
DESIGN HELPS!

DESIGN
MANIFESTO

Cieszyn,
2013

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Let's create a Polish Innovation Policy through DESIGN!

definitions

DESIGN

Design, as a user-centred innovation, means the act of planning a new or significantly improved product, service or system which best suits the needs, aspirations and capabilities of the user, while taking into account economic, social and environmental values.

Commission of the European Communities (2009) Design as a driver of user-centred innovation, SEC (2009) 501final, Brussels, p 58

Creativity gives rise to ideas and innovativeness uses them. Design combines both.

Rodgers Paul (2009) Design – The 50 most influential designers in the world, London: A&C Black Publishers Ltd, p 6

INNOVATION

Innovation is the implementation of a new or significantly improved product (good or service) or process, a new marketing method or a new organizational method in business practices, workplace organization or external relations.

OECD and Eurostat (2005) Oslo Manual. Proposed Guidelines for Collecting and Interpreting Technological Innovation Data, ed 3, pp 47–49

In times of complex global challenges, under the pressure of the economic crisis, the need to give a new impetus to socio-economic development is becoming more and more urgent. Today, the greatest competitive advantage is created by innovation. DESIGN is one of the best tools to provide innovative solutions that put user needs at the centre. Poles, as ambitious, creative and hardworking people, could become leaders of the current changes. However, it is necessary to take coherent, multi-faceted actions which will allow us to use the potential of design to the best advantage.

Poland has taken the first step towards the integration of support for design with national strategies, including support for industrial design in the Operational Programme Innovative Economy. However, there is a need to broaden the spectrum of innovation with non-technological innovation, innovative services (both public and private) and social innovation. Giving design a strategic position as a method to develop innovations in such a broad sense will contribute to increasing the competitiveness of the economy, further enhanced with a well-functioning public sector. This will directly translate into better living conditions for all citizens, as designers work „on behalf of users.”

Based on:

- The vision of the European Commission, that by 2020 design should be a fully recognizable and well-established part of innovation policies in Europe, at the European, national and regional levels;
- Recommendations of the European Design Leadership Board, expressed in the report made for the European Commission „Design for Growth and Prosperity”;
- The results of the workshop „Creating development strategies for states, cities and regions, based on design and innovation,” organized by Castle Cieszyn in October 2012;

we propose six main planes of discussion about the Innovation through Design Policy in Poland:

1. Competitive Products and Services

The achievements of design leaders should be promoted, and their successes, especially where design has had a positive effect on financial results, should be emphasized. It would be desirable to group them into a network of Design Leaders, to facilitate the exchange of experiences and inspire other companies which wish to achieve excellence in design. There is a need to improve access to design management knowledge and tools, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as to develop financing mechanisms for innovative investments in design. The best Polish products and services should be promoted under a common brand. For this purpose, the existing “Dobry Wzór” (“Good Design”) brand could receive more publicity, or be replaced with a new, more recognizable brand. The new improved solutions require adequate legal protection. Therefore, it is advisable to strengthen the protection of intellectual property rights against any infringements in both the physical and digital worlds.

GOOD EXAMPLE – PESA Bydgoszcz SA

Innovation determines the development of a company and its market position, which is why the PESA company has lavished funds on innovation for years. Their research and development department employs more than 150 engineers-designers, while working with many R&D institutes and universities on innovative solutions, such as patented energy absorbers. Production is entirely based on their own projects, developed by an internal multi-disciplinary team. Dr. Bartosz Piotrowski, the main designer in the team, recipient of the Designer of the Year 2006 award, ensures consistency between the projects. A consistent strategy of investing in design and new technologies has provided for the company’s impressive growth. Within a decade, the company from Bydgoszcz increased revenues by 950%, while the production increased from one vehicle in 2002 to 167 in 2011. High quality, innovative design and the adjustment of prices to market expectations means PESA rail vehicles appear not only on the tracks in Poland but also Germany, Italy, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Ukraine, Russia, Lithuania and Romania. However, the most spectacular success of the company is the recently signed framework agreement with one of the leading railway companies in the world – Deutsche Bahn – for the delivery of 470 Link-type vehicles. This contract may well be worth up to 1.2 billion Euros! The choice made by DB confirms the quality, innovation and safety of the Polish-made vehicles. This prestigious contract will be an excellent demonstration of how to access new foreign markets. Gerhard Knöbel, head of Regentalbahn AG, another German railway carrier, which already uses PESA vehicles, stated that the Bydgoszcz Link is “a vehicle that sets new standards for interior and exterior design in the German railways”.

