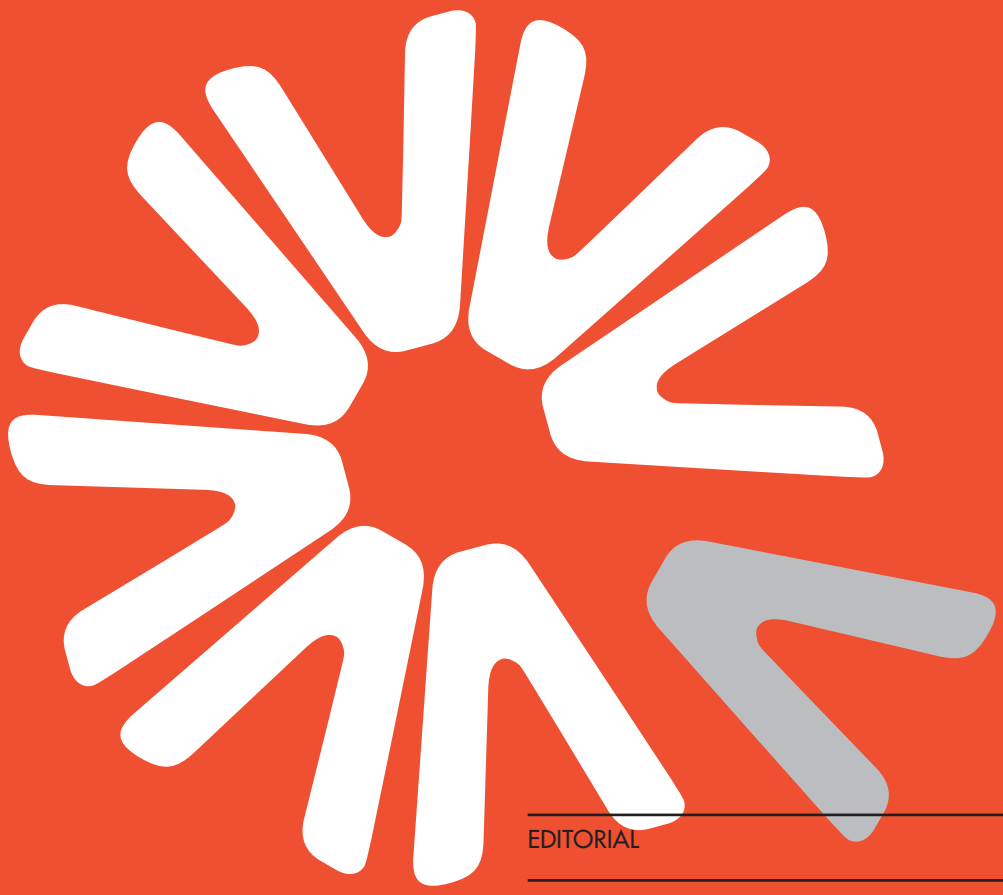
see BULLETIN

ISSUE 6 – June 2011

SHARING EXPERIENCE EUROPE
POLICY INNOVATION DESIGN



INTERREG IVC
INNOVATION & ENVIRONMENT
REGIONS OF EUROPE SHARING SOLUTIONS

European Union
European Regional Development Fund

EDITORIAL

Since the SEE project began three-and-a-half years ago, the policy landscape for both innovation and design at all levels across Europe has radically changed.

At European level, the Europe 2020 strategy Innovation Union states that Europe must 'develop its own distinctive approach to innovation pursuing a broad concept of innovation'. This wider concept embraces design as a driver of innovation in both the private sector (bringing innovative ideas to market) and the public sector (making services more effective). At the SEE project Policy, Innovation and Design Conference (March 2011), Peter Dröll stated that the European Commission's 'vision would be that in 2020, design is a fully acknowledged, well-known, well-recognised element of innovation policy across Europe'. He also provided an update on the much anticipated 2011 European Design Innovation Initiative (details in the special report, page 10).

At national level across Europe, the SEE project has enjoyed success in influencing policy agendas in the partner countries. For example, SEE has been active in feeding into discussions on the new Danish design policy, announcements about which will be made soon. In Estonia, the SEE project workshop held in December 2010 has accelerated discussions about a design support programme and provided representatives of the Ministry of Economic Affairs with insight from the SEE partners in delivering business support.

At regional level, SEE has been instrumental in creating the Flanders Design Platform, launched at the SEE conference, which unifies the political voice of Flemish design stakeholders. In Wales, as a direct result of Welsh Assembly Government policy-makers attending SEE events, design has been integrated into the strategy Economic Renewal. A summary of the impact of the SEE project in each of the partner countries is available on page 12.

Bulletin 6 draws together the themes and results of the SEE project. Dr Qian Sun discusses design supply and demand and the policy repercussions. Mark Vanderbeeken reviews the Policy, Innovation and Design Conference and the impact of the SEE project. The policy map presents interviews from Italy, Finland, Estonia and South Korea. The case studies feature Argentina's seminar programme 'Design and Business, Concepts that Merge' and Wales' Service Design Programme that addresses both supply and demand for service design.

We conclude with an announcement about the SEE project legacy.

Anna Whicher and Gavin Cawood

THE SEE PARTNERSHIP

This SEE bulletin is produced by Design Wales as part of the activities of the SEE project. From September 2008 to June 2011, SEE has been co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund through the INTERREG IVC programme.

SEE is a network of eleven European design organisations working to integrate design into innovation policies at regional, national and European levels.

Design Wales / UWIC – University of Wales Institute, Cardiff
Cardiff, UK

Design Flanders
Brussels, Belgium

Danish Design Centre
Copenhagen, Denmark

Estonian Design Centre
Tallinn, Estonia

Aalto University
School of Art and Design
Helsinki, Finland

ARDI Rhone-Alps Design Centre
Lyon, France

Centre for Design Innovation
Sligo, Ireland

Consorzio Casa Toscana
Poggibonsi, Italy

The Cieszyn Castle
Cieszyn, Poland

BIO / Museum of Architecture and Design
Ljubljana, Slovenia

Barcelona Design Centre
Barcelona, Spain

How policies matter to design

Dr Qian Sun, School of Art and Design, University of Salford

COX'S REVIEW AND DESIGN POLICIES IN THE UK

Sir George Cox was commissioned by the Chancellor of the Exchequer at the time of the 2005 Budget to explore how best to enhance UK business productivity by drawing on its creative capabilities. His Review (2005) made a range of recommendations to central and regional government, businesses, broadcasters and educational institutions. These include raising awareness and the profile of creativity; targeted support and incentive schemes; building capacity in higher education; and utilising the power of public procurement to encourage innovation. This is a typical example of how by championing the role of design and creativity in the economy to the government, the design industry craves coherent and comprehensive policies to support and cultivate the development of design capacities and resources.

