REPORT

DESIGN POLICY CONFERENCE

MAKE A PLAN
17&18 OCT 2014

icsid International Council of Societies of Industrial Design

CITY OF CAPE TOWN
ISIXEKO SASEKAPA
STAD KAAPSTAD

WORLD DESIGN CAPITAL
CAPE TOWN 2014

CON-TENTS

A guide to this report:
This report includes speaker profiles and summaries of their presentations, interspersed with voices from the delegates. Key themes are summarised towards the end of this publication.
Visit www.wdc14.com for presentations and videos of the conference.

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INTRO DUCTION

" The Design Policy Conference invites some of the world's most brilliant design minds into our midst. The conference looks at what design can do, and what policies are necessary to unlock the potential of the design industry, to respond to social challenges. A policy guideline is necessary in order to realise the innovative, ingenious and creative potential on the African continent.
The conference is aptly themed, *Make a Plan*, as on a daily basis we see ordinary South Africans making a plan with what they have, designing and developing innovative and extraordinary things, from the most ordinary and often unwanted material."

EXECUTIVE MAYOR, ALDERMAN PATRICIA DE LILLE, CITY OF CAPE TOWN

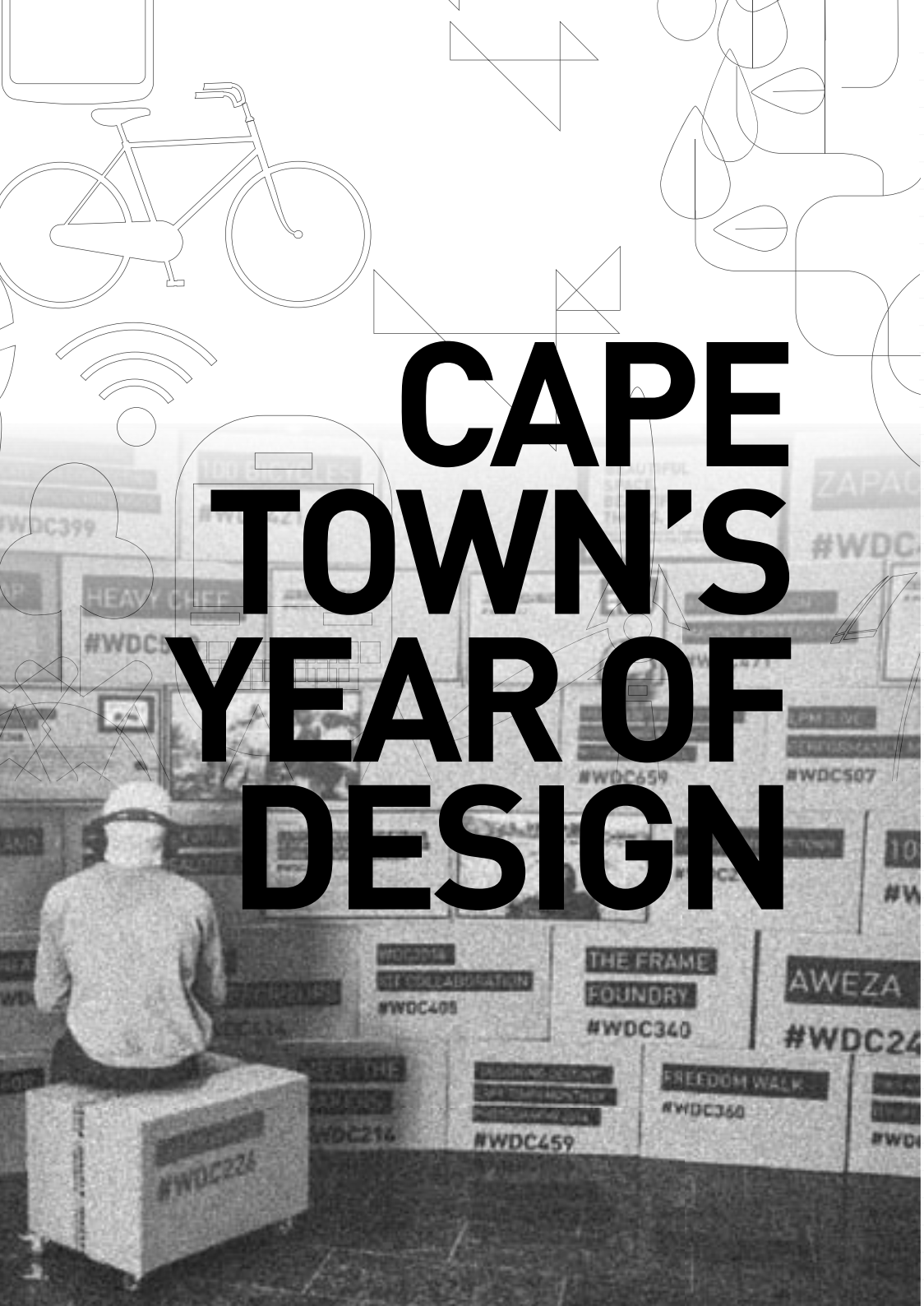
" This event serves as a platform to discuss and provide insights into the current South African design and innovation policy opportunities.
It builds stronger links and creates networking opportunities among national, regional and international stakeholders, and it provides a venue for designers, entrepreneurs and policy makers to interact, innovate and shape the future of the South African and, more broadly, African policy landscape. This is critically needed as design becomes fuel to the knowledge-driven economy across the continent."

BRANDON GIEN, ICSID PRESIDENT

" I would like to express my delight that this year may, as a very real legacy, have brought to the surface a different and hidden talent within Cape Town. If we are to realise the ambition articulated in our vision, which is to transform greater Cape Town into a sustainable, productive African city, then we have to take risks, disrupt the status quo and change the paradigm. We're proud that the year puts the spotlight on people – the inventors and the beneficiaries.

ALAYNE REESBERG, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, CAPE TOWN DESIGN NPC

CAPE TOWN'S YEAR OF DESIGN



The World Design Capital designation is awarded biennially to a city that recognises the value of design thinking and is dedicated to using design as a tool for social, cultural and economic development. Turin won in 2008, Seoul in 2010 and Helsinki in 2012. Shortlisted with Bilbao and Dublin, Cape Town won the bid for WDC 2014. Taipei will carry the baton in 2016.

WHAT HAS CAPE TOWN'S 2014 PROGRAMME BEEN ABOUT?

The year-long programme features more than 460 projects, activities and events curated following a public call for submissions. Recognised projects showcase a dynamic range of innovative and creative products and objects, processes and services that use design to better the lives of Capetonians.

DESIGN AS A TOOL FOR TRANSFORMATION

The WDC bid concept, *Live Design. Transform Life*. has served as a mantra to highlight socially responsive design in Cape Town's unique context. The problem-solving capabilities of design can lead to innovative, human-centred solutions. Inclusive design can help address societal imbalances, especially in a city that remains divided by the legacies of apartheid.

THE IMPACT OF WORLD DESIGN CAPITAL CAPE TOWN 2014

Together, projects impact Cape Town on a social, cultural, environmental and economic level. They stimulate innovation and new connections in the public sector, collaboration across industries, discovery of new talent, skills development and citizen-created solutions. The programme has raised awareness of design with social impact and has sparked a global interest in Cape Town as a design destination.

LOOKING BEYOND 2014

The long-term vision is to use design to transform Cape Town into a sustainable, productive, African city, bridging economic and social divides. 2014 sets a foundation for ongoing work to achieve that vision.

THE CASE FOR DESIGN POLICY

Traditionally, design was viewed as a function of production: to design jewellery, cars or mobile phones. Today, it is seen as an important tool that holds infinite potential for driving industrial, economic and environmental change, and improving lives.

Design offers new ways of thinking about the wicked problems that society faces, from climate change to eliminating preventable diseases; from transport systems to education tools. It is a process that enables governments and the private sector to transform societies, create jobs, build confidence, increase exports, grow entrepreneurship, express identity and improve economies.

If design acts as a key lever for socio-economic transformation and development, then a design policy is the anchor, the reference point from which design can be embedded into national, provincial and municipal systems. A design policy provides the framework for defining plans, allocating resources and unlocking the investment needed to deliver sustainable growth and development at all levels of society.

In short, design policy is: "The process by which governments translate their political vision into programmes and actions in order to develop national design resources and encourage their elective use in the country." (Gisele Raulik Murphy, Partner, DUCO; Lecturer, Positivo University; and conference speaker).

While policies are about change, the change needed can only come about if the policies are supported by implementable plans that respond directly to the unique needs of the country, province or city where the policies are enacted. The challenge, then, is for policymakers to create an enabling environment where policy can return real and meaningful results, unlocking fresh knowledge and manifesting that society's unique differentiating qualities.

At the same time, we need not wait for policy to begin taking action. The formulation of policy can be informed by analysis of the myriad existing initiatives that demonstrate the difference that design can make. An iterative process combining bottom-up action and top-down leadership can lead to clearer policy to address our country's most pressing challenges.

Seen in this light, it is clear that the creation of a design policy is not the end of the story. It is only the beginning.

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

300 Delegates
030 Speakers
002 Days

Policy is more than words on paper. It is declared objectives. It is the foundation for action. Good policy stimulates potential, encourages growth, feeds conversation and fosters innovation. An industry guided by policy is one that has come of age, one that is empowered and held accountable.