2. Innovative Public Sector

The public sector does not only consist of a number of key services, nor is it only about shaping the public space. It also sets the conditions for business activities. High quality services and efficient administrative service does not need to be expensive. With radical innovations and the use of new technologies it can reduce the operating costs of public sector in the long term. There is a need to help public sector managers become aware of the value of design and provide them with the methods and procedures for using it in their work. Another task for the authorities is to change the criteria for public procurement, so that the choice of offers is not always motivated by the lowest price but also by the functionality and innovation of the proposed solutions. The public sector could contribute to the enhancement of expectations of users for products and services, and set an example to private companies.

GOOD EXAMPLE – DESIGN SILESIA

Design Silesia is Poland's only systematic and long-term programme which uses the potential of design for the development of Silesia. Thanks to EU funds, nearly 40 projects were completed in less than three years. A unique partnership was created between the Marshal's Office in Katowice, Castle Cieszyn, the Academy of Fine Arts in Katowice, Ars Cameralis Silesiae Superioris in Katowice and the Silesian University of Technology in Gliwice. During design workshops "Fieldwork Design" ("Design w terenie!"), young designers, local government representatives and residents worked together to create concepts for the development and activation of 'difficult' places in the Silesian cities: Mstów and Radlin. Then, "Design... at your service!" ("Design... do usług!") helped to find ways to improve services in the District Employment Office in Żory, the Regional Cultural Centre in Katowice and the City Hall in Tychy. Sociologists carried out a study into how genuine the cooperation is between entrepreneurs, local authorities and designers ("Design in Silesia in the eyes of Silesian designers, entrepreneurs and local authorities"). The "Exemplary Silesian" project ("Wzorowe Śląskie") tested models of such cooperation in practice. Other studies probed the history of Silesian design to reveal how rich its traditions are. Product workshops showed how the potential of traditional production methods is underestimated. The rising standards of products and services design can best be seen in subsequent editions of the only regional design competition "Silesian Icon". The Design Silesia project has been appreciated by the jury of the prestigious Design Management Europe Award, a European award in the field of design management.

3.

Research in Design

Innovations require research and monitoring of their real impact on the economy and our lives. There is a need to include them in the funding programmes and to open the field for multidisciplinary research on global challenges. **Research “for” design focuses on the use of new technologies and materials, consumer surveys as well as ergonomic and market research, and is open to companies and designers. Research *through* design consists in searching for new applications for the methods and procedures of design, while research *about* design attempts to probe the impact of design on economic efficiency at the micro and macro levels and its impact on society as a whole. Programmes such as “Horizon 2020” will increase the availability of research for small and medium-sized enterprises and allow for funding for research on the value of design. Be prepared to make the most of these opportunities.**

GOOD EXAMPLE – PERFECT Sobierajski

Zdzisław Sobierajski’s Company is an excellent example of high quality achieved through research and multi-disciplinary collaboration on the project. Not only are talented design graduates invited to work on the project, but also doctors and medical equipment manufacturers. At the same time, research is regularly conducted on the development of new technologies and materials. As a result of this approach, three products developed and implemented by PERFECT Sobierajski have already been recognised by the international RedDot Design Award jury. In 2011, the functional surgical suction unit COMBO won in the “Life Science and Medicine” category, and a year later, the suction unit Expert50 and the foot switch THIN repeated this success.

Another PERFECT Sobierajski project worth mentioning is the artificial heart driver unit, designed by Paulina Kordos together with a team of engineers led by Roman Kustoszczyk of the Artificial Heart Laboratory at the Religa Cardiac Surgery Development Foundation in Zabrze. With a comprehensive approach to the task, careful scrutiny of the specific conditions of life of a patient with an artificial heart, and the use of modern technology, it was possible to slim down the driver unit by as much as 104 kg (the previous generation device weighed 120 kg), so that it took the form of a handy portable case.

4. Design Education and Design Competences

Poland needs education at every level, from the education of conscious and creative consumers, through training of a new generation of artisans, to greater interdisciplinarity of design studies and continuous support for the professional development of designers. The science of design management should also be developed, and its elements incorporated in economic school curriculums in order to educate managers who can use design as a strategic management and innovation tool. Without creating a demand for high quality products and services, design will continue to remain in its niche, closer to some elitist art disciplines than to functional solutions to commonly experienced problems. The inclusion of design in the entire education system, from primary schools up, will not only give the public a language for describing things in terms of aesthetics and functionality, but also increase consumer awareness and stimulate individual abilities to seek creative solutions to a variety of problems.