Cox's Review has no doubt inspired many academicians and practitioners within the design industry. Following this, a number of projects and schemes have been initiated in line with its recommendations, including for example the Arts and Humanities Research Council and Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council's £6.5 million investment in creating the 'Designing for the 21st Century Initiative' as a vehicle for supporting design research over a five-year period from 2005–09; the Design Council's Blueprint and Higher Skills/Higher Value review focusing on skill development; UK Trade and Investment's (UKTI) Strategy for Design Consultants on global promotion; 'Science and Innovation Investment Framework 2004–2014'; and 'Public Services by Design', funded by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

Given that Cox's Review pointed out that the UK design industry had a 15-year window of opportunity (of which five years has elapsed), what has the design industry achieved with the support of these initiatives and schemes? Expectations were that through the government's support services and incentives, business awareness of creativity would be raised and demand for design would be increased, leading to a subsequent growth of the design industry in terms of its capacity, impact and profitability.

However, a series of annual surveys by the UK Design Council over the past five years does not show that the design industry has taken off as hoped; nor is there clear evidence to reflect the effectiveness of any policies that have led to significant changes in the design industry. More conspicuously, the idea that creativity and design hold the key to the success of many businesses is still believed passionately within the design industry; however, this view is not equally shared by businesses, the government or other wider audiences. The anxiety and passion seem to have been well contained within the design sector. It is not clear how much the government has taken from the Review to forge concrete policies in supporting the design industry, or how effective these policies have been and to what extent they have had an impact.

I have come to wonder whether the design sector has asked for the right things. If yes, why did the government not respond as hoped? If not, what policies does the design industry really need? Perhaps the government is not in a position to respond to the requirements of a particular sector such as the design industry or to enforce policies to favour it over others. Answers to these questions seem to lie with a better understanding of the government's perspective and how policy instruments are employed to influence the economy. This has led me to initiate an enquiry into the principles of governmental policies in an attempt to gain a better understanding of its relevance to the design industry.

THE DESIGN POLICY MODEL

In classic economics, 'supply and demand' is perhaps one of the most fundamental concepts and forms the backbone of a market economy. It is broadly acknowledged as an economic model of price determination in a market, concluding that in a competitive market, the unit price for a particular good will vary until it settles at a point where the quantity demanded by consumers (at current price) will equal the quantity supplied by producers (at current price), resulting in an economic equilibrium of price and quantity. The earliest advocators include James Denham-Steuart, who first used the phrase 'supply and demand' in his *Inquiry into the Principles of Political Economy*; and Adam Smith in his 1776 book *The Wealth of Nations.* This model has served as a foundation for explaining a wide range of issues that have been in evolution over the past two centuries and has also led to the development of a range of schools of economic thought. For example, neoclassical economics (e.g. Karl Marx) systematised supply and demand as joint determinants of the market, affecting both the allocation of output and the distribution of income.

In principle, the supply and demand model suggests that the nature of the economic power of any market lies in the balance within the supply and demand system. Therefore, a government is able to deploy relevant policies to influence the balance between supply and demand in order to realise its control over the economy. This assumption is at the very centre of political economics or macroeconomics in analysing a government's intervention in the economy. Fiscal policy is a typical example, in which the government influences the economy by altering the balance between supply and demand through its expenditure and revenue collection.

When applying this to the design sector, supply can be considered as all forms of design capacity, from freelance designers to design consultancies and in-house teams; and demand as all organisations that use design, in both private and public sectors. The balance between the supply and demand for design determines the dynamic of the design sector. For example, if there is a surplus in design supply, the price of design services will drop; while if the surplus is at the demand side, design services will have higher bargaining power over clients. In theory, a government can deploy various policies to influence this balance, either directly or through the intervention of other key stakeholders, such as trade associations and academic institutions. It can be assumed that the joint intervention of key stakeholders will have an impact on this balance, resulting in variations in what constitutes policy. This is illustrated in Figure 1, which was first published in *DMI Review* (Sun, 2010).

In the figure, each of the arrows linking any two stakeholders represents a potential area for deploying design policy. Based on this proposition, two types of intervention can be identified:

Tier 1 Policy (intervening in the economic structure and directly controlling the balance between design demand and supply). The most direct and effective policies should be those controlling the balance between design supply and demand through, for example, investment, subsidisation and tax incentives (Policies A and B).

Tier 2 Policy (developing design infrastructure and indirectly controlling the balance between design demand and supply). At the same time, government can act through trade associations and academic institutions to develop respective sub-policies (Policies C–F) to achieve its goals. This type of policy is fundamental in the development of design infrastructure. As such:

- Trade associations can provide leadership for the industry, develop accreditation systems and regulate the design sector (Policy C); at the same time, they can promote design on the demand side (Policy D).
- In academic institutions, design policy can be deployed to support the development of design knowledge and skills (Policy E); it can be also be used to support knowledge transfer projects (Policy F).

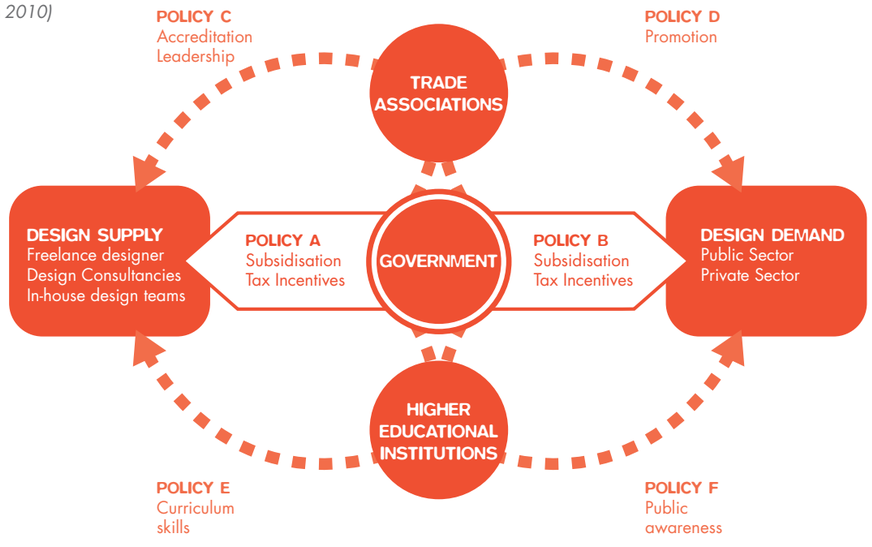
These two tiers of policies are not equally effective. Given the importance of the leverage between demand and supply, policies acting directly on the balance (Tier 1 Policy: Policies A–B) should be more effective than those acting indirectly (Tier 2 Policy: Policies C–E).

As the supply and demand principle lies at the centre of government intervention in the economy, this model portraits the relationship between the design industry, economy and government. By doing so, it identifies the policy areas that a government can develop for the design industry, and can be used as a tool to evaluate the effectiveness of policies relevant to design. My intention in applying supply and demand analysis is to gain an abstract understanding of a complex world; however, it does not – nor should it be expected to – give an accurate and complete description of any particular real-world market, as suggested by Goodwin et al. (2009).

THE PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN POLICY FOR THE UK SCENARIO

The design industry in the UK is a typical example of a saturated market where the supply of design services is significantly surplus to demand, as identified in the 'Design 2020' project (Cooper et al., 2009). This has led to a high level of competition and low fees. A vast majority of design consultancies are left with no space to grow; and clients normally have excessive bargaining power

Figure 1 The Design Policy Model.
Source: (Sun 2010)



over designers. The UK's design industry can therefore be characterised as having a vast majority of small consultancies (with fewer than five employees), a majority of whom work as freelancers; the lifespan of design businesses is short; the profile of design services spans a wide range of disciplines and the entry barriers are incredibly low; while client perceptions of design value are not guaranteed.

