



SHARING EXPERIENCE EUROPE  
POLICY INNOVATION DESIGN

## Case Studies in Design Policy & Programmes

This case study was developed as part of the SEE project. SEE is a network of eleven European partners sharing experience and stimulating debate on how to integrate design into innovation policies at regional, national and European levels.

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## Good Design Selection (KOREA)

The Korea Institute of Design Promotion (KIDP) hosts a biannual design competition called 'Good Design Selection', sponsored by the Ministry of Knowledge Economy (MKE). The award was started in 1985, when the objective was to catch up with developed countries that had already been promoting design for decades. According to Kang Phil-hyun, Head of the GD Selection Team, the main objectives are to improve the quality of life through taking design to a higher level and to contribute to the development of design by expanding public interest in the field. Over 25 years, GD Selection has become not only part of the government's strategy for encouraging innovation and expanding public awareness of the value of design, but also part of its procurement strategy, as winners with creative design solutions are privileged in the government's purchasing process.

Eligible product manufacturers, designers and retailers can submit entries for designs that have been sold in the past two years or are about to be launched in Korea or international markets. The submission categories include design for products, packaging, the environment, communication, materials processing, architecture and fashion. Unlike most design awards, there is also broad scope for the application of design to the public sector, including city infrastructure (streets, bridges, signs and public transport) and public construction (hospitals, libraries, parks, research laboratories, galleries and playgrounds), as well as for government communication (emblem designs for central and local government). Kang Phil-hyun has stated that in recent years, GD Selection has focused on making its way onto the list of prestigious international design competitions.


On average the KIPD receives about 1,200 entries per session for the award. These entries undergo a two-step selection process. In the first phase, approximately 30 per cent of entries are short-listed to go through to the next round. In the second phase, the entries undergo a rigorous selection process in which about 60 winners are selected to receive a prize. The entries are assessed on a number of criteria depending on the submission category, which include customer orientation, usability, environmental friendliness, innovation and the integration of design. In practice, winning an award means that the Good Design mark can be displayed on the product, its packaging,

description and warrant. The mark is a marketing instrument that sets products apart from others and consequently the KIPD has observed a significant increase in companies seeking design advice in order to compete for an award.

President's Award: 1 winner – Prize: 2,000,000KRW (approx. 1,000 Euros)  
 Prime Minister's Award: 2 winners – Prize: 1,000,000KRW (approx. 500 Euros)  
 Good Design Grand Award (MKE Minister's Award): 15 winners  
 The Best GD Award (Public Procurement Service Administrator's Award): 15 winners  
 Good Design Excellence Award (KIDP President's Award): 30 winners

Since the award was launched, the GD mark has been stamped on thousands of products around the country and is recognised as a certification scheme. As part of the scheme, Good Design winners are granted priority status when applying for a procurement tender as part of the Excellent Quality Products System implemented by the Public Procurement Service. For example, in the office supplies and furniture categories, an average of 70 per cent of products are adopted each year by the government. In this way, the Korean government is setting the bar for the effective application of design, which has a number of advantageous repercussions. Emphasising the added value of the design component in evaluating procurement tenders, rather than focusing on the cheapest solution, not only improves the level of public services by introducing innovative solutions, but also disseminates best design practice to the private sector by stimulating nationwide demand. As the public becomes more familiar with well-designed products and services, the private sector will have to respond to popular demand for creative user-centred solutions and more investment in design will in turn raise the quality of the expertise provided.

As the Head of the GD Selection Team asserts, the advantages of winning an award are manifold. First, national recognition through being able to display a government-certified mark. Second, media exposure as part of KIDP promotion campaigns. Third, priority status in the selection of participants for local, national and international exhibitions such as 'Design Korea' and the 'Korea Electronics Show'. Fourth, participant companies have the opportunity to improve their own business as they receive the results of the judging process in the form of a report. In addition, for those companies competing for government tenders, the award is a queue-jumping pass.

In essence, integrating the design promotion strategy and the procurement process has resulted in a number of positive externalities for the Korean government: improving public services; disseminating best practice among individuals and the private sector; and in turn raising the quality of design expertise, which contributes to the MKE's objective of upgrading the economy through greater innovation intelligence. 

*For more information, visit [www.gd.or.kr](http://www.gd.or.kr).*



Good Design Selection judging  
 2 December 2009,  
 Songdo Convensia,  
 Incheon