these questions in a larger framework. We live in a society where 'everybody designs' and where design capabilities are, of necessity, particularly diffuse.⁹ In fact, whether they wish to or not, ordinary people are forced to design and redesign their businesses, neighbourhoods, associations and ways of living. The result is a society that appears as a mesh of design-oriented networks: a complex system of interwoven design processes, involving individuals, businesses, non-profit-making organisations and local and global institutions, which imagine and put into practice solutions that address a variety of personal and social problems.¹⁰

In the framework of these design-oriented networks, a new design activity is emerging that points to a new and fascinating role for the designer. If designers wish to take part, they must accept in a positive way the fact that they can no longer aspire to a monopoly on design. Properly understood, this change in the position of designers in society does not reduce their role but, on the contrary, enlarges it. The very fact that the whole of contemporary society may

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be described as a mesh of designing networks means that designers have a growing responsibility to participate actively in these networks, feeding them with their specific design knowledge – the design skills, capabilities and sensitivities that come partly from their traditional culture and experience and that are partly entirely new – a design knowledge that, because it must be defined and tested, demands that there be *a new wave of design research*. In fact, talking about design for social innovation is more or less equivalent to talking about design research for social innovation. 

[1] This essay is based on François Jégou and Ezio Manzini (2008) *Collaborative Services: Social Innovation and Design for Sustainability*, Polidesign, Milan.

[2] See, for example, the Young Foundation (2006) *Social Silicon Valleys: A Manifesto for Social Innovation*, The Young Foundation, London.

[3] See Charles Landry (2006) *The Art of City-Making*, Earthscan, London; and Emerging User Demands for Sustainable Solutions (EMUDE), internal document, 2006 (EMUDE is a 6th Framework Programme, Priority 3-NMP, of the European Commission).

[4] See Anna Meroni (2007) *Creative Communities: People Inventing Sustainable Ways of Living*, Polidesign, Milan.

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] See Charles Landry (2000) *The Creative City: A Toolkit for Urban Innovators*, Earthscan, London; and Charles Leadbeater (2007) *The Rise of the Social Entrepreneur*, Demos, London.

[7] See Richard Florida (2003) *The Rise of the Creative Class*, Basic Books, London; and Richard Florida (2004) *Cities and the Creative Class*, Routledge, London.

[8] See Victor Margolin and Sylvia Margolin (2002) A 'Social Model' of Design: Issues of Practice and Research, *Design Issues*, 18: 4; John Thackara (2005) *In the Bubble: Designing for a Complex World*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.; John Thackara (2007) *Wouldn't It Be Great If ...*, Dot07, Design Council, London; Sustainable Everyday Project, <http://www.sustainable-everyday.net/cases>.

[9] See Anthony Giddens (1990) *The Consequences of Modernity*, Polity Press, Cambridge; and Anthony Giddens (2000) *Runaway World: How Globalisation Is Reshaping Our Lives*, Profile, London.

[10] See Ilkka Tuomi (2003) *Networks of Innovation: Change and Meaning in the Age of the Internet*, Oxford University Press, Oxford; and Eric von Hippel (2005) *Democratizing Innovation*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.

Design Policy and Promotion Map

To get a global perspective on the growing number and increasing maturity of design policies and promotion programmes and following up the good feedback from the previous issue of our Bulletin, this feature presents statements from design practitioners from five countries. Each interviewee provides an overview of developments in their country and outlines how design fits into various government strategies, in order to build a profile map of the state of affairs around the world.

POLAND

The Polish government has recognised design as one of the strategic elements for the country's development. Consequently, design has been included in the main governmental programme 'Innovative Economy' for the period 2007–2013, where €186 million has been allocated solely for industrial design support. This covers the 'Design Your Profit' programme, worth approximately €7 million, to be delivered by the Institute of Industrial Design in Warsaw. Regional Strategies of Innovation help to support existing as well as future regional design centres and other design-related activities. The leading example is the Silesian Castle of Art and Enterprise in Cieszyn. The Ministry of Higher Education chose design as a strategic discipline and allocated extra funds for the support of design universities. Most significantly, the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs is going to use design as one of the elements to promote the country abroad, particularly during the Polish presidency of the EU in 2011. Design is understood as an optimum tool for demonstrating the opportunities of innovative Polish industry and Polish identity.

