

PRESS RELEASE

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Five leading designers announced as World Design Congress Ambassadors



The Design Council reveals five sector-leading ambassadors for the prestigious *World Design Congress™* – with less than one year to go until the event, which will be held in the UK for the first time in 50 years.

Representing leadership and innovation in British design, the five Ambassadors are artist and stage designer, Es Devlin; industrial designer, Tom Dixon; fashion designer; Foday Dumbuya; creative and technology leader, Suhair Khan; and architect, Professor Lesley Lokko OBE.

Ahead of the World Design Congress, the Ambassadors will advocate for the urgent need for design to be harnessed in facing the planetary crisis.

The Ambassadors will nominate a cohort of design innovators who are trailblazing in sustainable design – forming ‘25 for 2025’, who will be featured as part of the World Design Congress.

The World Design Congress 2025 will take place on 9 and 10 September at the Barbican Centre in London.

The Design Council today reveals its five world-leading ambassadors for the prestigious **World Design Congress™** – with less than one year to go until the event, which will be held at the Barbican Centre in London, in September 2025.

The 34th edition of the World Design Organization’s global Congress – hosted by the Design Council – is a key moment for British design on the global stage and highlights the UK’s position as a key player in the international design community.

The event will showcase some of the most innovative design solutions to the climate crisis from designers and business leaders through talks, workshops and exhibits.

In a remarkable moment for the UK’s design industry, over 1,000 designers and design advocates will come together with business leaders and policymakers at the World Design Congress to listen and share in person the solutions for the climate crisis and the green economy.

Justine Simons OBE, Deputy Mayor for Culture and the Creative Industries, said:

“As a global design capital, London is proud to be hosting the World Design Congress for the first time in 50 years. It will bring together the world’s leading creatives and show the vital role of design in addressing the climate crisis and boosting the green economy. We are looking forward to showcasing our city’s contribution, as we build a greener London for all.”

Representing UK leadership in design, the Ambassadors will lend their voice to raise the profile of the Design for Planet mission, the theme for the upcoming World Design Congress. From fashion to AI, material solutions to the built environment, the Ambassadors will share their knowledge and expertise, recognising that we are all on a journey to pivoting our practice, to highlight the UK’s power to influence the future of design and its pivotal role for future generations.

As part of their role, these five ambassadors will together nominate twenty trailblazers who are redefining the industry through environmental solutions, highlighting the best in sustainable design – creating a cohort of 25 design innovators for 2025. These visionary designers, architects, innovators, and trailblazers will represent the cutting edge of sustainable design. Championing narrative-driven principles, pioneering next-generation materials, reshaping educational and creative frameworks, and democratising design through emerging technologies. The ‘25 for 2025’ designers will be featured at the World Design Congress, and profiled on the soon to launch digital platform.

The Design Council’s Five Leading Ambassadors for the World Design Congress London 2025 are:

- **Es Devlin**, Artist & Stage Designer
- **Tom Dixon**, Industrial Designer
- **Foday Dumbuya**, Fashion Designer & Founder of LABRUM London
- **Suhair Khan**, Creative & Technology Leader
- **Professor Lesley Lokko OBE**, Architect

Suhair Khan, Creative Leader and World Design Congress Ambassador, said:

“Designers sit at the intersection of pretty much every single sector that’s linked to how we deal with the climate crisis, whether it’s engineering, business, technology or the creative industries. From that perspective, designers have the ability to imagine new futures and create opportunities for industry and government to manifest significant changes.”

The World Design Congress coming to the UK will shine a light, not just on the incredible diversity of design in this country, but also on the various possibilities for supercharging that work in ways that could be beneficial for other industries to make change for environmental impact.”

Tom Dixon, Designer and World Design Congress Ambassador, said:

“We need to design for longevity, to be conscious of the materiality that we are using, to minimise our footprint and manufacture things that have a less toxic impact on the planet. It’s important for us to not work in silos so I’m hoping that the World Design Congress will allow for an overlap of different disciplines and investment in new ways of thinking.”

Minnie Moll, Chief Executive of the Design Council, said:

“If we are going to redesign everything around us, we need all designers, from all sectors, to help turn the tide. The World Design Congress Ambassadors represent different expertise and perspectives, pushing boundaries in their disciplines. Uniting in the conversation against the climate crisis is an excellent step in influencing and inspiring other designers to do the same, no matter where they are in their journey.”

I am excited to see which designers they nominate as part of the 25 for 2025 programme and looking forward to working together to build momentum for the crucial Design for Planet mission.

The World Design Congress coming to London is an opportunity to create a catalytic moment for design which we plan to grasp and harness to accelerate true action.”

The UK’s Design Council was selected to host the World Design Congress by the World Design Organization. The bid was supported by the Greater London Authority, the Mayor of London, and many leading design institutions. The event will put a spotlight on the UK’s design industry, a sector growing at twice the UK average and contributing £97.4bn in GVA to the UK economy. The Congress was last hosted in London at the Southbank Centre in 1969 and attended by almost 1,000 delegates from 39 countries, featuring H.R.H Princess Margaret as the guest of honour.

The World Design Congress is officially supported by the UKRI Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and Innovate UK.

Professor Christopher Smith, Executive Chair of the Arts and Humanities Research Council and UKRI’s Creative Industries Champion, said:

“The Design Council has led the world through its standard setting, its international connectivity and its convenorship. In 2025, it will bring the world of design to the UK. Design is the key to unlock the most difficult challenges and the most exciting opportunities of our times. UKRI is proud to partner with the Design Council on a moment of vital change and hope, when research and innovation from across the world will continue to design a sustainable future for us all.”

As part of the event’s legacy, and in recognition of the significant skills gap, the Design Council has committed to upskilling 1 million UK designers by 2030. Despite 73% of designers believing that the mandate for environmental design will continue to grow – and 66% of designers already working on environmental projects in the last 12 months – only 43% of designers feel that they have the capability to meet these demands (Green Design Skills Gap Report, Design Council 2024).

Further programme and ticket information is yet to be announced – **to be the first to know more, please register your interest on the [World Design Congress 2025 website](#).**

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About Design Council

The Design Council is the UK’s national strategic advisor for design, championing design and its ability to make life better for all. It is an independent and not for profit organisation incorporated by Royal Charter. The Design Council uniquely works across all design sectors and delivers programmes with business, government, public bodies and the third sector. Their work encompasses thought leadership, tools and resources, showcasing excellence, and research to evidence the value of design and influence policy. Their Design for Planet mission was introduced in 2021 to galvanise and support the 1.97 million people who work in the UK’s design economy to help achieve net zero and beyond. In September 2025 the Design Council will host the prestigious World Design Congress as a catalytic moment in driving the sector towards designing for planet.

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About the World Design Organization

World Design Organization (WDO)[®] is an international non-governmental organization and the international voice for industrial design. WDO advocates for Design for a Better World, promoting and sharing knowledge of industrial design-driven innovation that enhances the economic, social, cultural, and environmental quality of life. Today, WDO services over 200 member organizations, representing thousands of industrial designers around the world.

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