01

South Africa's first Design Policy Conference was held at the Cape Town Stadium on 17 and 18 October 2014. Titled *Make a Plan*, the conference theme refers to a proudly South African approach to ingenuity and resourcefulness that echoes across the continent as uniquely African innovation.

02

Make a Plan brought together geographically and culturally diverse makers and thinkers, doers and planners, implementers and visionaries. It was aimed at the design community, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), education and business, policymakers and influencers and communities whose work is informed and transformed by design.

03

The Make a Plan programme included designers, promoters, industrialists, academics, educators, policymakers and civil society. Countries represented included South Africa, United Kingdom, Canada, New Zealand, China, India, Italy, Turkey, Botswana, Kenya, Ghana, Colombia, Brazil, Argentina and the United States.

04

The views, opinions and experiences presented at the conference formed a picture of the process of design policy development across the globe. The speakers explored what worked, what didn't and where South African policymakers could do better.

05

This report provides a consolidated snapshot of those conversations to be used to inform future discussion and action among policymakers and change-makers.

PROGRAMME

DAY 01

FRIDAY
17
October 2014

Welcome and introduction	Michael Thomson
Conference opening	Premier Helen Zille
Design policy in practice	Gisele Raulik Murphy
An African perspective	Mugendi K. M'Rithaa
South Africa's journey of transformation through design	Hester Du Plessis
Challenges and opportunities for design policy	Craig Kesson Srini Srinivasan Erica Elk Carlos Scheliga
Value of an integrated design policy and strategy	Pradyumna Vyas
Summary of the day	Michael Thomson

DAY 02

SATURDAY
18
October 2014

Introduction to the day	Michael Thomson
Traditional and new design economies	Ezio Manzini in conversation with Lou Yongqi
Rise of a design-led city	Ludo Campbell-Reid
Business and design	Tasos Calantzis Johan Schepers Dale Dutton Ian Gourley Ulrich Meyer-Höllings
Who is getting it right in developing nations and what is driving the success?	Edgar Pieterse Anabella Rondina Richie Moalosi Ricardo Mejia Alpay Er
Looking into the future – a view from young design professionals	Monica Newton Lorraine Ambole Gabriel Mothibedi Ralitsa Diana Debrah Nkhensani Nkosi
Beyond policy, leading by design	Laura Lee
Closing remarks	Vuyo Jack

DAY 01 PRESENTATION SUMMARIES

CONFERENCE OPENING

PREMIER HELEN ZILLE

Design is solving problems with ingenuity and with vision. Some of the best designs solved problems we didn't know we had. Think of telephones, the internet and Twitter. Design can be used to address the crises that face us today at a global and local level: climate change, regional unrest, authoritarianism, disease epidemics – among others. At a local level, the divide between the haves and have-nots, particularly visible in Cape Town, presents many challenges but equally many opportunities for using design to transform lives. Many of our best thinkers are working on these issues today.

The conference title, *Make a Plan*, means so much for South Africans, with all we've done in this country: taking on political challenges and finding ingenious solutions for our unique context. As a nation we have had the courage to take on problems and challenges that have thwarted the best creative minds in the world. The World Design Capital designation – and the conference – enables us to create a node in the international web of design innovation, where we are uniquely able to present solutions to problems that other countries haven't been able to resolve.

SETTING THE SCENE

" In a globalising world, national policies are becoming increasingly recognised as a way to foster competitiveness, cultural identity and a better quality of life for all."

CONFERENCE CHAIR: MICHAEL THOMSON, UNITED KINGDOM

About Michael: *Independent strategist and founder director of Design Connect, Michael Thomson is an international expert on national design policy. As a former board member of ICSID, he directed the first international Design Policy conference held in Torino WDC in 2008 and served on the international advisory committee of Seoul WDC 2010. During his tenure as President of the Bureau of European Design Associations from 2007 to 2009, he played a leading role in successfully lobbying the European Commission to include design in its innovation strategy.*

About the talk: As we talk about design policy, it's also relevant to talk about design *in* policy, and the design *of* policy, in steps that indicate the maturity of society's acceptance of design. National design policies are important for shaping a country's future wellbeing. In a globalising world, national policies are becoming increasingly recognised as a way to foster competitiveness, cultural identity and a better quality of life for all.

Policy can offer a shared purpose and direction, and can help attract and focus resources. Doing that successfully means mobilising policy development from the bottom up – within the community; and also from the top down – from government. In South Africa, where much has been done in this regard, now is the time to align the vision and goals of a design policy into the plans that government has for society: the National Development Plan, the National System of Innovation, and the Industrial Development Plan. The task is to find a way to integrate design into those strategies – whether through a design policy or other routes of action.

DESIGN POLICY IN PRACTICE

" We have to be modest enough to collaborate outside of the discipline."

GISELE RAULIK MURPHY, UNITED KINGDOM/BRAZIL

About Gisele: *With a Masters in Design Strategy & Innovation (Brunel, UK) and a PhD in Design Policy (Wales, UK), Gisele Raulik Murphy has successfully advised the Uruguayan and Brazilian governments on policy issues while maintaining teaching positions at various Brazilian universities. During 2005, she co-ordinated an EU-funded project establishing a collective of European design centres to share experiences and expertise on policies for design and innovation. She is currently a board member of the Brazil Design Centre.*

About the talk: Design policy is about encouraging the effective use of design in all aspects of life. But change cannot happen by chance: it's essential to have a plan – and sufficient capacity to implement it. Sport is a great analogy for design policy. It took ten years of planning for Germany to beat Brazil in the 2014 FIFA World Cup finals. Taking a leaf out of Germany's World Cup book, a design policy needs the following to succeed:

- Meticulous planning for long term results, setting priorities and starting early
- A multi-faceted approach, and a willingness to collaborate with other expertise beyond the design disciplines
- Working with the collective genius of the whole team, not just small parts
- Identifying your unique strengths and weaknesses, mapping the connections and missing links
- Having competitive intelligence, using data to inform and iteratively refine your plan
- Having a way to measure your impact

AN AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE

" Africa's challenge is to find a way to add value to its own abundant resources and inherent richness, using design to unlock the possibilities of its indigenous knowledge..."

MUGENDI K M'RITHAA, KENYA

About Mugendi: *The current ICSID President Elect, Mugendi K M'Rithaa has played an influential role in promoting design and design education on the African continent and is passionate about socially responsive and responsible design. With a Masters in industrial design from the Indian Institute of Technology in Mumbai, he has taught at and started design programmes at the Universities of Nairobi and Botswana. He currently holds a teaching position at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) in Cape Town.*

About the talk: Africa is a huge, complex, diverse, and multi-faceted continent with far-reaching influence around the world. It's a place of many challenges and many opportunities. When we talk about policy within this context, we need to account for cross-border collaboration.

Africa's challenge is to find a way to add value to its own abundant resources and inherent richness, using design to unlock the possibilities of its indigenous knowledge, craft capacity and unique identity in ways that go beyond the traditional production-led disciplines of design. Design policy and strategy need to energise what's already happening.

We need to consider how design policies can support both environmental and social sustainability, as a means towards social equity and cohesion. As humans, we share a common destiny, despite our different roles. Design can bring people together, building our competitive advantage, but also our comparative and collaborative advantage. Knowing this, we can use design to improve human relationships and understanding, as well as quality of life and quality of products.

SOUTH AFRICA'S JOURNEY OF TRANSFORMATION THROUGH DESIGN

The National Planning Commission's Diagnostic Report, published in June 2011, identified nine key challenges facing South Africa today:

- Too few people work
- The quality of school education for black people is poor
- Infrastructure is poorly located, inadequate and under-maintained
- Spatial divides hobble inclusive development
- The economy is unsustainably resource-intensive
- The public health system cannot meet demand or sustain quality
- Public services are uneven and often of poor quality
- Corruption levels are high
- South Africa remains a divided society.

HESTER DU PLESSIS, SOUTH AFRICA

About Hester: *Faculty head at Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection (MISTRA), Hester du Plessis's experience in the field of art and design is extensive. It covers academic, journalistic and management positions in South Africa, India and Europe. Past and current associations include a research chair at the National Institute of Design in India and steering committee positions for the project Journées Hubert Curien in Nancy, France, and the SAASTA 3d African Science Communication Conference.*

About the talk: Design drives the world. It is the key to ensuring a better life for all, creating products that meet social needs and promoting cultural identities. Neglecting design in policy is a grave mistake.

The National Development Plan (NDP) lays out the government's vision for addressing 9 key challenges. In March 2014, a workshop was held to consider which elements of the NDP could be addressed through design or design thinking. Design is not a neutral tool: it assumes commercial, political and social interests. Despite a general climate of distrust, the workshop enabled policymakers and designers to find a common language.

The workshop identified three economic interventions as critical outcomes:

- Subsidising design services to stimulate growth
- Investing in design associations and networks to help other organisations use design as a strategic tool
- Establishing networks with other creative industries to add value

While the journey is just starting, the workshop galvanised the SABS Design Institute to work with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC), forging links between government, industry and society at large.

However, as one delegate put it: tangible results of policy must be ensured. How do we move from the promises made in the NDP to the realisation of that vision?

PANEL DISCUSSION:
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR DESIGN POLICY

" How can we break down silos across government departments to enable collaborative design thinking and to encourage competitive advantage by supporting the design industry?"