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BRAZIL

The Brazilian Design Programme (PBD) has been operating since 1995 under the Ministry of Development, Industry and Trade. In 15 years it has weathered many changes in the country's political direction, but its continuous support (in one way or another) indicates the recognition of design for national development. PBD is responsible for two important national initiatives: the Design Biennial and the *Design Brasil* web portal. In Brazil design is seen as a tool for innovation and competitive advantage as well as a cultural manifestation. The Ministry of Culture supports the Brazilian Design Biennial and the participation of Brazilian design in international awards. The Ministry of Science and Technology endorses design as an activity eligible for financial incentives. The use of design in the industry is encouraged by the national organisations SEBRAE (subsidies to SMEs' investments in design) and SENAI (design hubs across the country). An important development, which is fundamental to facilitating the implementation of national design strategies, is the design sector organising itself into strong associations in the Federal States and together launching the Brazilian Design Forum.

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LATVIA

At the government level, design is recognised as a component of innovation within creative industries and is mentioned in the Guidelines of Latvian Culture Policy for 2006–2015. At present, action for the creative industries is also included in the Latvian National Development Plan 2007–2013, the Latvian National Lisbon Programme 2005–2008 and the Culture and Creative Industry Development Programme 2009–2013. Design is also specifically mentioned in the planning document Latvia 2030, an umbrella document for strategic development (currently under public consultation). Key support programmes include a business incubator started in 2009 in Andrejsala as a member of the international organisation The HUB; the Architecture and Design programme running since 2010 as a competition for project grants supported by the State Culture Capital Foundation; the Ice-breaking programmes for entrepreneurs and designers supported since 2008 by the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia; and the Technology Transfer Contact Point in Design set up in 2009 by the Art Academy of Latvia in collaboration with the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia.

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KENYA

Recently, the government has committed to creating and implementing a Science, Technology and Innovation policy framework to support *Vision 2030*, which underlines the critical role played by R&D in the acceleration of economic development in all the newly industrialising countries of the world. This strategy recognises the importance of informal and small-scale industries – known as *Jua kali* (hot sun), alluding to the open-air setting where most production takes place – that provide employment for over 70% of Kenya's working population. It is hoped that such a policy will set out a clear path for design as an important tool for economic development. NGOs and universities are continuing to carry out further research into the indigenous and often tacit design knowledge of the Kenyan people in order to translate it to explicit knowledge bases for drafting appropriate policies and strategies for design. However, designers will also need to get involved as experts and interest groups in lobbying for the importance of design at policy level. Design Kenya brings together designers and educators from all fields of design in monthly meetings with varied activities.

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BOTSWANA

A number of strategies have been implemented by private- and public-sector organisations in Botswana to foster a culture of creativity and innovation. The Botswana Technology Centre runs the National Design for Development Awards, recognising innovative prototypes and products that offer good design solutions. The University of Botswana's Industrial Design and Technology Department offers a Bachelor of Design that strives to graduate future innovative entrepreneurs for the industry. An Innovation Hub has been set up by a think tank and catalytic centre for design and innovation to add value to manufacturing through economically viable projects. The government's Local Enterprise Authority, which promotes small, medium and micro enterprises, is setting up incubators for service and manufacturing industries. Again, design will play a pivotal role in these incubators. Although innovation is now part of the government's Science, Technology and Innovation policy, there are concerns that the bias will still be towards science as there are few people capable of driving a broader innovation agenda at a national level.

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Map available at:
www.seeproject.org/map

7th European Conference on Design Promotion

In this special report Jean Schneider presents a review of the issues that were presented and discussed during the seventh European Conference on Design Promotion.

The seventh European Conference on Design Promotion, organised by the *Agence pour la Promotion de la Création Industrielle* (APCI), gathered more than 100 professionals in Paris on 11th and 12th January 2010. The contribution of design thinking in an operational context was at the core of all presentations. Two strands were developed and discussed by speakers coming from different fields: how can design approaches support business strategies, and how could they facilitate social transformation?

Darragh Murphy (PDR, UK) proposed a typology of the use of design in business strategy, out of his study of the entries to the three editions of the Design Management Europe Award. The focus on ‘how’ (how design is managed) rather than on its output gives a richer map of the contribution of design to business. Independently of the quality of the result, design can support other activities, such as innovation, branding etc., while some companies will put it at the core of their business.

