

Press Release

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Design Council announces Barbican as venue for London's World Design Congress 2025



The Design Council reveals that the Barbican Centre has been chosen as the venue for the World Design Congress 2025, when it returns to London for the first time in over 50 years.

The prestigious design event will be hosted by the UK Design Council on 9 and 10 September 2025 at the Barbican, alongside a programme of regional activations placing the UK centre stage of the global design community.

The Design Council is currently working with the Centre on Barbican Renewal, a project to future proof the Barbican's spaces to meet the expectations of audiences and artists for the next forty years and beyond.

To mark the announcement on Earth Day, the Design Council has released the World Design Congress 2025 official logo, alongside visual interpretations of the Design for Planet theme from leading designers.

Today, on Earth Day, the Design Council announces the Barbican in London as the venue for the World Design Organization's **World Design Congress™** in 2025. The 34th edition of

the prestigious global design event will take place in London in September 2025, in partnership with the London Design Festival – creating a big moment for British design on the global stage and highlighting its position as a key player in the international design community.

Opened in 1982, the Barbican is an arts, learning and conference centre which sits in the heart of the City of London and is recognised worldwide for its iconic brutalist architecture. The Barbican was chosen by the Design Council as the London venue due to its renowned design status and current focus on improving sustainability. The two-day Congress, which will bring together 1,000 members of the international design community, will include elements such as talks, workshops and exhibitions – showcasing some of the most innovative design solutions to the climate crisis from British designers.

The UK's Design Council was selected to host the Congress in Autumn 2023 by the World Design Organization. The bid was supported by UKRI, the Greater London Authority, the Mayor of London, DCMS 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 event has more recently been held in cities including Tokyo, Hyderabad, Torino, and Montreal.

Alongside its iconic status and renowned cultural spaces, the Barbican was selected as the Congress venue due to its commitment to 'Design for Planet', the event's 2025 theme and the Design Council's flagship mission, which aims to galvanise the 1.97 million people working in design in the UK to design their way to net zero. The Congress calls for designers, and commissioners of design, to lead the way globally by creating the landscape and resources needed to put planetary needs at the forefront of design. Over 71 percent of designers think that demand for environmental design will grow in the next three years, but only 43 percent feel moderately or fully equipped to meet this demand, according to the Design Council's recent [Green Design Skills Gap Report](#).

The Design Council has been appointed to work with the Barbican to support and provide design advice on the Barbican Renewal Programme, a once-in-a-generation opportunity to radically reimagine the Centre through delivery of improved public and creative spaces and facilities. The Barbican is working with an award-winning design team consisting of Allies and Morrison, Asif Khan MBE and Buro Happold to support the renewal, which will deliver a sustainable revitalisation bringing underused spaces into new creative use, all without adding a single square metre of extra building. The first phase of Barbican Renewal is supported by £25 million funding pledged by the City of London Corporation.

Minnie Moll, CEO of the Design Council said: *“Both London and the Barbican represent the height of creativity, inspiration and design, which is why they are the perfect choice for the 2025 Congress, particularly with its focus on sustainability. The Barbican has demonstrated time and again that it is a world leader in event sustainability, and we look forward to developing the themes of the event around its incredible offering.”*

Charlie Smith, Deputy Head of Sales at the Barbican, said: *We're incredibly proud to have won an event that aligns so perfectly with the Barbican's unique design, cultural offerings and sustainable values. We play an important role in providing a platform for artistic and educational work which discusses and develops solutions for our planet and this event is an example of that. We are excited to have been chosen for such a high-profile global event and look forward to welcoming delegates from around the world in 2025."*

As part of the announcement, today marks the release of the official logo for the 2025 London World Design Congress designed by Design Council Designer, Maryam Atta. Inspired by the Design for Planet mission logo, the central symbolic eye alludes to the cover of a 1955 archival issue of Design magazine by Hans Schleger, announcing the new logo for the iconic Design Centre in Haymarket.

To celebrate Earth Day, the Design Council called on some of the world's leading designers to create their own visual representation of Design for Planet – supporting the message that design is a powerful tool to educate and inspire the next generation and putting planetary needs at the heart of the industry. The logo designs will be featured on the [Design Council's Instagram page](#), including contributions from Margaret Calvert, Ilse Crawford, Sebastian Conran, Labrum London and more.

The World Design Congress will be held at the Barbican in London on 9 and 10 September 2025. More programme information and tickets will be available early next year – to be the first to know more, please register your interest [here](#).

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Notes to Editor:

For further information, imagery and interview requests, please contact:

Joanna Cockerill

Design Council Press Office
designcouncil@modusbcm.com
+44 (0) 7833 476 094

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. The 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.

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About the Barbican

The Barbican is a catalyst for creativity, sparking possibilities for artists, audiences, and communities. We showcase the most exciting art from around the world, pushing traditional artistic boundaries to entertain and inspire millions of people, create connections, provoke debate, and reflect the world we live in.

We are an international arts and events centre rooted firmly in our own neighbourhood, collaborating with local communities and putting the City of London on the map as a destination for everybody. Central to our purpose is supporting emerging talent and shaping opportunities that will accelerate the next generation of creatives.

As a not-for-profit, we rely on the generosity of individuals and organisations, including our principal funder the City of London Corporation. Every ticket purchased, donation made, and pound earned supports our arts and learning programme and enables the widest possible range of people to experience the joy of the arts.

Opened in 1982, the Barbican is a unique and audacious building, recognised globally as an architectural icon. As well as our theatres, galleries, concert halls and cinemas, we have a large conservatory with over 1,500 species of plants and trees, a library, conference facilities, public and community spaces, restaurants, bars, and a picturesque lakeside oasis.

We're proud to be the home of the [London Symphony Orchestra](#), and a London base of the [Royal Shakespeare Company](#). We regularly co-commission, produce and showcase the work of our other associates and partners including the [Academy of Ancient Music](#), [the BBC Symphony Orchestra](#), [Boy Blue](#), [Britten Sinfonia](#), [Cheek by Jowl](#), [Darbar Festival](#), [Doc'n Roll Film Festival](#), [Drum Works](#), [EFG London Jazz Festival](#), [Human Rights Watch Film Festival](#), [London Palestine Film Festival](#), [Serious](#), and [Trafalgar Entertainment](#).

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