CRAIG KESSON, SOUTH AFRICA

About Craig: *Oxford graduate and Rhodes Scholar, Craig Kesson is the Director of Policy and Strategy for the City of Cape Town. His portfolio includes citywide policy and strategy development and alignment; corporate transversal management; executive monitoring and evaluation; and external relations.*
Craig has designed and delivered on medium- and long-term strategies for the City and has led delivery co-ordination between the City and regional governments.

About the discussion: How can we break down silos across government departments to enable collaborative design thinking and to encourage competitive advantage by supporting the design industry? Trying to shift mindsets from working in silos to working together is like trying to turn an oil tanker. Collaboration across three spheres of government can be very difficult, with people grabbing what they can in the name of their individual mandates. But if each person understands that they are working towards one plan, it becomes possible to get people moving forward together. With a plan in place, people within organisations can find their own core value as an integral part of that plan. This leads to more collaboration and the ability to look beyond individual mandates to collectively focus on the key task at hand.

PANEL DISCUSSION:
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR DESIGN POLICY

SRINI R. SRINIVASAN, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

About Srini: *Executive Board member of ICSID and CEO of Lumium, an award-winning creative design company based in Silicon Valley, USA and India, Srini Srinivasan has more than 25 years' experience in creative design, user experience design, telecom and wireless product design. He is also adept at company formation and venture capital raising, having established business partnerships in many parts of the world using an extensive network of contacts across the globe.*

About the discussion: Global manufacturing trends and practices are changing. Globalisation, shifting customer relationships, greater reliance on technology, increased competition and inverse cost ratios between inputs and outputs have all affected the way the sector operates in the 21st century.

In response, manufacturers are moving from a supply chain-centric model towards a more distributed model, enabling them to maximise the best available resources to meet customer demands. Regardless of the model, multiple policies regulate those manufacturing practices.

Design policy also has a role to play in the manufacturing sector: influencing a better quality of design and engineering education; establishing more favourable finance models; stimulating cross-border collaboration; driving job creation and implementing initiatives to ensure local production is both protected and more competitive.

PANEL DISCUSSION:

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR DESIGN POLICY

"We built three pillars into the Western Cape Design Strategy: to support the design sector, promote design and develop designers."

ERICA ELK, SOUTH AFRICA

About Erica: *Erica Elk is the executive director of the pioneering Cape Craft & Design Institute (CCDI), which she was appointed to establish in 2001. She plays a key role in the development and implementation of a design strategy aimed at stimulating competitiveness and contributing towards economic growth in the Western Cape. She is a board member of Cape Town Design NPC and was recently named Social Entrepreneur of the year by the Western Cape Businesswomen's Association.*

About the discussion: We don't often give ourselves credit for how far we've come. In South Africa and the Western Cape we have already done a lot to build an appreciation of the value of design.

In addressing the nine elements in the National Planning Commission's diagnostic report, we now have a chance to redesign our country; to reverse engineer the deeply flawed yet brilliantly designed and controlled social system that was apartheid. While design is not a silver bullet, we can use it to make our ideas real.

In devising the Western Cape Design Strategy, we wanted to find a simple, elegant way to capture what is needed for design to unlock innovation and build our competitive advantage. We built three pillars into the Western Cape Design Strategy: to support the design sector, promote design and develop designers.

The title of this conference is *Make a Plan*. It should be *Make a Plan and Implement It*. We are awash with policies, but where policies fail is in implementation. We wanted to use 2013 and 2014 to set our plans in motion, on the principle that the best approach is to debate while implementing. The World Design Capital designation has been a lever to build an awareness and a common understanding of what design is, and to prototype what is possible. From 2015, our strategy takes us from planning to action, when we begin to build on our investments and successes while continually adapting and evolving.

What is missing from the design sector is coordination and collaboration; the understanding that we are working together as colleagues, that we're building something together. This needs to be facilitated to encourage the growth of design industries.

THE CURRENT SOUTH AFRICAN POLICY LANDSCAPE FOR DESIGN & INNOVATION AS REFERENCED BY SPEAKERS

Regional
Millennium Development Goals (MDG)

National
South African Constitution
National Spatial Development Perspective (NSDP)
National Development Plan 2030 (NDP)
New Growth Path (NGP)
Industrial Policy Action Plan (IPAP)
(Dept Trade and Industry)
Mzansi Golden Economy (MGE)
Ten-year Innovation Plan (Dept Science & Technology)
National Research and Development Plan
(Dept Science & Technology)

Provincial
Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF)
Future Cape 2040
5-year Provincial Strategic Plan
Provincial Economic Development Strategy

City
Spatial Development Framework (SDP)
Integrated Development Plan (IDP)
Social Development Strategy
Economic Growth Strategy

PANEL DISCUSSION:
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR DESIGN POLICY

" It is important to shift mindsets so that citizens are engaged in making a better city, and government officials see the potential for design to improve all public services."

CARLOS SCHELIGA, BRAZIL

About Carlos: *Carlos Scheliga is an Engineer and Industrial Designer with an MBA and over 20 years experience. He has been the president of the Brazilian Product Designer Association since 2009; a councillor at Associação Objeto Brasil; a member of the Brazilian Design Biennial Committee at the Development Ministry of Brazil; and co-owner of the award-winning company Questto|Nó. Carlos is also a specialist in Public Transit and Urban Planning, and for the last ten years he has been an advisor at the Sao Paulo Transport Regulation Agency.*

About the discussion: The key to developing places through design is identity. Identity is the golden thread that should be woven into business, social inclusion, strategy, sustainability, language, place branding and better cities.

If we are to achieve the cities we want for the 21st century, it is important to develop the local creative industries, allowing them to imbue their cities with their own identity, building cities into more fair, human, green, sustainable and creative meeting points. With citizen participation and lasting design policies, we have the opportunity to make cities great meeting points where culture, arts, creativity, diversity, equality and citizenship converge.

The answer is not investment but a cultural and people-engagement solution. This is critical if the ROI is to move beyond just $ return, but include social value. To achieve this, design policies need to be a decision led by society. It is important to shift mindsets so that citizens are engaged in making a better city, and government officials see the potential for design to improve all public services.

VALUE OF AN INTEGRATED DESIGN POLICY AND STRATEGY

PRADYUMNA VYAS, INDIA

About Pradyumna: *Pradyumna Vyas is the current Director of the National Design Institute in India, where he has been for 22 years. He has represented the institute in Taiwan, Korea and Singapore as well as Europe and the USA. During his term as ICSID executive board member, he was appointed to the India Design Council, established in pursuit of a national design policy. His background is in Industrial Design with a keen interest in design for social development.*

About the talk: India is a culturally diverse nation, with a large population, vast land mass, multiple languages and myriad customs, cultures and traditions. It is a nation leaping ahead on the path of development, aspiring to be a global player while still cherishing its cultural heritage.

The National Institute of Design (NID) was established in 1961 with a foundation set by Charles and Ray Eames' 1958 seminal document, *The India Report*. Since then, it has evolved completely, from an institute to promote cottage industries to a trans-disciplinary centre of excellence focused on education, research, training, incubation, publication, promotion and protection.

The NID undertakes various projects that together form a robust picture of how to integrate design to develop societies, empower women, enhance collaboration, preserve traditional knowledge, promote indigenous craft, encourage product diversification, improve public services like sanitation and healthcare, improve the working environment, stimulate grassroots innovations and influence classroom practices. One clear example of design policy in action is the NID's Design Clinic Scheme, where matches are made between entrepreneurs and designers, whose fees are subsidised by government.

Pradyumna ends his presentation reminding the audience of the seminal piece of film, 'The Lota' by Charles Eames, which in its essence serves as a guide for design thinking.

NOTES:

SEE, LEARN, DO
www.wdccapetown2014.com/
about/designpolicyconference

DAY 02 PRESENTATION SUMMARIES

TRADITIONAL AND NEW DESIGN ECONOMIES

"If we don't act, we don't learn. If we don't learn, we don't know where to go."

EZIO MANZINI, ITALY

About Ezio: *As a passionate researcher and educator, Professor Ezio Manzini holds positions at the Politecnico di Milano, the University of the Arts, London, Tongji University, Shanghai and the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT). He has been awarded the Compasso d'Oro Italian Design Prize, the Sir Misha Back Medal and honorary positions at prestigious institutions in the USA, Scotland and Finland. Recently, he focused his interests on social innovation and started Design for Innovation and Social Sustainability (DESIS), an international design network for social innovation and sustainability.*

About the talk: Design in the 21st century looks very different. Previously, design was the exclusive domain of expert designers. Today, design is about co-designing systems, often with many people involved who sit between those expert designers. Experts today need to redefine their role, not as product designers, but as enablers who use design knowledge to help others be better designers.

Our complex society is in transition towards another, more sustainable society. In that transition, experimentation becomes the norm. As designers enable better design, so policy must enable experimentation – and failure. Complexity and transition mean that the role of policy is to create conditions that liberate the energy needed to catalyse great ideas. This means creating safe spaces for experimentation, exploring new economic models – such as social innovation, collaboration and co-operation – and promoting the idea of well-being and a liberated human capacity to improve quality of life.