Thomas Bertin-Mourot, manager of Quantum Glass, illustrated the birth of a brand created as a spin-off of the world’s largest glass manufacturer (Saint Gobain) to develop and market a whole range of products resulting from years of research. In an uncharted market, strongly connected to the construction business, the strategy is driven by design input: showcasing the potential of these new types of glass through prototype buildings, as much as involving designers and architects in the specification process.

‘Has the crisis had an impact on the use of design in businesses?’ is a question that was on everyone’s lips. Could we get insights into any transformations of managers’ attitudes towards design? Patrick McGowan, artistic director of IBM software brand Lotus, and Robert Sachon,



From left: Patrick McGowan, Robert Sachon and Thomas Bertin-Mourot at the APCI conference (Paris, 2010). Photo by Gabriel Patocinio.

brand manager for Bosch-Siemens domestic appliances (BSH), were both confident in the fact that when design is deeply embedded in the business, it will be preserved. Yet there might be a call for a clarification of its role and its contribution to business strategy. Budgets might be frozen and recruitment slowed down, but there would be greater expectations. In the white goods business, which depends also on construction, the recession was foreseen rather early, and has affected primarily independent buyers and small manufacturers. For Robert Sachon, the key for success in a business in which the average lifetime of an appliance exceeds 10 years is ‘to keep calm and true to the brand values’. For design managers, the necessity of ‘thinking ahead’ is an asset when having to deal with change.

Patrick McGowan described the narrow route that design managers face as design’s role matures in a business. When teams expand and more people get linked to the design group, it is central to have a strong core of trained designers. Otherwise, as the design process becomes diluted, the risk is starting to outsource or looking for a cheaper provider. Yet a strong team should also open up to larger audiences, whether they are users or other people in the company. Learning to listen is also a challenge for designers. Design managers should be able to develop a design process that is tailored to the culture of the business.

Insights gained from other companies seem to confirm the trend: when design is a supportive activity, its budget and activities are likely to follow the general course of business; if design is a key component of the business strategy, hard times call for more efficiency, but the position of design remains central.

Within the various means developed to foster innovation in Europe, ‘Living Labs’ have appeared as a way of gathering multiple stakeholders, operating at a local or regional level. Living Labs are aiming at getting end users closer into the design loop of innovation, by offering test beds, creating better dialogue etc. Salvador Fernandez Marquez, head of the fishermen’s association of the village of Cudillero in Spain, convinced the audience of the value of this approach when tackling the issue of providing means to guarantee the outstanding quality of hake fished in the traditional way. New technology shortens the delay between catch and final dish. However, the main point was not the design of the technology, but the redesign of a social system (fishermen, buyers, final consumer) that could offer potential benefits for each party.

Ecolizer 2.0

(BELGIUM)

Every year, approximately 3.4 million tonnes of household waste and 32 million tonnes of industrial waste are accumulated in Flanders and 308 municipalities work together with 27 associations to dispose of this waste. Traditional waste management focuses mainly on the end-of-life phase, where material becomes waste. However, managing the material chain as a whole, 'from cradle to cradle', is essential in finding sustainable answers to the waste problem.

In light of this, the [Public Waste Agency of Flanders \(OVAM\)](#) has sought to broaden the scope of its approach by implementing a series of initiatives to promote sustainable consumption and production, including:

- *Three trial projects, in close co-operation with the retail sector*, to stimulate the sale of environmentally friendly detergents, energy-saving lamps and energy-efficient tumble dryers.
- *Eco-efficiency scanprogramme* to identify opportunities for eco-efficiency improvements within small and medium enterprises.
- The *MAMBO* initiative, 'Less waste, more profit', a software package by which companies are able to calculate the true costs of their waste production.
- The web application *Producttest*, to help local authorities gauge the sustainability of their procurement.
- *PLAN C*, the Flemish Network for Sustainable Materials Management, in which industry, NGOs, research centres, the government and other organisations reflect on ways to develop policies for managing whole material cycles instead of classic waste strategies.


