

Press Release  
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# Design Council announces Manchester as 2024 location for upcoming Design for Planet Festival



*Baz van Abel, Founder of Fairphone at Design for Planet Festival 2023*

**The Design Council announces the location for the 2024 Design for Planet Festival as Manchester – a city rich in urban and industrial design history – in collaboration with Manchester School of Art, Manchester Metropolitan University**

**The Design Council invites designers, design studios and businesses to collaborate for a net-zero future in its award-winning annual Design for Planet Festival, taking place on 6 November**

**Featuring a series of talks and workshops with leading designers from around the world, the festival will demonstrate the important role that designers play in generating solutions for the climate crisis focusing on a theme of Planet Positive Business**

**Ahead of the event, the Design Council today puts out an open call for designers, studios and businesses based in Greater Manchester using environmental design to get in touch.**

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The **Design for Planet Festival** is the award-winning flagship programme by the Design Council to support the UK design community to address the climate and ecological crises. The festival – previously held at the V&A Dundee, University of Northumbria, University of East Anglia Norwich and now Manchester School of Art – aims to galvanise the 1.97 million people working in design in the UK to design our way to a net zero world and beyond.

Launched in 2021, the festival brings together the whole design sector – from AI and digital systems, to fashion and architecture – inspiring action around climate-positive design and showcasing the latest regenerative design innovations. This year’s festival will bring global attention to the UK’s leadership in design and its role in addressing the planetary emergency, in the lead up to the World Design Congress in London 2025.

Manchester is the UK’s third largest green economy, a city with an ambition for inclusive, green growth and a thriving design industry. Renowned for its rich industrial past and vibrant cultural scene, Manchester’s position as the world’s first industrialised city has left the region’s heritage deeply intertwined with its architectural and design landscape. The festival will be held in the heart of Manchester School of Art’s campus in the same year Manchester Met is celebrating its 200th anniversary.

With a host of inspiring keynote speakers, practical how-to workshops and in-person networking sessions, the festival will bring together designers, design studios, students, businesses, educators and policymakers. Whilst also bringing together the global design community, with last year’s Design for Planet festival attended by online viewers from 93 countries worldwide.

Designers will leave empowered to make the case that design can be both good for the planet and for business, with the stories, stats and skills to challenge briefs, suggest innovative materials and systems at the forefront of sustainability, and highlight the power of design to achieve the triple bottom line. They will hear how to make the case for design to meet business’ immediate net zero needs, as well as help them shift their business models to ones which are kinder for the planet. The hybrid event will be streamed online around the world, with a series of exciting live events and roundtable discussions.

According to the Design Council’s *Design Economy* report, two-thirds of businesses use design in their practice, but only one-third anticipate using design for net-zero purposes. Employing the theme of *Planet-Positive Business*, the Design for Planet festival will demonstrate how design can support in the shaping of sustainable product lines, alongside the creation of circular business models and services; to mobilise the UK’s powerful design community into uniting efforts with businesses to address the climate crisis.

**Cat Drew, Chief Design Officer, the Design Council said:**

*“We are delighted to be bringing the Design for Planet Festival to Manchester for 2024, an incredible city, well-known for its transformation from an industrial powerhouse to a modern cultural hub, and leading an inclusive, green economy. It is fantastic to be bringing the*

*design community together to convene and upskill their capabilities to support business to do well and do good. We need a new economy that is fuelled by green design-led innovation, with designers working with businesses not only to create regenerative products, services and places, but also the business models that underpin them.”*

**Professor Martyn Evans, Director of Manchester School of Art, said:**

*“As one of the UK’s leading universities for sustainability, we are thrilled to partner with the Design Council for this year’s Design for Planet Festival. Design has always been at the heart of Manchester School of Art – in 1838 the School was created as a response to the manufacturing needs of industry in the city and once again, we are dedicated to educating and empowering the next generation of designers with the skills they need to address the climate emergency towards a greener, cleaner future.”*

The festival is advised by a new curatorial board for its 2024 edition, which includes: **Lou Cordwell**, Professor of Innovation & Special Advisor at University of Manchester; **Christine Cort**, Director of CC&Friends; **Kasper de Graaf**, Director of IMAGES&Co; **Martyn Evans**, Creative Director at LandsecU+I; **Jaheed Hussain**, Founder of Fuse; **Katie Jones**, Lecturer in BA (hons) Graphic Design at Manchester School of Art, and **Kyle Soo**, Partnerships & Product Manager at B Lab UK.

Design for Planet Festival 2024 will take place at Manchester Metropolitan University on 6 November, with more details to come.

**Designers, studios and businesses based in Greater Manchester using environmental design can get in touch at [press@designcouncil.org.uk](mailto:press@designcouncil.org.uk).**

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**ENDS**

**#DesignForPlanet**

Design for Planet Festival is the Design Council’s flagship event, as part of our Design for Planet mission: to galvanise the 1.97 million people working in design in the UK to design our way to a net zero world and beyond. Taking place on 6 November at Manchester Metropolitan University – with additional activity on 5 November – the festival will host around 150 invited guests in person and be live-streamed globally.

## 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.

[designcouncil.org.uk](https://designcouncil.org.uk)

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## About Manchester Metropolitan University

Manchester School of Art, Manchester Metropolitan University, is the second oldest art school in the UK (established in 1838), and one of the most comprehensive. It is housed in purpose built, state-of-the-art, award-winning buildings, and includes the [Department of Art and Performance](#) (including the [Manchester School of Theatre](#)), [Department of Design](#), [Manchester School of Architecture](#), [Manchester Fashion Institute](#) and the new [School of Digital Arts](#). In addition to Manchester School of Art, the university is also home to [Manchester Poetry Library](#) and the [Manchester Writing School](#), integral to Manchester's status as a UNESCO world [city of literature](#).



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