DESIGNING THE DESIGN POLICY OF CHINA: LEAPFROG FOR A NEW ECONOMY

LOU YONGQI, CHINA

About Lou: *As the Vice Dean of the College of Design & Innovation at Tongji University, Shangai, and Vice President of CUMULUS, Lou Yongqi is recognised as a leading mind in rethinking urban development in China. He serves on the boards of prestigious design programmes and associations in Italy, Denmark, Austria and Sweden and holds editorial positions at Design Issues (MIT Press), the Journal of Visual Art Practice (Taylor & Francis Press) and the Journal of Design, Economics and Innovation (Elsevier Press).*

About the talk: If Design 1.0 was about designing products and Design 2.0 is about designing both products and services to meet needs, then Design 3.0 is about designing and implementing solutions to today's major problems within complex systems. China's government is in the process of developing a design policy to address three pillars of sustainable development: economic growth, social development and environmental impact. This shift presents two choices in terms of design policy: to catch up with the rest of the world; or to leapfrog to a new mindset, new economy and new society.

In opting for the leapfrog approach, proactive design innovation is needed to enable the right social and economic changes. China's phased design policy roadmap promotes an awareness and capacity for design; integrates design into the strategic economy and comprehensively enables design so that design policy becomes invisible over time.

Success, however, relies on the energy to keep moving and generating change, energy which is inherent in a developing nation. Without energy, it becomes impossible to move forward, so there is a need to use the invisible hand of market, government and individuals to guide and cultivate the qi [energy] of design-making policy, maintaining a delicate balance between the two.

RISE OF A DESIGN-LED CITY

Auckland's transformation was led by the principle that an urban design strategy is an economic development strategy.
The process involved shifting mindsets and the will to make sometimes unpopular decisions. The result is a design-led strategy that comprises eight pillars:

- Leadership: set a clear vision and mandate from the top
- Champions: appoint design champions, both political and council
- Experts: appoint a world-class team (40+ urban designers in council)
- Policy decision-making framework: set rules, introduce principles
- Best practice review: of both major council projects and private developments
- Raise consciousness: Auckland Conversations (engage media, inspire, change mindsets, create behaviour change)
- Challenge: get data, model, monitor and benchmark
- Enabling: work with private and community sector (co-produce how to guide).

LUDO CAMPBELL-REID, NEW ZEALAND

About Ludo: *Ludo Campbell-Reid is Auckland Council's first ever Design Champion, and developer of Auckland's first urban design framework, 'Designing Great Places for our People' (2007). Earlier, Ludo worked in London as CEO of Urban Design London, a partnership to lift design quality across London; and as Senior Urban Designer at the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. Working in the private sector in Cape Town during the 1990s, Ludo was a member of the master-planning team for the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront development.*

About the talk: New cities are being transformed by a design-led agenda, using people-centred design and multi- and trans-disciplinary thinking to bring enjoyment, heart and soul to the city. Auckland's story is amazing, but not often told (see left).

Bringing the design-led strategy to life is to understand what makes a design-led city. It's a collaborative process that embeds design into a city's DNA: its plans, policies and its projects. A design-led city recognises the skill, energy and creativity of its people; and celebrates culture as a point of difference. In these unique environments, where context and sense of place are important, design can be used to bridge professional and political divides, while also building in adaptability, change and resilience.

PANEL DISCUSSION: RETHINKING BUSINESS AND DESIGN

"Design takes chaos and complexity and produces something elegant and doable that leads to the desired results."

TASOS CALANTZIS, SOUTH AFRICA

About Tasos: *Tasos Calantzis is the CEO of Terrestrial, a consultancy that creates breakthrough products, services, processes and experiences for global companies like Motorola, P&G, BP and Philips. The company has won several of the world's most prestigious design and innovation awards including the German Red Dot Design Award, the Chicago Athenaeum Good Design Award and top nominations for the INDEX and IDSA awards.*

About the discussion: The design of the business model is an exciting topic. Products and services companies are used to using design. Large corporations are beginning to use a design approach to solve problems in other areas not necessarily related to production or manufacturing. Entrepreneurs have had to design something, but primarily they're designing their business model to kick-start investment, and to bring a new kind of value into their business and their industry. Government, too, is beginning to use design thinking. Increasingly we are seeing how national departments are starting to accept the idea that you can use an approach that's more structured and disciplined when making and implementing a new policy to deliver services. They're using the design process.

Government, entrepreneurs, corporations, education institutions, funders and NGOs are all part of an ecosystem that forms the economy. The degree to which they interact is interesting: each part of the ecosystem supplies and buys from other parts of the ecosystem. Design takes chaos and complexity and produces something elegant and doable that leads to the desired results. That complex ecosystem is only as successful as the way it's designed. It needs to be designed to succeed.

PANEL DISCUSSION:
RETHINKING BUSINESS AND DESIGN

JOHAN SCHEPERS, SOUTH AFRICA

About Johan: *With a background working in start-ups, management consulting and large multinationals, Johan Schepers has experienced the challenges and joys of designing services from within some unique business environments. He has held senior manager roles at DStv Mobile and Vodacom. In the past 10 years, he has been the co-founder and owner of two successful companies, most recently as country lead for Fjord service design consultancy, a division within Accenture Interactive.*

About the discussion: Traditionally, education institutions have focused on product, graphic and industrial design, neglecting service design as a discipline. This has led to a shortage of service design skills, so the tendency is to import those skills from international design consultancies. This becomes unsustainable, particularly since our labour laws are not structured to attract the right talent to our shores. If we can encourage government to add service design to the critical skills list, we can shape the curriculum towards service design, attract those skills into the business world and fundamentally change the service design sector for the country and its people. In addition, drawing on expertise from the humanities and social science would enhance the human-centred quality of design.

PANEL DISCUSSION:
RETHINKING BUSINESS AND DESIGN

DALE DUTTON, SOUTH AFRICA

About Dale: *As independent software application and integration developer, Dale Dutton has used design as the foundation to approaching system process optimisation and automation. With a diploma in Electronic Engineering specialising in Avionics, he has consulted international companies on projects as diverse as aircraft equipment integration, data synchronisation and software system process automation. His most recent projects were in the mining industry and focused on labour force management in ERP systems.*

About the discussion: In an ideal world, software design should be 80% planning and 20% execution. In a typical development model, the information technology (IT) department provides the business with a solution, which is often fraught with inadequate reporting and misunderstanding of users' needs. This can be a recipe for disaster. There is a need to partner with the rest of the business, encouraging users to participate in the design of systems to suit their own purpose. This approach will help businesses save time and money – and significantly increase productivity. To build a successful business, you need to build successful people, and if you can design systems around users' needs, this becomes possible. After all, we're human by birth, but we're people by design.

PANEL DISCUSSION:
RETHINKING BUSINESS AND DESIGN

" ...the attitude of innovators can be humbling – they never give up, they experiment. They make a plan. "

IAN GOURLEY, SOUTH AFRICA

About Ian: *Ian Gourley is Chief Creative Officer of the Barrows Group of companies – a privately held company specialising in retail marketing. With a focus on innovation and new business development, Ian has a strong belief in influencing and integrating with the key educational institutes that support industry. Ian qualified in graphic design in the 1980s and has a passion for various aspects of design – many of them incorporated within the Barrows design services' global offerings.*

About the discussion: The African innovation landscape has three characteristics: working with no budget increases creative thinking; innovation comes from people who are simply trying to make it through life; and the attitude of innovators can be humbling – they never give up, they experiment. They make a plan.

So the question is: how can we focus on the power that comes from new ideas, when people make something out of nothing? An idea to produce a solar-powered freezer that can deliver frozen ice cream in Central Park can also revolutionise medicine delivery in emerging markets. When we inject first-world innovation into an emerging market, then that idea can grow into something truly magical.

PANEL DISCUSSION:
RETHINKING BUSINESS AND DESIGN

" Design was always a fringe activity applied in an ad-hoc manner at the end of the decision-making process, to make things pretty. "

ULRICH MEYER-HÖLLINGS, SOUTH AFRICA

About Ulrich: *Ulrich is Director Strategy & Innovation at ...XYZ Design and has extensive experience in managing large-scale strategic and decision-led innovation projects for blue-chip companies across the globe. He was an Associate Director of the Vivaldi Partners Group of Companies and associate principal with the innovation strategy practice at Deloitte Consulting in South Africa. Ulrich holds a Master Degree in Applied Cultural Studies and a PhD in Innovation Management Studies from Lüneburg University in Germany. He is a business author, business broadcaster, speaker, and executive education lecturer in South Africa and Europe.*

About the discussion: The conversation about design and business is changing. Traditional business models are starting to shift. Design was always a fringe activity applied in an ad-hoc manner at the end of the decision-making process, to make things pretty. Today, technology and consumer behaviour are forcing change in the way businesses make decisions. More businesses are beginning to welcome a more design-led way of thinking. With this, there is an argument that people who think like designers should be CEOs: designers have the ability to imagine business in a different way, experimenting with models that were previously at the fringe, but which are now needed to change the core of how business operates. At the same time, there is a need for rigour to translate innovation into a value proposition. Bringing a designer's perspective into business leadership is not 'shoot from the hip' creativity. A generational shift is happening, with many people in new leadership positions representing a new sensitivity to connectedness, networks and people-centred business approaches; and a realisation that desks are dangerous places from which to make decisions. Once businesses have begun to transform, it's impossible to go back to normal.

PANEL DISCUSSION:

WHO IS GETTING IT RIGHT IN DEVELOPING NATIONS AND WHAT IS DRIVING THEIR SUCCESS?