OVAM believes that to be successful it is essential that the initiatives and instruments be developed in close collaboration with the relevant social sector and with the creative techniques used by designers. Therefore OVAM chose to collaborate with [Design Flanders](#) – the design promotion unit in the 'Enterprise Flanders' agency – in two initiatives:

the Ecodesign Awards PRO and the Ecolizer. The Award intends to encourage designers and design students in the field of product development to integrate environmental criteria into their designs (for more information see the case study on the *Henry van de Velde* and *Ecodesign Awards* in the SEE Library <http://www.seeproject.org/casestudy> or visit www.ovam.be/ecodesign). The Ecolizer 2.0 was developed to help designers create more environmentally friendly products by making eco-design more accessible during the initial design phases.

The first Ecolizer was developed in 2005 for designers and product manufacturers as an introduction to eco-design and Life Cycle Thinking, and as a tool to assess the environmental impact of their products. The idea behind the Ecolizer originated from the fact that despite the wealth of academic information and software on eco-design, it is rarely applied by Flemish designers or businesses. The tool was also only available in Dutch. Four years on, an update was needed. In developing the new version, OVAM surveyed those 500 designers and companies who had employed the first Ecolizer in their projects. From this emerged the need for a digital version of the tool and for more detailed workshops and case studies. The Ecolizer 2.0, available in English, was launched in 2010.

The Ecolizer 2.0 employs an updated set of eco-indicators based on the 'ReCiPe' method rather than the previous 'Eco-indicator 99' methodology – both single-score indicator methodologies based on Life Cycle Assessment (LCA). This new method is still used to express the environmental impact of the production materials and all the subsequent stages in one eco-indicator number, so a designer can assess the sustainability of a creation in a quality score. OVAM chose the methodology and subcontracted an agency specialised in environmental issues, life cycle analysis and eco-design to develop the model and calculate the eco-indicators. A communication agency was responsible for the layout in a way that would appeal to designers. The Ecolizer 2.0, with its fan-like design, conveys complex academic content in a smart tool that is quick and easy to use in any design process and helps to incorporate environmental criteria into innovative products.

Three members of OVAM (two designers and an engineer) were responsible for delivering the project with a budget of €80,000 for development, printing and communication. To launch the Ecolizer several workshops were organised in collaboration with Design Flanders. OVAM intends to update the Ecolizer every three years from now on.

With the Ecolizer 2.0, OVAM introduces a scientifically based tool that contributes to increasing the eco-friendliness of any product design. Although it is not possible to assess how often or how successfully the Ecolizer is used by its target group, several prominent Flemish designers have referred to the Ecolizer when asked about how they apply eco-design. 

For more information: www.ovam.be/ecolizer



Innovation by Design

(IRELAND)

Innovation by Design was a mentor-led programme based on best practice in Europe and the US, operating from June 2007 to September 2008. Developed by the *Centre for Design Innovation* in Sligo, Ireland, the programme involved six SMEs across a range of sectors – software, manufacturing and services – based in the northwest of Ireland. Each company participated in a tailored programme that enabled them to develop innovative products and services and to generate competitive advantage well beyond the end of their involvement in the programme.

To formulate the programme, the Centre hosted the event ‘Meeting of Minds’ with key design practitioners from the UK, USA and Ireland who had extensive experience of running SME design programmes. Research from this event and the user-centred work by IDEO, Ziba and the D-School in the US, as well as the UK Design Council’s Designing Demand programme, formed the basis of the methodology which conceptually defined the Innovation by Design programme.

‘Ten Commandments’ to guide the programme’s interaction with companies:

1. Invest time in the selection process
2. Speak their language
3. Don’t scare them with too many details
4. Be explicit about rewards
5. Establish a diary at the outset
6. Understand the psychology of a diverse team
7. ‘Who are the users? What do you know about them?’
8. Pick good stories
9. Have a contingency
10. Learn from others who have conducted similar programmes

From an initial list of 200 companies, devised from recommendations by government support agencies on which SMEs would benefit most from the programme and would be willing to commit to such an initiative, a final group of six companies was selected.

Two Design Associates with extensive experience in design support, industry and research engaged with the companies at various points to facilitate the programme’s aims and objectives. The 18-month programme had a total budget of €120,000. The cost to each company was €1500, for which it received two network days, three workshops and 5–7 days of mentoring sessions. The real cost was around €10,000 per company. The network events occurred roughly every three months, including workshops on specific issues such as branding or product development,

and an online site was created to manage communications and provide a digital forum for the organisations to communicate at any time. In these activities, the non-competitive network was crucial and of unique value.