A supply and demand analysis suggests that design policies ought to focus on rebalancing the supply and demand of the industry, which ultimately leads to healthy growth and profit. Therefore, in theory, sensible policies should aim either:

- to stimulate the demand for design; or
- to restrict the supply of design.

Given that the design industry in the UK is a buyer's market, design supply is driven by design demand; it can be further deduced that more effective design policies act on the design demand side. Therefore, for example, investing in the economy to enhance the use of design (Policy B) is likely to be more effective than subsidising the design sector (Policy A).

EVALUATION OF COX'S REVIEW

Using these as benchmarks, it is possible to evaluate the impact of design policies on the design sector. Given its wide influence in the sector, Cox's Review is taken as an example to demonstrate the value of this model as an evaluation tool. This section unpacks Cox's Review and evaluates the impact of each recommendation on the design industry. This is shown in Figure 2.

First, Cox's Review has suggested: (I) utilising the power of public procurement to encourage the government's spending on design; and (II) developing target support and incentive schemes (e.g. strategic design work should be eligible for R&D tax credits). These can be considered as a typical example of fiscal policy where a government influences a particular sector using expenditure and taxation. For example, the Design Council's 'Bugs Out' project was funded to test new procurement methods by collaborating with the NHS. However, it is not clear yet whether this had led to a significant increase of demand from the public sector before the Coalition Government took power in early 2010. Putting aside the fact that it is not clear how much the then government had taken on from these suggestions, let us focus on the potential impact of these recommendations on the industry. It is very unlikely that these policies would stimulate sustainable demand from the private sector; instead, these policies focus on subsidising design supply by creating an artificial demand for design services and a distorted profit. They influence the design supply directly and therefore can be classified as Policy A.

The danger of this type of policy would be that it cultivates a dependency of the design sector on the government's procurement policies and the design sector then becomes vulnerable to any political changes. This is evidenced by the change in the UK's political agenda when the Coalition Government took power in early 2010. The new government's shift in economic agenda means that public-sector funding is likely to be reduced in the coming year, which will lead to a further 'shrinking' of those sectors that have been heavily dependent on government subsidises. For example, some observers have started to exhibit concern about the future of regional design networks in the UK given the disappearing of funding.

At the same time, this type of policy could potentially mislead the design sector when design capacity is developing to meet the needs of new demand from the public and third sectors. This is particularly in line with the debate in relation to the identity of design as a profession. The dramatic growth

Figure 2 Cox's Review

COX'S RECOMMENDATIONS

Policies on the supply side:

Ⅰ Utilising the power of public procurement to encourage innovation /Procurement Policy (Policy A)

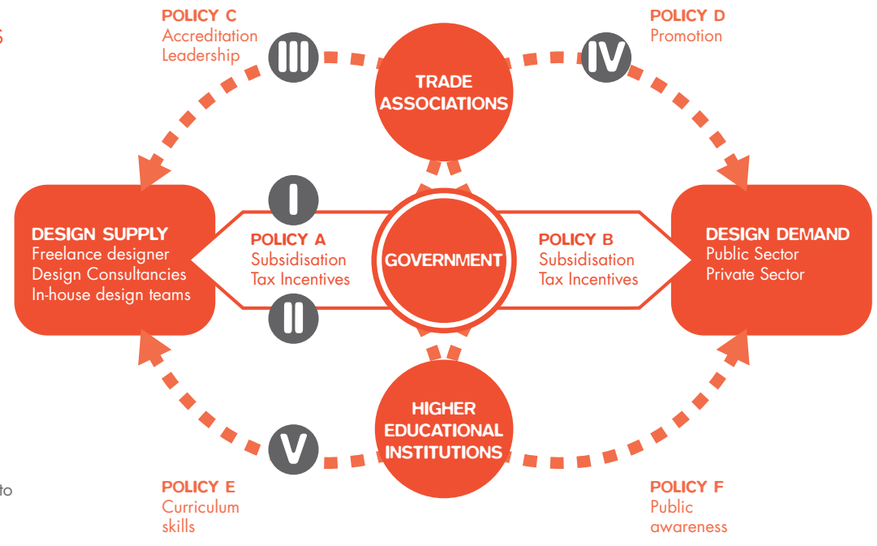
Ⅱ Targeted support and incentive schemes (Policy A)

Ⅲ Developing a national network of design centres (Policy C)

Ⅳ Building capacity in higher education/skills (Policy E)

Policies on the demand side:

Ⅴ A national support programme to help SMEs use design and to raise awareness of creativity (Policy D)



of the public sector and the decline of manufacturing in the UK over the past decades had led many to believe that the opportunities for design lie in previously untapped areas such as strategy, healthcare and sustainability. This requires a shift of the basis of knowledge away from its core, participation in new knowledge networks and engagement with new kinds of clients. The design sector seems to have become divided. Many scholars, therefore, held a sceptical view; for example, Woudhuysen has questioned how far design can go.

Cox's Review has also suggested: (III) developing a national network of design centres (Policy C); and (IV) building capacity in higher education (Policy E). Similar to the tax credit and procurement policies, these do not lead to a restriction of design supply as presumed in the theory; instead, they encourage the growth of supply and result in a further imbalance. Competitive advantage theory (Tirole, 1988) suggests that the existence of economic profits depends on the prevalence of barriers to entry. According to this theory, what higher education institutions (HEIs) and trade associations should be doing is to establish a form of barrier to entry. This is aligned with the heated debate in the design sector, over such issues as whether the sector needs an accreditation system, how far the standard of design qualifications should be raised and what legislation should be in place to protect IP. However, there is no clear consensus across the board and policy of this kind is scarce.

Although the most appropriate means to achieve this is under debate, it is undeniable that the design sector is struggling to absorb the large number of new design graduates entering the industry every year. As recorded in research, for instance Sun (2011), a majority of design graduates often find it difficult to start their careers and take longer to establish themselves than other students. They normally have complex career paths, managing several jobs in different fields, often simultaneously, with a trend for graduates to move towards self-employment as their careers progress. They show high transfer rates to other disciplines (especially retail, marketing and advertising) and are more likely to work in a wide range of jobs. This explains why employability remains high on the agenda for HEIs in the UK.

Finally, Cox's Review has suggested: (V) a national support programme to help SMEs use design and to raise awareness of creativity in the public sector (Policy D). By showcasing the Design Council's work with businesses, this policy aims to promote the value of design. One example is 'Public Services by Design', funded by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. It is a mentoring and coaching programme for public-sector professionals, helping them to innovate and deliver customer-focused services by using design techniques and by working with designers. Another example is the UKTI's Strategy for Design Consultants on global promotion. This type of policy promotes design and raises awareness, and ultimately stimulates the demand for design services. However, given that it belongs to Tier 2 policy, which can only indirectly influence demand, its effectiveness is relatively low and the scale of its impact limited.

Based on this pilot mapping analysis, it seems that a majority of policies proposed focus heavily on advocacy and funding of design supply, but seem not to be actively engaging the private client sector. To a large extent, this could have contributed to a further imbalance between supply and demand in the design industry.