EDGAR PIETERSE, SOUTH AFRICA

About Edgar: *Founding director of the African Centre for Cities (ACC), fast-emerging as the pre-eminent urban research centre on the continent. Edgar Pieterse holds the SARChI Chair in Urban Policy and is Professor in the School of Architecture, Planning and Geomatics, both at the University of Cape Town. He is consulting editor for Cityscapes – an international biannual magazine on urbanism in the global South and is currently leading a national policy process to formulate the Integrated Urban Development Framework for South Africa.*

About the discussion: In Cape Town and South Africa, we are grappling with two challenges: On one hand, the root causes within our DNA of inequitable and divisive social patterning that brings with it the historical burden of legalised racial exclusion. On the other hand, the dynamics of a new society within a globalised, digital world that repositions traditional economies onto a new, nimble, dispersed footing to take advantage of new economic opportunities and understand new industrial processes.

Positioning ourselves for the challenges of the new world requires that we focus on the structuring effect of unequal land demarcation; educational access; and political power concentrated in small groups – all of which set the tone for development. Now is the time to ask how we take seriously the imperatives and the complex technological and economic challenges of changing economic drivers to embrace opportunity, but also to look for the root causes of division.

PANEL DISCUSSION:

WHO IS GETTING IT RIGHT IN DEVELOPING NATIONS AND WHAT IS DRIVING THEIR SUCCESS?

> "...designers now need to have a stronger voice to influence design policymaking. And to have a stronger voice, designers need to be politically savvy."

ALPAY ER, TURKEY

About Alpay: *The Department Head of Industrial Design at Özyegin University, Istanbul, Alpay Er was responsible for initiating and implementing Turkey's first ever design support and education programme directed towards small and medium enterprises, in co-operation with Istanbul Chamber of Industry (ISO). He has served several international design awards such as Red Dot, iF, Red Star China and Design Turkey and is a member and a Fellow of the Design Research Society (DRS).*

About the discussion: We need to understand the political economy of design if we are to create design policies. Fifteen years ago, there was no mention of design in government service in Turkey. Today, there are two different ministries competing to own design policymaking. It has been a long journey, with designers lobbying and working to promote design everywhere. In a protected market, there was no need for design. As a new business class began to emerge and markets began to collapse, there was a need to find new ways to survive. Export unions began to play a role in the quest to formulate design policies, as they formed alliances with the new industrial bourgeoisie. The result was the formation of a National Design Council and a design policy, with fiscal support and tax reductions for designers. While this has been a success, designers now need to have a stronger voice to influence design policymaking. And to have a stronger voice, designers need to be politically savvy.

PANEL DISCUSSION:

WHO IS GETTING IT RIGHT IN DEVELOPING NATIONS AND WHAT IS DRIVING THEIR SUCCESS?

"Designers need to understand the user, and build a bridge between the user and the designer to design workable products and services"

RICARDO MEJIA, COLOMBIA

About Ricardo: *As an independent industrial and strategic designer based in Colombia, Ricardo Mejia was instrumental in government efforts to create a design culture to bridge the divide between professional designers and the productive sector in that country. His vast international experience includes directing research, development and innovation in the private sector, consulting in the public sector and the development of integral design tutoring projects. He is currently a PhD fellow at the Delft University of Technology in the Netherlands.*

About the discussion: In 1994, a research project was instituted in Colombia to study design policies and approaches. The study revealed that 97% of businesses were small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Only 5% of these had a body in place to implement design in their business; and just 2% had funds to invest in design. Believing that designers need to understand the user, and build a bridge between the user and the designer to design workable products and services, there was a need for design, academia and SMEs to lead and catalyse the process of implementing design in business.

A systematic way was needed to apply design to SMEs: design is not only operational – it must be strategic, too. With this understanding, the design policy comprised three steps: knowledge transfer about design through handbooks, manuals, diagnostic tools and workshops to explain the value of design; viewing and promoting successful case studies of local design; and hosting an international co-creation roundtable and other events to ask what the policy should contain.

PANEL DISCUSSION:

WHO IS GETTING IT RIGHT IN DEVELOPING NATIONS AND WHAT IS DRIVING THEIR SUCCESS?

ANNABELLA RONDINA, ARGENTINA

About Annabella: *Annabella Rondina has taught at the University of Buenos Aires for 20 years and as Professor of Industrial Design since 2001. Following nine years at the Metropolitan Design Centre of Buenos Aires, she was appointed manager of the prestigious institution. Her accomplishments include being part of the team that secured Buenos Aires' nomination as the first UNESCO Design City in the Creative Cities Network. She also heads up the Buenos Aires International Design Festival and the Design Incorporation Programme.*

About the discussion: While Argentina isn't necessarily known for its design, it has produced design icons like the Butterfly Chair. When democracy returned to Argentina in the late 1980s, after years of political turbulence, formal education for design-related careers began to open up for designers. By the early 2000s, the design sector was disjointed and suffering the effects of economic and social crisis. A policy was needed to promote the design disciplines.

The Metropolitan Design Centre was established to promote local design and to promote the economic, cultural and social importance of design in the country. Its target was to incorporate design programmes in businesses, and to give SMEs the business capabilities to be successful design-led businesses. This was achieved by incubation programmes, research, design infrastructure development, knowledge transfer and training. By 2009-2010, a survey revealed that 70% of SMEs had carried out design activities.

PANEL DISCUSSION:

WHO IS GETTING IT RIGHT IN DEVELOPING NATIONS AND WHAT IS DRIVING THEIR SUCCESS?

RICHIE MOALOSI, BOTSWANA

About Richie: *Richie Moalosi is an Associate Professor and Head of Department for the Industrial Design and Technology Department at the University of Botswana. With a PhD and MA in Design, awarded by universities in Australia and the UK, he has published extensively in international journals and at conferences. Richie has been involved in multi-national collaborative research projects in South America and Europe. His research interests involve the development of innovative, culturally sensitive and sustainable consumer products.*

About the discussion: Are we ready to develop design policies in Africa? While design links creativity and innovation, the concept and the value of design is misunderstood, so it was appropriate to change our language from speaking of design to speaking of innovation. In Botswana, several entities are involved in design and innovation, but designers are still working in silos, even though there is some overlap.

There is recognition that a design policy should unify stakeholders, add value to products and services, recognising the importance of design and innovation as a business strategy, promote social innovation and design education, strengthen small scale industries, and develop an indigenous base for research and innovation. In order to adopt a more human-centred approach to the design policies we want, a design policy should come from local designers, rather than from the outside, complemented by insider-outsider hybrid collaboration.

PANEL DISCUSSION:

SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME – YOUNG DESIGN PROFESSIONALS LOOK TO THE FUTURE

MONICA NEWTON, SOUTH AFRICA

About Monica: *As a Deputy Director General at the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC), Monica Newton heads up the portfolio within which design and other creative industry sector development is located. She joined the DAC after heading up the National Arts Council and lecturing in arts management at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits). With a qualification in Industrial Sociology, Monica has worked as a government employee and consultant in a range of areas including policy research and strategy development, cultural development, and public sector governance.*

PANEL DISCUSSION:

SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME – YOUNG DESIGN PROFESSIONALS LOOK TO THE FUTURE

"We need to look at the theoretical opportunities of designing for informality, understanding the apparent chaos but inherent logic..."

LORRAINE AMOLLO AMBOLE, KENYA

About Lorraine: *Currently Director of Promotions for the Ogake fashion brand, Lorraine Amollo Ambole's background is in industrial, product and jewellery design. She has taught at the Universities of Maseno and Nairobi and besides a passion for education and training, she has nurtured an interest in sustainability issues. She has worked on a range of social design projects, mainly through DESIS, an international design organisation for social innovation and sustainability. She is currently pursuing a doctoral degree at the University of Stellenbosch.*

About the discussion: Nairobi is a small, overcrowded but energised city. Young graduates there struggle to find formal work, and often need to improvise by working within the informal sector. As a result, the informal sector employs 80% of Nairobi's citizens. This paradox means that we need to find a new way of designing and a new way of collaborating to meet the challenges in the city. Design is a cultural expression of people making do on very little; and this expression is found within the informal sector. We need to look at the theoretical opportunities of designing for informality, understanding the apparent chaos but inherent logic within the informal sector and using design to facilitate the process between formality and informality. We will discover that people already have a plan. We just have to understand how it works.

PANEL DISCUSSION:

SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME – YOUNG DESIGN PROFESSIONALS LOOK TO THE FUTURE

"As the link between creativity and innovation, design is the solution to the wicked problems that businesses face today."

GABRIEL MOTSHIDISI MOTHIBEDI, BOTSWANA

About Gabriel: *Gabriel Mothibedi is a communications design consultant, practitioner and lecturer of design at the University of Botswana. He consults for clients ranging from telecommunications companies and retail stores to non-profit organisations, fashion and lifestyle companies. He has presented papers at the Nairobi International Design Conference (NIDEC) and the Gaborone International Design Conference (GIDEC), and is a member of the American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA) and the Network of African Designers (NAD).*

About the discussion: In the past, business has asked questions about how to develop new products, how to position the firm, or how to produce products more efficiently. Today, business is asking what problems innovations should solve, what clients want, and what kind of solutions to offer. As the link between creativity and innovation, design is the solution to the wicked problems that businesses face today. It is central to business, offering a new way of problem solving. To achieve this, business needs to move to Design 3.0, a more human-centred empathic environment that understands feeling, knowledge and wisdom, leading to a greater awareness of design as a process and a strategy for organisational transformation.