Within 15 months each company applied a design approach to understanding customers’ needs first, which is key to identifying the right ideas to commercialise. Avenue Moulding mapped its service offering, developed a well-received quick-start mould manual for its customers and engaged with a new design firm. Connacht Gold engaged with Institute of Technology Sligo design students and staff to develop a range for 12-month and 5-year product concepts. Elements of the work have been incorporated in new product marketing. Infacta is completing a rebranding programme of its company and has hired a full-time designer. Mantis Cranes made over two dozen design modifications to a developing crane and implemented a new product-development process. The Institute of Technology Sligo rebranded the college. Ireland West Airport made adjustments to its check-in and queuing procedures, as well as fixing an issue with its luggage trolleys and developing concepts for new, sustainable and better-designed trolleys to enhance the passenger experience.



Innovation by Design workshop on user-centred design in Sligo, Ireland (2007)

According to Justin Knecht, the Programme Manager, the Design Associates were key to the success of the programme: ‘Programmes cannot be just a series of workshops, they require mentoring to facilitate the adoption of tools and define discrete projects. The content was practical, relevant, hands-on and able to be implemented immediately by the participating companies.’ The six case studies generated from the companies that participated are relevant to a broad range of SMEs. Although there are lessons to be learned from multinationals like Apple and Toyota, regional case studies of similar size and scope have greater resonance.

The CEO of the airport commented, ‘Now we’re really ready to use design, what are we going to do with you next?’ It was recommended that a follow-on programme be created to build on the initial success; help fund larger-scale projects; and integrate design processes and tools holistically throughout each organisation’s structure to move them towards a design culture. These programmes need a planned process for building on initial small wins and turning them into sustainable change. ●

For more information visit: www.designinnovation.ie

SEE Library

Here we present a selection of publications from the library available online (www.seeproject.org/seelibrary), where we provide a range of material for practitioners and policy-makers in the field of design and innovation policy. The papers and documents fall broadly into three categories: policy documents, academic research and survey studies.

National and Regional Policies for Design, Creativity and User-Driven Innovation (2009):

This PROINNO EUROPE Thematic Report presents the findings of a survey conducted in 2008 as part of DG Enterprise and Industry's examination of design as a tool for innovation. It is a benchmark study of models of design promotion across countries in Europe and the rest of the world in order to support policy learning.

Design and the Public Good Creativity vs. the Procurement Process (2010):

In this report, the UK Associate Parliamentary Design and Innovation Group and the Design Business Association release the findings of their inquiry into public sector procurement of design and creativity. Following on from the Cox Review of Creativity in Business, it discusses not only design buying in government but also re-designing the public sector route to procuring creative services.


Sustainable Alternatives in Design (2009):

This research, edited by Barbara Predan and Cvetka Pozar and published by the Architecture Museum of Ljubljana – BIO, explores design theory in relation to sustainable development and social innovation. The aim is to address the discrepancy between theory and practice in this field. The publication is a good compilation of papers by Dieter Rams, Ezio Manzini, Jonathan Chapman, Clive Dilnot, Per Mollerup and Victor Margolin.

Design des Politiques Publiques (2010):

This collection of case studies centres on the question 'Can we (re)design public policy?' and was produced by the 27e Région, a public innovation laboratory currently delivering the ERDF-funded programme *Territoires en Résidence*, a series of social innovation initiatives across France. It describes 30 initiatives in the field of design, anthropology, social innovation, urban art, technology, culture and creativity and explores various methods for co-creating public action (available in French).

SEE POLICY BOOKLETS

As part of SEE's efforts to engage with government representatives and policy-makers to integrate design into policy across Europe, we are publishing four SEE Policy Booklets. The first, *Integrating Design into Regional Innovation Policy*, was published in November 2009. The second, *Realising Sustainability and Innovation through Design: Making it Happen in Communities, Industry, Public Sector and Policy-Making*, has just been released. Both booklets outline the rationale behind policy intervention, explore how design can be employed to realise innovation and sustainability, provide illustrative case studies and put forward policy proposals. 

To download a copy visit: www.seeproject.org/publications



SEE bulletins will be published every six months between 2009 and 2011. They will include research papers, articles, interviews, reports and case studies relating to policies and programmes on design, innovation and competitiveness in different countries.

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

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