THE NEXT GENERATION OF POLICIES

Given that the evaluation of Cox's Review suggests that the proposed policies have to a large extent failed to address the key problem inherited in the imbalance of demand and supply in the design industry, what policies should be requested?

As suggested by the theory discussed earlier, the most effective and positive policies for the UK should be those that stimulate demand for design services. This would be achieved by either developing an economic structure that relies more on existing design capacities or exploring other markets with stronger demand. Many believe that Sir James Dyson's 'Ingenious Britain' report for the Conservative Party 'has thrown the spotlight firmly on the role of design in future government policy thinking'. In this report, Dyson suggests that there is an opportunity for the UK to set a new vision for the economy, with the government taking action by putting science and engineering at the centre of thinking. If his view is supported by the new government, it is likely that the demand for traditional design services will grow.

In line with this, one report proposes that support should focus on 'small-scale, often private-sector, programs that encourage high-growth, innovative businesses', rather than on programmes such as Business Link, which offer only general support. Another report suggests a focus on improving the availability of finance for rapidly growing firms to continue to make investments in innovation. These suggestions are in principle aligned with 'The Plan for Growth' published alongside 'Budget 2011', which sets out a package of measures to support private-sector investment, enterprise and innovation. As the plan focuses on encouraging investment and exports as a route to a more balanced economy, it can be expected that the change in the economic structure would lead to an increase in demand for design from the client sector. At the same time, and as a result of the funding cuts, it is likely that a Creative Industries Council will be created by combining a number of organisations, including the Design Council. This, to some extent, signifies an intention to downsize the supply of design and its representative bodies.

Benchmarked with the principles of UK design policy proposed earlier, the new set of policies appears to be on the way to stimulating the demand for design services from the private client sector, at the same time showing an intention to tighten up design supply. In theory, these changes would benefit the design sector in the long term by cultivating demand stemming from economic growth.

However, given that design policies are understood by many as 'government strategies that aim to develop national design resources and to encourage their effective use in the country' (Raulik-Murphy et al., 2010), 'Plan for Growth' should not be considered as design policy, because supporting and subsidising the design sector are not its intention. However, the plan potentially encourages a rebalancing of demand and supply in the design industry and reduces its reliance on government procurement policies. This set of new policies can therefore be considered as Tier 1 policies that effectively influence the balance of the industry.

WHAT IS DESIGN POLICY AND DOES IT MATTER?

This leads to the question of how we define design policy. Should those economic policies shaping the development of the design sector be classified as design policy? And should those policies discouraging the growth of the design supply capacity be considered as design policy? According to the existing understanding, the answer would be 'No'. However, from a government perspective, it is very unlikely that any government would support a particular sector unless the economic value were apparent or any potential damage were minimal, as pointed out by Kester (2011).

More importantly, the design sector is in a passive position within an economic system. The economic structure determines the nature of design demand, further dictating the design services required. This passive role determines that design policies aimed at supporting the development of design resources and encouraging their use alone would not lead to greater buy-in from the government. More importantly, in the long term this intention might damage the natural balance between supply and demand in the sector. Opposite to the fiscal political approach, this view is very much aligned with monetary policy, which advocates minimal governmental intervention in any market, and emphasises the advantages of free market economics and the disadvantages of governmental intervention and regulation.

Differing from the UK, other economies, such as China, have adopted a more relaxed approach to the design industry. China has an investment-driven and manufacturing-based economy that has created significant demand for design services. Its economic structure has also shaped the pattern of development for its design industry. The Chinese government appears to be following a non-interventionist policy, providing no champion role and allowing market forces to dictate the form and structure of design services. The focus of design policy, aligned with economic policies, is on the co-location of services and the cultivation of more entrepreneurial relationships, including peer production. As a result, the risks inherent in new product development are shared. This encourages a form of 'natural selection' in which the fittest survive (Williams and Sun, 2009).

Clearly, the UK and China show significant differences in industry dynamics, leading to a disparity in the policy provisions for the design sector in each country. However, these differences are to a large extent rooted in economics. The economic structure has determined the nature of design demand, further dictating the design services required.

CONCLUSION

The design policy model proposed has expanded the definition of design policy from one of supporting and subsidising the design sector, to one aimed at restoring a balance between design supply and demand, potentially leading to a sustainable competitive advantage for the design sector. Using the model as a tool, design representatives could draw policy principles by looking into supply and demand within the design industry and further identify a set of design policies relevant to each key stakeholder.

This model is still at an early stage of development. In order to explore its implications in other economies further, I am working with a number of institutions and local governments in China (including Shenzhen, Shanghai and Beijing). The intention is to conduct a comparative study mapping innovation and economic policies and their relevance to the design industry based on this model.

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Design Policy and Promotion Map

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

ITALY

Italy is an anomaly compared to the main design countries. It has a strong and well-rooted design culture and tradition, but no real national design policy. A National Design Council – with no concrete activities to date – was created between 2007 and 2009 as a part of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities, with the aim of promoting initiatives for collaboration between industry and the world of culture, intellectual creativity, design culture and Italian design quality. In Italy design is always considered a residual element in programmes that support product and process innovation. The country's innovation strategy depends on three main documents:

- *National Research Programme (*Ministry of University and Research) conveys the status of Italian scientific and technological research;
- *Plan for Innovation 2012* (Ministry of Public Administration and Innovation) defines the strategy to support technological innovation for citizens and enterprises;
- *Industria 2015 programme* (Ministry for Economic Development) established strategies for future development and the competitiveness of the Italian production system.

The bottom-up approach to design has always featured Italian enterprises, although no government funds have been available to support design-driven innovation. Today this approach is unable to deal with the growing competitiveness of a global market, which requires multidimensional innovation and strong government policies for innovation, development, sustainability and networking. A National Industrial Plan focused on these issues would represent a really important tool to facilitate the introduction of a top-down approach to design.

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FINLAND

In 2008, design was written into the definition of innovation in the Finnish National Innovation Strategy and is emerging as a component of the National Innovation System (NIS). The NIS is based on a systemic approach aligning the business and policy sectors (horizontal) and their relevant activities at different levels (vertical). In 2009, the Finnish NIS was evaluated by a team of national and international experts. A specific challenge that emerged was the inclusion of creativity in the promotion of innovation activities. Consequently, the new demand- and user-driven innovation policy emphasises customer needs in developing products and services and the participation of end-users in the innovation process. The International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (Icsid) has designated Helsinki as the World Design Capital 2012. To strengthen the connection between design, innovation and competitiveness, the European Commission has set up the European Design Innovation Initiative (EDII), which is supported by its own secretariat, situated at the Designium Innovation Centre at Aalto University in Helsinki. According to the Commission, a more market-driven and user-centred approach is needed in Europe to balance out technology-oriented thinking. The EDII Leadership Board, Secretariat and the European Commission will produce a common vision and recommendations regarding the most important development areas and measures that will be used to ensure the integration of design into European innovation policies.