PANEL DISCUSSION:

SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME – YOUNG DESIGN PROFESSIONALS LOOK TO THE FUTURE

"With a rapidly growing economy, Ghana is seeing an influx of businesses who need design to sell their ideas..."

RALITSA DIANA DEBRAH, GHANA

About Ralitsa: *Ralitsa Diana Debrah is a design educator with a faculty position at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) in Ghana. She is currently undertaking doctoral studies in the Faculty of Informatics and Design (FID) at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT). Her research interests are in Design, IT and Health Informatics. Ralitsa is also a multimedia technical advisor who has co-ordinated and assisted in designing instructional materials to facilitate teaching and learning among students in Ghanaian universities.*

About the discussion: With a rapidly growing economy, Ghana is seeing an influx of businesses who need design to sell their ideas with branding and promotional materials. Most of the time, businesses ask 'What can we sell?' rather than 'What do people want to buy?' Businesses are now starting to see the essence of design, presenting many opportunities for designers. This creates a dilemma for designers, balancing the needs of everyday, functional design, and bringing innovative ideas to the boardroom. Inadequate intellectual property laws, pay disparities and insufficient representation leads to a need for advocacy to promote the designer's role in the development of a society. This is becoming especially important with the shift from design as drawing to design as a tool for social innovation and sustainability. Potential solutions are greater collaboration between business and academia; the introduction of intellectual property laws and entrepreneurial skills training; and the establishment of a professional body that represents artists and designers.

PANEL DISCUSSION:

SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME – YOUNG DESIGN PROFESSIONALS LOOK TO THE FUTURE

"...we need to prioritise the creation of industries that can be interdependent and self-sustaining"

NKHENSANI NKOSI, SOUTH AFRICA

About Nkhensani: *Nkhensani Nkosi is one of the new voices from Africa. She is an entrepreneur, writer, producer, television personality, and Industrial Psychology and Sociology graduate. While travelling through Africa, Nkhensani saw an opportunity to build an African brand that celebrated South Africa's new sense of identity. Urban fashion label Stoned Cherrie was born. She was awarded Top Success Story of The Year – Top Women in Business and Government 2005; and Young Business Achiever of the Year – Young Business Quarterly (2003).*

About the discussion: In South Africa, creative businesses are relegated to culture and entertainment, rather than commercial enterprises that make a significant contribution to the national GDP. With the country's unemployment rate, we need to prioritise the creation of industries that can be interdependent and self-sustaining. Currently, there is a gap between the academic world, which is good at creating frameworks and policies, and the creative industries I work in every day.

The fashion industry is dynamic and vibrant, but businesses in the industry also need to be commercially viable: there needs to be a direct link between entrepreneurial businesses and building a creative industry. We have a long way to go, and we need to have an honest conversation that looks at our failings and real successes. The people driving the processes need to have a deep desire and intent to shape our future with the decisions they make today. Hopefully, in 20 years' time we can look back and say the change in industry started at this conference.

BEYOND POLICY: LEADING BY DESIGN

" It's important for designers to look at their expanded role as leaders, visionaries, collaborators and champions who can educate, activate and advocate for change in society"

LAURA LEE, CANADA

About Laura: *Laura Lee is an architect and Professor of Architecture, most notably at Carnegie Mellon University in the USA. She is a leading voice for integrated design education, policies, practice and research with special interest in collaborative programmes between the academy, government, industry and the profession. Laura lectures internationally and serves on award juries and as an accreditation chair, advisor and consultant for numerous academic institutions, companies and professional organisations. She is also the recipient of several national and international awards, grants and honours.*

About the talk: Lessons and experiences from others aren't necessarily the right or only way to do things, but they do provide a model that can be transferred to other settings and communities. The lessons learned could be instrumental in how we move forward.

It's important for designers to look at their expanded role as leaders, visionaries, collaborators and champions who can educate, activate and advocate for change in society. And yet, while designers have the ability to understand the architecture of South Africa's wicked problems, and have a role to play in resolving them, they're not the only answer. Design is a particular discipline that explores different truths; allowing designers to change the reality from what it is to what it could be. The ability to look beyond policy means to move from design being about objects to design being a behaviour.

The red thread of the conference has been the need for uniqueness, identity, spirit of place. These are all parts of the unique context in which design policy must be grounded. This means understanding how the elements of the South African innovation system are related, and then bringing together the right collaborators in government, the creative industries, academia and business to work together to find our unique collaborative advantage. While much has already been done in this respect you have to demonstrate how design works so that people can get it; so they can see and commit to the future. In turn, this requires leadership with imagination and courage.

NOTES:

SEE, LEARN, DO
www.wdccapetown2014.com/about/designpolicyconference

VOICES FROM THE FLOOR

"Something that came out of this morning for me is that it's not just about designers pitching an idea. Rather, it's about showing how it adds value to society. We just need to get going and do it!"

"What's interesting is how the rest of the world is speaking the same language. Business as usual has to change quickly. We've forgotten how to simplify things – and we have so many examples of simplified ways of doing things here in Africa."

"It's all about synergies. I've had my mind opened today. I think policy is important because it provides guidelines and gives useful limits within which to work – and this helps to take things forward."

"My biggest challenge in owning my own business is that people think that I'm too young to deal with and to take seriously."

"What is most exciting for me is that we're getting global players and thinkers to Cape Town, helping us to fumble and stumble our way through things. Planning is definitely important. But the flipside of the coin is performance – which is key. To start, I think we need greater collaboration and less fragmentation in South Africa."

"In Cape Town, where we are faced with massive transformation and great turbulence, these discussions have been particularly relevant in showing that design is about systems and a new way of approaching things."

"Over the last 20 years, I've seen so much change in the design landscape. What is interesting is how design is now influencing social programmes and having an impact in that area."

"With an unemployment rate of 59%, we need investment to provide finance and develop capacity and skills. This investment can also fund the human expertise needed to develop careers for youth and key areas of the economy, like manufacturing. Big companies have the resources to make those investments, but those resources are not being invested."

"World Design Capital has been sowing the seed for an important legacy that needs to be established. What needs to happen is for a design and innovation approach to be adopted in organisations."

"My biggest issue/challenge is people dealing with the symptom as opposed to the root cause – putting a plaster on it. For example, they'll say 'create employment' but in reality, you need to deal with the issue of education first."

"I'm here to learn about social design and about sharing. Sharing is a new design approach for the developed world. In Germany, there's a strong product tradition and we've never really emphasised the benefits of learning from each other. There is lots we can learn from the developing world in terms of sharing."

"Platforms like this help people to cross paths they would never normally cross. Face-to-face networking is undervalued – no one structures it into their business – but a ten-minute conversation can prove to be the most productive thing you've done all year."

"I think a big issue is that there is still a misunderstanding of design in general. Design is not the same as art. Design starts with problems, whereas art does not start with problems."

"The thing I've been thinking about is how do we do great things when we have this issue of low trust? It's obvious that a successful plan relies on strong networks between design, government and other players, but how do you build this? Perhaps it comes down to the role of intermediaries – people who can create the glue; people who can move between the different worlds. An example would be designers based in government departments."

"I thought Mugendi was a huge eye-opener. I mean, being from Africa I feel like I should know more about this stuff. But you realise that South Africa is very different to the rest of Africa."

"I think entrepreneurship in design needs to be the next big focus, along with designing for social impact."

"I liked this idea of bringing design into the boardroom, which will only happen if everyone learns to share the same language."

"I liked the idea of collaboration, real collaboration that is purposeful and driven. I like the notion of detailed planning – where you visualise the desired outcome. We have a long way to go. But if we can state where we want to head upfront, it will help us to get there quicker."

"Policy is an iterative process. We will have a lot of opportunity to test it out in the legacy of the World Design Capital. In terms of business and design, I think it's difficult. Due to the poor economy, business is not yet looking much beyond profit."

"It's so inspiring to be here and to see that there are people like this doing the thinking – people who can inform us. We are not all leaders, some of us are followers and that is how teams work. One person can't think of an idea, implement it and take the lead. We need to do it together."

"I started my business in 2005. There have been many challenges, but perhaps the biggest has been finance and the fact that Khayelitsha is very far from the city. We are isolated and far from everything. Selling property in Khayelitsha is tough as no one wants to live there. My hope is that conferences like this will help to come up with ways to connect it with the rest of Cape Town."

"I'd like to see more sharing – between the educated and the uneducated. It would be incredible for the people that I work with daily to have the opportunity to be exposed to great design minds like this – and vice versa, for them to benefit from meeting people in different circumstances."

"We don't need to have massive budgets. Sometimes you just need 1 000 small ideas to translate into big change."

"There is no doubt that the need for focus on education is great. Policy needs to look at things like human capital, and the skills we need in the future. How can we harness tools used in play to teach valuable life skills?"

"I think there are all these connections that we need to learn to tie together in order to lead to implementation. In our department, for example, we are fortunate that many of our projects have worked well. What needs to happen is for people to plug in to these learnings so that people don't do things from scratch but rather benefit from what has been tried and tested."

SUMMING UP

WHAT DIFFERENCE CAN DESIGN AND DESIGN POLICY MAKE?

"There is substantial proof that companies that have good design practices can experience higher growth, increased competitiveness and can innovate with a higher success rate."