GOOD EXAMPLE– Joined up design for schools

The Sorrell Foundation

The Joined Up Design for Schools is a Sorrell Foundation initiative with the aim of showing how design can improve the quality of school life when you listen to the needs of the actual “school customers”, i.e. the students. The five-year project covered dozens of schools, with more than 10,000 students. The project consisted in combining groups of ten or more student representatives with leading British design studios to find solutions to problems that arise in schools. At the beginning, students were familiarized with the specific characteristics and methods of a designers’ work. Then the children discussed among themselves what required the

most urgent changes in their environment, chose a specific problem and wrote a brief for the designer. Over the next three months, there were meetings of these unique “customers” with the designers. They visited inspiring places, sought original solutions and discussed the most important design assumptions. When the young team members had accepted the project, it was presented to the school authorities, the other students and the parents. Students pointed to a variety of issues, from friendly areas of science, functional dining rooms, safe and vandal proof toilets, to school visual identities and new looks for uniforms. The projects were carried out with the schools’ own means, funds from sponsors and the local community, with the support of the ministry responsible for education. However, most valuable are the intangible benefits of the initiative – giving students control and responsibility for their own environment meant that they began to identify with it and feel more at home. The *Joined up design for schools* project stimulated creativity and developed important social skills – teamwork, negotiation, communication and joint problem solving. The experience of bringing their own ideas to life increased the students’ self-esteem and self-confidence, and it was a positive example of the changes that design can make real. The project ended with an exhibition at London’s Victoria and Albert Museum, after which the Ministry of Education and Skills committed itself to support the Sorrell Foundation’s activities in the field of design and education.

5.

Social Innovation through Design

Innovation is often associated only with its technical and technological dimensions. However, innovation is also the result of social and economic development. The implementation of an innovative knowledge-based economy will not be possible without the stimulation of appropriate social mechanisms such as social trust, openness to innovative solutions or the educational system supporting creativity. Social innovations mean positive changes which meet the local social needs more efficiently than the existing solutions, while at the same time enhancing society's ability to act, establishing new social relationships and fields for cooperation. For this matter, design also proves to be an ideal tool as a means of engaging people in the process of solving their problems and implementing these solutions.

GOOD EXAMPLE – WellDone – Good Things

Być Razem Social Enterprise Development Foundation, Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, the United Nations Development Programme, Castle Cieszyn and the Adam Mickiewicz Institute.

WellDone is a pioneering initiative on Polish soil, which involves designers in the operation of a social enterprise, which supports the activation of the unemployed. The cooperation began in 2009, when the Być Razem Foundation and the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, Holon Institute of Technology in Israel, and Castle Cieszyn joined the project „From idea to object, from object to product” carried out in cooperation with the Adam Mickiewicz Institute. Young designers have prepared simple, useful and funny items, which are produced by the Foundation's protégés – those seeking to return to the labour market. The WellDone brand is much more than nice, smart gadgets. It is a chance to solve the problems of the people who produce them. In addition, the products are created in the spirit of sustainable development through the use of waste wood as the material and the use of recycled cardboard tubes as the packaging. The project was presented at exhibitions in Poland, Israel, France and Germany. Its innovativeness was recognized and supported by the UNDP Project Office in Poland, which helped with the comprehensive branding of WellDone and with designing new products. The next stage of the joint activities of the Foundation, the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, Castle Cieszyn and UNDP is to be the creation of the Social Design Centre, which is intended to build relationships between social enterprises, designers and businesses and to promote socially engaged design.

6. Consistent Design Promotion

The currently existing design centres in Poland should be networked to achieve synergy of their actions: enhanced cooperation will bring better results than competition. The role of the central design promotion institution should be reviewed and given a new impetus for action. Programmes aimed at the promotion of Poland through design, carried out by various state institutions, should be more strategic in nature rather than of the one-off campaign style. Therefore, they must be planned for a longer period of time.

GOOD EXAMPLE – DANSK DESIGN CENTER

Danes define themselves as the design nation and thus stand out in the world, gaining international recognition. This would not be possible, were it not for a coherent programme of support for and promotion of Danish design. The Danish Design Centre was the first in the world to elevate the support for design to the rank of national policy. The main objective of the first Danish design policy in 1997 was to make small and medium-sized enterprises as well as the public sector become aware of the value of design. 450 companies received support with the implementation of new products and services, so that they could find out about the added value that is brought by design. In order to receive support for further activity, DDC presented a research report indicating the positive impact of design on revenues, exports and the creation of jobs. This resulted in yet another design policy in 2003. The new strategy's motto was to „bring more design into business” and DDC focused on helping companies to integrate design into their business operations and innovation. A valuable prize INDEX Award for „projects that improve lives” was established.” The design policy of 2007 puts emphasis on user-oriented innovation, design of services for the public sector and international promotion. In 2010, the Danish government included design in the political vision and strategy for the country for the next ten years. DDC continues to strive for further improvement of design support strategies and to create the best conditions possible for the development of an innovative society through design. Maybe that is why Denmark leads the rankings as the best country to live in and do business?

Poland has achieved a lot in recent years, but the quality of life and business development conditions leave much to be desired. It is time to take the next step! It is time to design!