Eija Nieminen
Director, Designium, Aalto University
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ESTONIA

In Estonia, government policy on design is covered by the document 'Knowledge-based Estonia: Research and Development and Innovation Strategy 2007-2013' rather than through a design specific policy or strategy. This strategy recognises the need for the public sector to set an example in using innovation, including using good design; that Estonia needs innovative enterprises that use knowledge, technologies and professional design; that design can provide competitive advantage; and, the need to disseminate best practice in the use of design. Although the government has not directly set up initiatives to assist in the application of design, collaboration between the Estonian Art Academy, Tallinn University of Technology, Estonian Association of Designers and Estonian Institute of Design has created the Estonian Design Centre. The main activities of the Estonian Design Centre are developing design awareness, design education and utilisation of design. In addition, the Estonian Association of Designers hosts an annual design event in Tallinn, Design Night, which includes a conference, workshops and several design exhibitions and fashion shows. Currently, a Design Policy Action plan is being developed by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications.

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SOUTH KOREA

From 2008 to 2012 South Korea is implementing its fourth five-year plan for design promotion. In this country design policy is determined by the Ministry of Knowledge Economy (MKE), with support from the Korea Institute of Design Promotion (KIDP), the national design organisation, which is also responsible for the delivery of design policies and programmes. The globalisation of Korean design is an important issue in the current national plan, which also includes developing innovation design in companies as well as fostering multidisciplinary courses at Korean universities. In order to foster creative design talent in the country, KIDP has promoted the Next Generation Design Leaders Programme since 2004. Companies are supported through the Design Innovation Programme – which has been delivered by the Korea Evaluation Institute of Industrial Technology since 2009 – and by KIDP through a design support programme commissioned by the Small Business Administration. Besides KIDP, South Korea has a number of regional design centres and other design organisations undertaking regional and sectoral agendas, such as the Seoul Design Foundation, Gwangju Design Centre, Design Centre Busan and Daegu Gyeongbuk Design Centre.

Taewan Kim
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KIDP Korea Institute of Design Promotion
www.kidp.or.kr

Details of design policy and promotion programmes in more countries are available at www.seeproject.org/map

SEE Project's Policy, Innovation and Design Conference

On 29 March 2011 the Flemish Parliament in Brussels hosted the Policy, Innovation and Design Conference, the SEE project's final event.

Mark Vanderbeeken, senior partner, Experientia

SEE stands for Sharing Experience Europe — Policy, Innovation and Design. It is a network of eleven design support organisations — Design Wales (Lead Partner, UK), Design Flanders (Belgium), Danish Design Centre, Estonian Design Centre, Aalto University School of Art and Design (Finland), ARDI Rhone-Alps Design Centre (France), Centre for Design Innovation (Ireland), Consorzio Casa Toscana (Italy), Cieszyn Castle (Poland), Museum of Architecture and Design/BIO (Slovenia) and Barcelona Design Centre (Spain) — who through the project share knowledge to stimulate debate, disseminate good practices and influence local, regional and national policies for design and innovation in their respective countries.

The conference, organised by Design Flanders and Design Wales and chaired by the writer of this article, was attended by over 200 delegates from 25 countries. This impressive number underlined the growing importance of design in innovation, of recent design policy developments in Europe, and of successful design policies and promotion programmes from around the world.

After a short introduction by **Johan Valcke**, director of Design Flanders, the conference was kicked off by **Bernard De Potter**, general manager of Enterprise Flanders, who explained how the role of design in Flemish innovation policy is implementing the larger European innovation policy. Seven breakthrough projects demonstrate these efforts, and these are predominantly focused on user-centred design and sustainability. Crucial for Flanders is the launch of a horizontal public cross-ministerial structure that allows the government to deal with design issues across historical institutional divisions, and enables designers and design entities to address public institutions in a more holistic way.

Gavin Cawood, operations director of Design Wales, discussed the SEE project itself, which aimed to explore best practice in regional design policy and implement successful initiatives that link innovation and design within the partners' own regional and national institutions, thus influencing their policies. Various workshops resulted in a number of policy booklets, aimed at regional policy makers, and also influenced (and still influence) EU innovation policy currently in the making. Cawood gave a brief overview of the main project results, a synthesis of which can be found at the end of this article. Design has enormous potential to realise innovation, he said, and the key is to understand how government can drive the different policies and enable beneficial connections between them.

The SEE project was co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund through the INTERREG IVC programme, which aims to improve regional policies in the various European regions. INTERREG project officer **Elena Ferrario** explained why the funders consider the SEE project to be a flagship project although, exceptionally, it is the only INTERREG project (out of 122) where policy makers were not directly involved in the partnership. For INTERREG the SEE project has been a great success, since it achieved improved policies in all the regions involved and assured the transfer of good practices from one partner region to another.

Anders Byriel introduced himself by saying that 'normally he is a CEO, running a business', so design policy is really his hobby. Notwithstanding his modesty, his roles are impressive: Byriel is in charge of the Danish Vision Committee Design 2020 and is chairman of the Danish Design Council. He began by describing the evolution of Danish design from product design to human-centred design to strategic and service design, which was also reflected in successive iterations of the country's design policy. The first iteration of Danish design policy emphasised the role of the public sector, which has been a very strong driver of design in Denmark. It also created a number of important tools, including its acclaimed design ladder — positioning four levels of design (non-design, design as styling, design as a process and design as strategy) — that became a tool for policy makers to achieving better positioning for design companies. In 2003, in a second iteration of the policy, Denmark decided to reach out to emerging markets and social design (with the INDEX award as its key tool), to improve its design education and to promote the importance of design research. A third policy iteration emphasised the importance of strategic design, with a focus on front-end innovation and on the spread of design as a tool of design innovation on a regional level. It also provided the basis for important user-centred project funding, inspired by US companies such as IDEO and frog design, to allow public entities to locate Danish companies more successfully in the international market. The next Danish design policy is currently in development and will emerge from the recommendations of the Danish Vision Committee Design 2020. Design research will surely become even more important.

Better by Design, the design support programme for export-oriented companies in New Zealand, is run by **Judith Thompson**. Success in New Zealand business depends on design excellence, and the programme focuses on making companies more capable of achieving that through transforming thinking and capabilities. As a government agency, Better by Design has to demonstrate its achievements in quantitative terms, and thus provides numerical testimony of the importance of design in achieving innovation success. Highly appreciated was Thompson's honest assessment of what the agency did and did not get right; the latter mainly focused on too little involvement of the design sector itself and limited use of human-centred design processes.

The Service Design Toolkit, launched in English at the conference, was the work of **Alain Denis** and **Kristel Van Ael** of the design consultancies Yellow Window and Namahn respectively, in collaboration with Design Flanders. The toolkit sets out to provide service design tools to local authorities, in order to allow these institutions methodically to improve the quality of their public services. Service design provides great value to public entities, as it is always done in a human-driven way and starts from the needs and requirements of the users and stakeholders, who are actively involved in the design process. It is also a holistic and multidisciplinary process that aims to achieve consistency across all touchpoints. Added advantages are that the approach is highly visual (which makes it easily understandable), dynamic and engaging, and that solutions are often surprisingly simple and fast. The toolkit also contains some inspiring examples.

One of the municipalities where the service design approach has been implemented is the city of Antwerp. Antwerp's Mayor, **Patrick Janssens**, has a background in market research and advertising. He explained how through branding and communication, launched in a bottom-up approach, he and his team managed to change people's perception of their own city and to create a more consistent quality of public services. It also involved a new customer-centred face for public services, including police service centres on shopping streets.

The Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities was one of the key players involved in implementing the toolkit in Flanders and its communication officer **Adina Balog** explained in more detail how these activities were conducted. The association works on promoting best practices and supporting municipalities through training and workshops.

Design as a government capability was the topic of **Bryan Boyer**, strategic design lead at Sitra, the Finnish Innovation Fund. He discussed how to move design upstream, focusing on some of the more strategic questions with which designers usually do not get involved, such as climate change. Sitra is, he said, designing within government rather than designing for government. Or, to put it another way, rather than looking at policy for design, Sitra is using design to create policies, making them more robust and durable.

SEE project partners and conference speakers at the Flemish Parliament, March 2011

It focuses on root causes as a way of arriving at the true value in the design process. Boyer used Low2No and the Helsinki Design Lab as examples. Low2No is a development project for a block in a new part of Helsinki that has low to no carbon impact. Sitra uses it as a concrete example to influence system issues, services, legislation and potential replicability. Helsinki Design Lab develops capabilities on a strategic level, so that Finnish institutions and policy makers are better able to respond to large societal challenges.

Peter Dröll, Head of Unit at the European Commission Directorate General for Enterprise and Industry, gave a very dynamic presentation about the 2011 European Design Innovation Initiative. Innovation, he stated, is a key driver of growth. 25% of productivity growth in Europe comes from investing in innovation. Europe needs 'to capitalise on its creative potential and this increases dramatically the role of designers, because, if we have a broader understanding of innovation, we need more power for design and design thinking in companies and in the public sector', particularly since design is really about 'conceiving and developing a plan for new or significantly improved products, services or systems that ensures the best interface with user needs, aspirations and abilities'.

This is a new trend in European innovation policy; in fact, so new that a Europe-wide implementation of it would dramatically change current European, national and regional research, innovation and regional programmes, which have been heavily technology-centric for many years now. Now the EU wants to expand its approach to innovation by including the role of design within society and the public sector. Dröll avoided underlining this radical change too much; and indeed it remains to be seen to what extent it will actually be implemented in Europe's enormous research budgets, since the 2011 budget for Dröll's first activities is only 3 million euros.

EU policy makers like Dröll see design as a human-centred tool for confronting complex societal challenges to economic and social welfare. They have identified three main barriers to the uptake of design currently: a lack of awareness of its potential; a lack of evaluation of the rate of return; and a lack of clarity about design thinking itself.

This is why the European Commission has launched the European Design Innovation initiative.

Its stated goals are ambitious: to create a shared vision for design thinking in Europe; to position strategic design prominently in all innovation policies at national and local levels; to increase commitment within companies and the public sector to use design thinking as a tool for achieving success and productivity; to have design consultancies and designers go beyond product design to fully embrace design thinking; and to establish a shared understanding within education and academia of how to teach design thinking.

To start this Initiative the European Commission will nominate a Leadership Board, to provide the Commission with a vision for design and to decide on the actions it needs to take to achieve that vision and the objectives within the design initiative. It will consist of 15 members: representatives from umbrella design organisations, design agencies, academia and the design industry.

At the time of publication, neither the members nor how they were selected had been announced (unfortunately, an open selection process was not followed), but Dröll commented that it is very important that the Leadership Board reaches out to wider stakeholders.

This summer the European Commission will launch a 3 million euro call for proposals for concrete actions to launch the first part of the European Design Innovation Initiative. Of course, we will keep you posted about this.

The SEE project, meanwhile, has been an enormous success: in every partner country the project raised awareness about the role that design can play in innovation policy, and influenced upcoming innovation policy and the role of design within it. In some countries new programmes have even been set up as a consequence of the SEE project. The SEE partnership will continue its collaboration and efforts to engage with regional, national and European governments well beyond the end of the project in June 2011.

The presentations and audio recordings from the SEE project's Policy, Innovation and Design Conference are available at www.seeproject.org/seefinalconference

Below is a short summary of the key results of the project.

SEE PROJECT KEY RESULTS

In the **UK**, the Lead Partner, Design Wales, developed a Manifesto for Design and Innovation to raise the profile of design on the Welsh political agenda. The manifesto has received overwhelming support, including a unanimous vote by the National Assembly for Wales to implement the manifesto's recommendation to 'harness the power of design for innovation in industry, services and society'. Design has also been integrated into the Welsh Assembly Governments's strategy Economic Renewal as a direct result of policy-makers participating in SEE.

In **Belgium**, the SEE project has accelerated the development of the Flanders Design Platform to enhance the effectiveness of the six different design organisations in the region and to create a broader and guiding design policy by the Flemish Government.

In **Denmark**, the SEE project has been engaging with the Danish Government and more specifically the Design 2020 Vision Committee, appointed by the Danish Government in November 2010 to develop the new Danish Design Policy.

In December 2010 in **Estonia**, the SEE project delivered a workshop to the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communication and Enterprise, which is now investigating the possibility of a national business support programme to enable companies to bring innovative ideas to market through design.

In **Finland** the project has re-awakened discussions about design among policy makers and the design community that had been dormant since 2005, when the last design policy ended.

In **France**, in collaboration with the regional government, ARDI Rhone-Alps Design Centre is mapping an overview of regional design support initiatives, in order to see how the results and recommendations from the SEE project can be compared with the existing initiatives in the region and how they might be examined from a policy dimension.

In **Ireland** the SEE project has gained the Centre for Design Innovation visibility and access to higher levels of government, particularly within the Irish Innovation Task Force.

In **Italy,** building on the SEE project, the Italian partner is launching a Pole of Innovation, in which design will play a key role in realising innovation in the region of Tuscany.

As result of the exchange of knowledge, **Poland** has been incorporating concepts learnt in Denmark regarding the adoption of sustainable principles through design programmes.

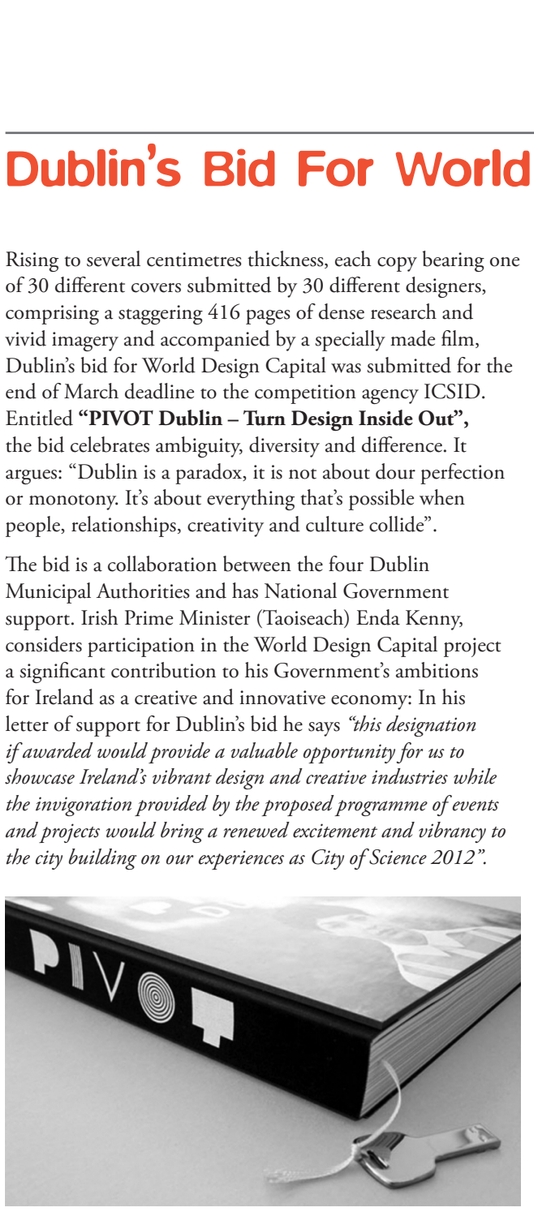
In **Slovenia**, as result of the increased awareness among policy makers and government ministries of the importance of the creative industries, a special study on the status of design in the country will be carried out. Moreover, examples of good practice on design policies presented within the SEE project are serving as a model for the new R&D Innovation strategy 2011–2015.