Gisele Raulik Murphy, Partner, DUCO; Lecturer, Positivo University

One of the key questions arising throughout the conference was: "What can designers and design policies actually do?"

Pradyumna Vyas noted from India's experience, design and design policy can help to address our most pressing challenges in areas such as healthcare, entrepreneurship, communication, intellectual property rights, education, security, empowering women and children, urban migration and the environment.

These challenges are equally relevant in South Africa. Nkhensani Nkosi pointed out: "We have so much poverty and depletion of resources. Design can help us to be self-sustaining and solve some of the economic problems that we have." And as Ezio Manzini argued, a design policy in Africa can enable a double leap from pre-modernity to a sustainable society, skipping both the industrial and post-industrial phases.

To redress South Africa's spatial inequalities, we can look to numerous examples of cities that have been radically improved through effective urban design. They include London, Glasgow, Bilbao, Barcelona and Melbourne. According to Ludo Campbell-Reid, Auckland authorities have embraced urban design as core to the city's economic development strategy. It is helping to secure the city's future by creating an urban environment that attracts smart, intelligent people who are capable of selling smart ideas to the world. Auckland's transformation shows that design has the power to excite people and inspire them to fall in love with their cities all over again.

To Ezio Manzini, design is no longer only about professional design of products, but increasingly about co-design of systems that can enhance quality of life. The role of today's design experts, he argued, is to navigate complexity and help non-experts to be better designers.

Designers working at a strategic level bring with them valuable tools and processes, as described by Gabriel Mothibedi. These include visual thinking, user-centred approaches, co-creation, systems thinking, fact-finding techniques, design research methodologies, modelling and prototyping that can help organisations adapt to continuous change and rising complexities. As such, design is a process that is central to business success and renewal.

According to Laura Lee, design is a unique discipline that can handle multiple truths and designers are capable of understanding the architecture of solutions to 'wicked problems'. Companies that have good design practices can experience higher growth and innovate with a higher rate of success, said Gisele Raulik Murphy.

For design to offer these benefits to society and the economy, policy can help create the enabling environment. Gisele explained, governments and business need to support the work of design agencies to ensure their local environment is design-friendly. Policy should create conditions that stimulate and support good ideas, according to Ezio.

Policy is typically what governments use to help turn their political visions into actions with the necessary effect, but it's important to remember that the success of a design policy is ultimately dependent on its implementation – a point emphasised by several speakers. There's no point in creating a beautiful policy that doesn't get passed into legislature or used. Practical implementation of policy is where India's National Institute of Design excels, as illustrated with the tangible programme examples provided by Pradyumna.

Another critical factor for successful policy, Gisele added, is to allow for an iterative process by which the plan is continuously revised and refined. "Don't start from scratch everytime. Learn from what's been done and build on it". Ezio also talked about the plan as being 'the story'. It suggests potential and possibility not yet realised. "It says: this is how it could be".

Laura, echoing Nkhensani, concluded: "You can talk about what design can do. But, ultimately, you have to demonstrate it before people get it."

LESSONS FROM ABROAD

"Probably the best conditions for innovation revolve around having a limited budget, a desperate desire to improve one's lot in life, and the right attitude – never giving up and constant tinkering."

Ian Gourley, Chief Creative Officer, Barrows Group

With speakers from around the world, the conference provided a variety of practical examples of design policy implementation that South Africa can adapt to our context.

According to Lou Yongqi, governments should play a leadership role in informing design policy. In the case of China, the government is working with others involved in formulating a national design policy in China towards a common vision: to leapfrog the country into a new phase of growth by integrating design with national needs and emerging economies.

China's problems – ongoing urbanisation, big industries, rural development issues – are viewed as presenting the need for design and new opportunities. "We choose to see our strong government as an opportunity for active participation in policy; our large population as a wealth of human resources." With this positive mindset, the South African design industry could embrace Africa's economic potential (boasting six of the fastest-growing economies) and the 300 million-strong youth population as a favourable era for Design 3.0 to overcome and supersede the challenges the continent faces.

Providing an Argentinian perspective, Annabella Rondina explained that in 1999, the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labour initiated a series of activities to promote design as a discipline and stimulate innovation. The objective was to implement policies that would multiply job opportunities, promote social balance, stimulate development and increase the competitiveness of the local economy. This would be achieved by incorporating design and technological innovation in the goods and services production system in the City of Buenos Aires. The plan was directed primarily at SMMEs, and towards integrating design professionals into the local productive structure. The Metropolitan Design Centre (CMD) was formed as the mechanism to achieve these aims.

Continuing in the South American context, Ricardo Mejia said: "Colombia has been transformed into the country with the third best business environment in Latin America." Taking into account that 98% of Colombian enterprises are SMMEs, of which 5% were investing only 2% of their annual budget in design, in 1994 the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism launched the National Industrial Design Programme. Its intention was to promote design as an innovation driver for Colombian industry through the development of activities, projects, workshops and information sharing in this field. Key steps included creating handbooks and manuals to transfer design knowledge; producing diagnostic tools; running workshops to explain the social and economic value that design adds; and building a repository of successful case studies that demonstrate how design can act as a catalyst for success.

Gisele Raulik Murphy's presentation also outlined several examples from Uruguay and Brazil that demonstrate a variety of strategies and approaches to design policy. That said, it is not possible to copy and paste a design strategy from one country to another, emphasised Gisele. Although learning lessons from other countries is valuable, it is essential to map your own national design system. Significantly, Gisele emphasised the importance of encouraging industries inside a country to use their own national design services. This means showing industry the benefits that design could bring them. It also means ensuring that your national design system helps to connect industrial businesses with design professionals.

CHALLENGES FOR DESIGN POLICY IN SOUTH AFRICA

"For sustainable solutions, bring the problem to the point where it is nearest and known. Complexity cannot be managed from the centre."

Professor Ezio Manzini

While acknowledging Africa's vast resources and opportunities, the conference also pointed to challenges that need to be overcome through design policy.

Mugendi K. M'Rithaa argued that Africa has the potential to leapfrog into the 21st Century using available technology, but designers face numerous problems. He went on to highlight what he believes are the key challenges for design policy in Africa, as follows:

Recognition and transformation, in that the design profession is not fully recognised in many countries, with few design strategies or policies in place; **celebration and elaboration,** with few design awards beyond fashion being offered; **collaboration**, as mechanisms for regional exchange are limited; **protection and regulation**, as designers are exploited in the course of their dealings; **education and inclusion**, with offerings differing significantly; **promotion and capacitation**, as few dedicated promotional organisations exist for developing and supporting the discipline; and **differentiation and participation**, referring to the need for different design disciplines to collaborate across professional lines, for example industrial design with product innovation, manufacturing and engineering.

Mugendi also made an appeal for design policy that helped to make the transition from achieving competitive advantage to harnessing comparative and collaborative advantage. "We need to seek creative and sustained ways to make a plan to secure a progressive future for design and designers on this vast and incredibly rich continent. If the 21st Century is indeed Africa's to claim, concerted and directed design policy will need to inform such aspirations," he added.

Narrowing the focus to South Africa, it was widely acknowledged that the local design industry faces numerous challenges. "There are many issues, and we have to be honest and blunt about them," commented Hester du Plessis. She referred particularly to the challenge of corruption, and how this can cause a breakdown in trust between government, various stakeholders and the design industry. "There is also the fact that government and designers don't speak the same language, which prevents effective collaboration."

Artists and designers have a pivotal role to play in creating a better life for all, continued Hester. Therefore, excluding design from our policy systems would simply be inexcusable. In line with the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030, the creative and cultural industries can contribute substantially to small business development, job creation, and urban development and renewal – provided they are promoted effectively.

As Hester noted, design is not a neutral tool, but assumes commercial, political and social interests. In South Africa, any efforts to formulate a national design policy will need to square a circle created by our unique history. On one hand, indigenous design – an indicator of social identity and values – was excluded from the national landscape by the post-1948 apartheid authorities and regressed into tourist curiosities, where – to a certain extent – it remains. On the other hand, design education in South Africa is rooted in the European context of modernity. In this sense, South Africa is somewhat frozen in time when it comes to design.

Speaking within the context of business and service design, Johan Schepers said that it was vital for South Africa to build its service design capacity. Formal design training courses have thus far neglected the discipline of service design; and most have ignored the importance of designers being able to start and run their own commercially viable businesses.

Srini Srinivasan observed that countries around the world need a strong manufacturing base to achieve a stable economy, stable fiscal policies and ultimately more happiness. South Africa is no exception to this rule, but it risks falling from 24th to 25th place on the list of Global Manufacturing Competitiveness, a clear sign that the nation's manufacturing industry is not effectively meeting the combined challenges of globalisation, intensifying competition and lack of technology and manpower.

So, what can a design policy do to help our manufacturing industry? Among other roles, it could influence better quality design and engineering education and impel government to implement measures that support the sector. Srini added that there needs to be proactive engagement between government, labour and business leadership, investment in a better standard of education, better wages and job creation along with industry collaboration to co-ordinate and fund cross-border infrastructure projects.

Erica Elk shared her experiences of establishing a design policy for the Western Cape against a backdrop of local challenges that included – among numerous others – unemployment, corruption, the unevenness and poor quality of public services and the unsustainably resource-intensive economy. The key to overcoming these problems and unlocking innovation to create competitive advantage lies in embedding design processes in business and organisational practices across sectors, she explained.