In **Spain**, a new innovation and research plan for 2010–13 has been launched by the innovation department of the Catalan government, in which a chapter has been dedicated to design.

Dublin's Bid For World Design Capital 2014

Rising to several centimetres thickness, each copy bearing one of 30 different covers submitted by 30 different designers, comprising a staggering 416 pages of dense research and vivid imagery and accompanied by a specially made film, Dublin's bid for World Design Capital was submitted for the end of March deadline to the competition agency ICSID. Entitled **"PIVOT Dublin – Turn Design Inside Out",** the bid celebrates ambiguity, diversity and difference. It argues: "Dublin is a paradox, it is not about dour perfection or monotony. It's about everything that's possible when people, relationships, creativity and culture collide".

The bid is a collaboration between the four Dublin Municipal Authorities and has National Government support. Irish Prime Minister (Taoiseach) Enda Kenny, considers participation in the World Design Capital project a significant contribution to his Government's ambitions for Ireland as a creative and innovative economy: In his letter of support for Dublin's bid he says *"this designation if awarded would provide a valuable opportunity for us to showcase Ireland's vibrant design and creative industries while the invigoration provided by the proposed programme of events and projects would bring a renewed excitement and vibrancy to the city building on our experiences as City of Science 2012".*



The PIVOT Dublin bid, March 2011

The design and delivery of the bid document and associated film was undertaken by an interdisciplinary consortium of Red & Grey Design; Emma Curley Architect and Areaman Productions (film). Using material gathered from a year of exploratory workshops and conversations facilitated by the co-ordination team led by the Dublin City Architect, they have produced a document that arguably represents the most comprehensive research into a wider Irish design culture since the pioneering report *Design in Ireland*, which led to the establishment of the Kilkenny Design workshop in 1965. It is hoped that Dublin's bid will act as a similar catalyst towards developing a shared understanding of the benefits that design thinking can bring to economic, environmental, social and political challenges.

This ambition is encapsulated in the bid title 'PIVOT Dublin – Turn Design Inside Out' a response to Dublin's unleashed potential to use design as the vehicle to turn things inside out; to adapt, innovate and grow. A key strength in Dublin's bid lies in its diversity. Alongside the more established design disciplines such as product, craft, fashion and graphic design, it features architecture and urban design, as well as the new digital design cultures and reflects Ireland's recent success in animation, film and the gaming industry. Overwhelmed by a plethora of design events that take place in the city, the biggest challenge for the bid team was in editing the information. To tell Dublin's story, the team focused on a few key projects that have transformed the city including the landmark new bridges that link north and south along the River Liffey, the community connections made by the Special Olympics in 2003, and the international outreach of a Digital Hub project that redesigns computers for schools in Africa.

The PIVOT Dublin bid strategy identifies an opportunity to use Dublin as a test bed for new ideas which address local need yet have global relevance. The bid explores these challenges and opportunities under four themes, which represent issues that face all cities; 'Connecting Cities, 'Making Cities Lighter', 'Making Cities Flow'; and 'Making Cities Smile'. These themes are being explored through the development of 'seed' project collaborations between the public sector, business and design communities. Central to the bid strategy is that the seed projects start as soon as the bid is submitted and this work is now underway.

The PIVOT Dublin team hopes that the bid will convince an international audience that Dublin is a repository of much talent and a solid tradition of great Irish design. Above all, the bid conveys what a "cool city" Dublin is. Perhaps it does not tell a conventional story but it is a fascinating one, it is a story about a very sociable city for an extraordinary design experience. The Dublin design community agrees, as is evident in this testimonial by graphic designer David Smith of Atelier, the first Irish Designer to be elected to the AGI (Alliance Graphique Internationale):

"That is what I would love to emerge from it; the legacy. That we use design to make a difference. If that came out of it at the end – win, lose or fail – that would be the best thing that we could have achieved for our city and the bid certainly presents that opportunity".

More information on Dublin's bid for World Design Capital 2014, is available from www.pivotdublin.com

Design and Business– Concepts that Merge

(BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA)

Training seminars delivered by the Metropolitan Design Centre and financed by the Ministry of Economic Development, City Government of Buenos Aires

The economic crisis that Argentina suffered around 2001 was the cause of a steep dismantling of national industry, and the beginning of a new era for Argentine design. This was the year of the creation of the Metropolitan Design Centre [*in Spanish:* Centro Metropolitano de Diseño (CMD)], a public institution created by the City Government of Buenos Aires to assist enterprises, designers and entrepreneurs to improve their competitiveness through innovation and strategic design management.

In a difficult employment context, a new generation of designers emerged, often establishing small-scale companies oriented to design-intensive productions. The recovery of the economy that took place in the following years did not prevent this kind of organisation from growing alongside the rebirth of national industry. In Buenos Aires in 2008, creative industries generated 153,084 jobs, almost 10% of the total jobs that year, and 9% of its gross domestic product. However, there was no business-oriented content included in design courses to teach students how to quote for their work, offer their services or place their products on the market. To address this need, CMD tried to systematise the consulting and advice it had been providing in order to satisfy the growing demand from designers and creative industry entrepreneurs.

The result of this was the provision of free training for design-based companies, delivered as a seminar programme entitled 'Design and Business, Concepts that Merge'. This four-month seminar programme, established in 2009, aims to train designers and entrepreneurs of creative companies to supplement their disciplinary academic training. It encourages its participants to assume a new role: to be leaders in the creation, set-up and consolidation of a business project. The seminars operate at three levels: level one is open to professionals and managers of design initiatives that need to supplement their training in business; the second and third levels interact with established design companies.

The seminars are coordinated and delivered by economic science professionals (e.g. accountants and business specialists) and guest professors from related relevant fields, such as law, business administration and IT. The course also enlists design professionals with experience in the link between design and strategic management. The first level of the seminar consists of 15 lessons; participants who attend more than 75% of the lessons have the right to receive free individual advice.

Additionally, the seminars are complemented by other CMD programmes, which deliver advice and training on incorporating design within companies, starting new companies and participation in international trade fairs.

The programme has had a good response; during its second year, 700 people applied to participate in the first-level seminar. Due to the extent of the interest, the series was split into two cohorts. A total of 410 people finished the first-level seminar. From these, CMD selected 35 companies to participate in the second level. Early indications for the 2011 series demonstrated similar levels of interest. In fact, 50% of the places for 2011 were already filled by those who were unsuccessful in gaining a place in 2010.

Design and Business, Concepts that Merge seminar, Buenos Aires, 2010

The Business and Design seminar is one of the pillars of the work that the CMD carries out. The rationale for the effort involved in developing this series is based on a conviction that design is a valuable tool that increases companies' competitiveness and innovation and helps expand their exportable offer. The goal of the Business and Design seminar (to improve the competencies and performance of companies that offer design products and services) complements CMD's programme for the incorporation of design in Buenos Aires' SMEs. In 2011, this programme will benefit 48 industrial and service companies in the city, each receiving free consulting services from a specialised team. Further, CMD offers a programme that promotes the acceleration of company growth. This year, it supported 20 new companies that will establish their offices in the CMD building.

The Service Design Programme: Moving from products to services

(WALES, UK)

The Service Design Programme is delivered by Design Wales on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government and uses service design as a tool for economic growth within the advanced materials and manufacturing sector. The programme was launched in 2010 and was a direct result of Welsh Assembly Government representatives seeing the potential benefit of service-led innovation through discussions with the SEE partners.

In 2009, findings from an Engineering Employers' Federation report revealed that services account for between 15% and 20% of total revenue earned by UK manufacturers (compared with 66% across UK industry as a whole)1. The report also identified that these services tend to focus on fixing products, ongoing maintenance, marketing and sales, for example, rather than a strategic move towards 'servitisation'.

Intriguingly, a survey conducted in 2010 by the same organisation showed that the number of companies introducing or planning to introduce service innovation would jump from 17% to 48%, highlighting the rise in interest in services from manufacturers.

This shift from products to services provides clear opportunities for service designers who can support manufacturers in realising their aims. Design offers a clear path for businesses to add value to their offer, servitise their products or even adopt new service-based business models. The Design Wales support programme aims to capitalise on this shift and demonstrate how service design can help companies achieve this, kick-starting a demand for design-led service innovation.

The Service Design Programme began in July 2010 and is running until May 2013. The programme was set up to address both supply and demand by creating demand among Welsh manufacturers and expertise in service design among Welsh designers. Design Wales is set to work at a strategic level with 90 companies or 'The90'. The programme's key performance indicators are made up of a balance of delivery indicators (number of seminars and diagnostic interviews) and impact indicators (new services launched, R&D investment induced and jobs created). Combined, these indicators have a significant impact on both behaviour and practice within a business.

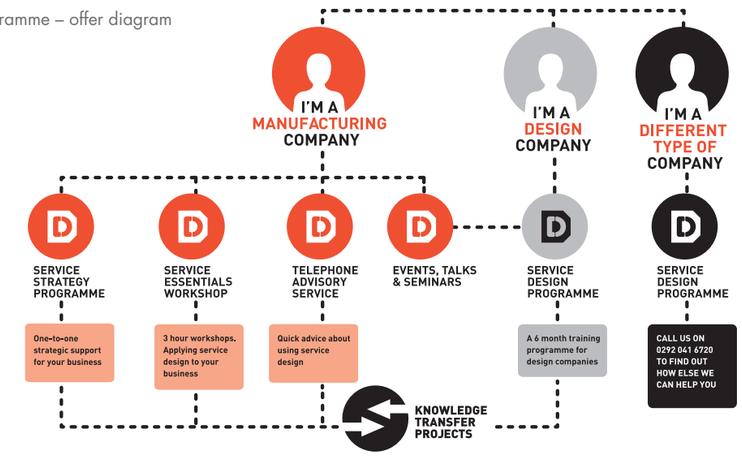
The model of business support developed by Design Wales is based on a four-step process: Events, Telephone Advisory Service, Service Essentials Workshop and the Service Strategy Programme. In order to create meaningful impact on a business it is important to engage it over a longer period of time. The shift from products to services is as much about a change in management culture as it is about a change in business practice.

THE DESIGN WALES MODEL OF BUSINESS SUPPORT

The Service Design Programme also works with the design sector in Wales to create a 'supply' of service design expertise, ensuring that once companies have received their funded support from Design Wales, local service design expertise is available to deliver the work.

Although there are some exceptions to the rule, most companies accessing government support for innovation are SMEs or micro-businesses. It is these businesses that lack the critical resources to contract service design expertise or develop an in-house capability that value design support programmes the most. As well as being open to support, these SMEs also have a great amount of potential as shifts in mindset, approach and business model are easier to implement within smaller companies.

Service Design Programme – offer diagram



HOW AN ADVANCED MANUFACTURER IN SWANSEA FOCUSED ON ITS SERVICE AND IMPROVED ITS BOTTOM LINE

Aggrelek makes electrochemical water-treatment units for companies such as Shell, BAA and Corus. The company is based in Swansea, South Wales, where it employs eight members of staff. As with many small businesses in the manufacturing sector, Aggrelek has grown up and established itself based on technical expertise. Its technical knowledge had enabled it to compete and develop its innovative product with several key clients. However, "a new company introducing new technology can be an uphill struggle," explained Phil Morgan, Managing Director.

With the help of Design Wales, all members of the company, from senior management to installation staff, mapped out typical customer journeys and identified key points that had a significant impact on the customer experience: highlighting good practice, current problems and potential improvements. A key concept in service design is customer touchpoints where users interact with the product or service. By focusing on those touchpoints with the greatest potential for impact, the company was able to identify where it could achieve strategic change within its business.

Design Wales supported the company management through this process and advised Aggrelek on the use of design methods such as ideation, observation, branding and service prototyping. Aggrelek then developed a number of service concepts, such as Containerised Plant, Electrode Management and Process Consultancy services, which it has tested with customers and brought to market.

Impact of Design Intervention in Aggrelek

- The company invested £50,000 in R&D
- The team revised their business plan and employed 8 new members of staff
- The company rebranded itself Aggrelek from Watertec Solutions
- It launched 3 new products and 4 new services
- Its new service received £100k sales in the first 2 months after launch
- It protected its improved service via a trademark

[1] Engineering Employers' Federation (2010) 'Innovation Monitor 2010'.

For more information on the Service Design Programme visit www.testyourservice.co.uk

SEE Legacy

Between September 2008 and June 2011 the SEE project has been funded by the European Commission to function as a network of eleven European design organisations working together to integrate design into innovation policies at regional, national and European level.

The two key objectives have been:

- Establish an active dialogue and rapport between the SEE partners and their regional government policy makers.
- Further develop the link between innovation and design to positively influence regional policies.

The success of the project has been substantial but only possible due to the close working relationships that developed between the design organisations and their regional and national governments, allowing realistic policies for design-led innovation to be developed and discussed using creative approaches.

At the SEE project steering committee in March (Brussels) the current partners unanimously agreed to work towards a sustainable model that can continue to integrate design into innovation policies.

As plans develop we will keep you informed. If you are a design centre or national/regional/local government that would like to be involved in the future then please let us know by e-mailing info@seeproject.org.

SEE bulletins include research papers, interviews, reports and case studies relating to policies and programmes for design and innovation from around the world. The opinions expressed in the articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the SEE partners.

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