Accordingly, the Western Cape Design Strategy comprises the following objectives: the development of design-ready businesses, business-ready designers, design in the public sector and involved citizens. Erica concluded her talk by saying that although the theme of the conference is 'Make a Plan', it should be 'Make a Plan – and implement it!'

BUILDING ON FOUNDATIONS

"There is a wealth of advanced activity already happening. I think Cape Town and South Africa are really poised for greatness and to make a difference."

Laura Lee

While the challenges are clear and many opportunities beckon, we are reminded to acknowledge how far we have already come and to build on these successes.

Cape Town's year as World Design Capital 2014 has helped to create an appreciation of what design can do, according to Erica Elk, and positioned the city and country as a significant node in the international design web, as Helen Zille pointed out. Much can be learned from the 460+ projects recognised in the WDC 2014 programme. In Ezio Manzini's analysis, most of these can be categorised as open-ended processes of co-designing systems, and therefore demonstrate advanced 21st Century design.

"Cape Town has great things happening. Talk about these stories because they are real and powerful," encouraged Ludo Campbell-Reid.

Considering the broader context, Ian Gourley described the African landscape as being ideal for innovation, with low budgets providing the stimulus for more creative thinking, and emerging markets demonstrating persistence born out of a need for survival. "There is real magic happening," he said, giving the example of a solar-powered freezer being adapted for local use.

Ulrich Höllings-Meyer emphasised that Africa is proof that these days you don't need permission to start a business, you just do it. "Africa is the hottest place for banking, for example. Banks have bootstrapped services in a previously inconceivable way!"

Bringing the focus back to South Africa, Hester du Plessis stated that while the government's National Development Plan (NDP) is a somewhat contested document, it is a vision that has been adopted and is a starting point to what we have in terms of design policy. "The outcome of a workshop held this year is that the SABS Design Institute will have the opportunity to work with different government departments to embed design in government processes. It's a long road to go down but definitely the work is starting."

Erica Elk described the implementation of the Western Cape Design Strategy, the first regional strategy of its kind in Africa, as a process of testing successes as they go along, with citizen involvement and feedback. Some of the initiatives include *The Better Living Challenge* – which stimulates innovation and supports the commercialisation of new products; *the Human Capital Forum* – which brings together design educators, government, manufacturers and industry on catalytic projects; *Career Education* – which inspires school learners to consider design careers; and *Design Thinking Training* for business and the public sector. "The saying, 'how do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time' springs to mind," she concluded. The Western Cape's design-related businesses' contribution to national GDP is currently more than R13 billion.

THEMES & THREADS

While each speaker spoke about their own experience of working in a unique context, several common themes emerged from the discussions that took place during the two day event. Identified here, they may help to stimulate thoughts and discussions about the process of creating and implementing design policies:

COMMON THEMES THAT EMERGED

Collaboration is a key attribute for better design. As an ingredient to make three from one plus one, it creates value by unlocking volitional effort and surfacing the unexpected. It opens the conversation to explore the notion of collaborative rather than competitive advantage and new values which may spring from that.

If you develop a policy, you must have a plan for implementation. Once the process starts, it's important to act; and then to reflect, plan and adjust as the process continues. Having a goal, a destination endpoint, provides focus and a pathway for the journey. In the words of one delegate: "Once the rubber hits the road, what are the tangible results?"

Design can help address the world's wicked problems. While design is not a silver bullet, the act of design can contribute greatly towards social innovation, economic development, and enhancing quality of life.

With design leadership, political economy and an understanding that design is an enabler for growth, designers have a role to play in influencing what should be included in design policy; encouraging policymakers to engage differently in the design of policy, and ensuring that society can benefit from the more widespread embedding of design in policy.

Designers don't have all the answers, but they have a role to play in passing on their knowledge to help others design better. The role of the designer has changed from one who has all the knowledge to one who shares and integrates knowledge. In a world where it could be argued everyone is a designer, the future role of the professional designer is to facilitate the collaborative process, hold the complexity and ignite the imagination needed to democratise design, encouraging the bottom-up participation and top-down engagement we need to design a better world.

Context is everything. While we can be inspired and informed by the lessons and experiences of other places, policy and planning must fit our own unique identity, history, geography, industry and culture. In South Africa, the NDP provides the foundations of the policy matrix into which design can be woven as a tool to promote our local craft, our green economy, our major industries, service industry design and social innovation. We must understand – and not underestimate – who we are, what we already have and what we've already done.

Design means different things to different people. There is a need for a common understanding of what design is and its role in society; and a common language in how we talk about design, translating it for mutual understanding. This is particularly important, since design can be applied at all layers of society, from the 1% who invest in high-end beautiful objects; to the 90% where design is needed to solve basic human needs like decent sanitation in rapidly urbanising areas. Creating a common understanding of design and the benefits it can deliver will help to foster collaboration across business, government, academia and the design sector.

NOTES:

SEE, LEARN, DO
www.wdccapetown2014.com/
about/designpolicyconference

"After all I've seen and heard at the conference, it's clear that we're all in the same stream. We just need to be swimming in the right direction"

Gisele Raulik Murphy

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

As we look to the future of design and design policies in South Africa, what would the plan look like? What would be needed to inform and influence design policymakers across the country?

"It's clear that South Africa is already setting, creating and shaping the direction of a design policy," said Conference Chair, Michael Thomson, as he summarised some of what had been said, seen and heard. That said, he continued: "It's important to have a broad ship that invites many different stakeholders on board, collaborating in clarifying the chosen goals. Many of those stakeholders are already on board, including the Premier of the Western Cape, Helen Zille, and the Executive Mayor of the City of Cape Town, Patricia De Lille."

Referring to this political engagement at a national level, the Department of Arts and Culture had also recognised the need to build design into its policies, as Vuyo Jack, the department's Acting Director General explained in his closing remarks: "Design needs to help us move through the current conditions characterised by volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity towards the radical socio-economic transformation the country needs."

If socio-economic transformation is the destination, then – as the Conference Chair Michael Thomson suggested – it is possible to link that destination to the nine key challenges in the National Planning Commission's Diagnostic Report, which other speakers also referred to, and which informed the National Development Plan.

Acting Director-General Jack explained that the core of the NDP is the need to create a virtuous cycle of value creation, value capture and value circulation, using the analogy of a fruit tree: as you plant a seed, you create the value; as you nurture and protect the seed while it grows into a tree, you capture the value. And as you harvest the fruits and sell them at the market, you circulate the value.

Through better managing the political economy, however, Michael reminded us, paraphrasing Manzini, that for design in and of policy to succeed, it is important to give others the knowledge to design better; to create safe spaces for experimentation and to bear in mind the need to distribute complexity through every node on the network, pushing out problems to local areas.

ALIGNED WITH THESE POINTS, VUYO OUTLINED THE DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND CULTURE'S PRIORITY SPENDING AREAS OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS:

01

To create incubators to help creative entrepreneurs turn their ideas and imagination into realities that will meet the real needs of people, building skills and capturing the value of the home-grown talent in all creative fields. Jack referred to an earlier speaker's concept of taking business to design, and design to business. Successful designers can then reinvest back into the system, scaling up and upskilling other designers

02

To create markets, through the Mzansi Golden Market, to help channel government spending for all creative, heritage and cultural businesses into one platform that will help creative entrepreneurs grow both nationally and internationally

03

To release venture capital through a venture capital fund designed specifically to drive creative entrepreneurship and develop industrialists from the creative sector.

"The Department of Arts and Culture," said Vuyo "must be the catalyst for this infrastructure." To make this happen, he said: "We need to have design thinking permeating through policy. We need to design business models that can adapt to the uncertain times we live in; we need to redesign our economic systems."

"I like the idea of having a Chief Design Officer for Government," he continued. "The urgency is now, so we need to design our lives to get the results we need." He closed off by taking up the challenge set down by Michael earlier: "We will definitely make a point of having a follow-up conference, a meet-up to ask ourselves how we can use design to take radical economic transformation to the next level, to transform ourselves and to transform our country."

CLOSING REFLECTIONS FROM THE CONFERENCE CHAIR

The conference 'Make a Plan' has positioned Cape Town, the Western Cape and South Africa as a significant player in the development of the increasingly sophisticated narrative on design policy that is developing on the global stage.

Initiated during ICSID's World Design Capital Torino 2008, the design policy dialogue has been deepened and enriched in Cape Town. It will continue in Taipei in 2016 and beyond. South Africa is now embedded in the DNA of the conversation. The world will look to South Africa to learn from its progress over the coming years.

South Africa is not alone in this journey. Increasingly, we are seeing pockets of practice and behaviour where non-design audiences - including policymakers - are increasingly recognising the power of design as a tool, a strategy and a process to effect significant and lasting change for communities and economies, not only at the local level, but also at the level of cities, regions and nations.

The emergence and sharing of new understanding, insights and knowledge is being proactively developed through these important international conferences.

Cape Town's 'Make a Plan', inspired by the very high quality of the contributors' presentations, has been a seminal step in developing our collective understanding of design's deeper potential.

The need for design to continue to talk at the top table through connecting to national social and economic goals remains critical if bottom-up activities are to flourish and sustain.

Through collaborative effort, the stakeholders, influencers, policymakers and politicians of the Western Cape and by extension, those of South Africa, have a unique opportunity to leapfrog other countries of the world in embedding design thinking as a component of the culture of policymaking for all.

Michael Thomson
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