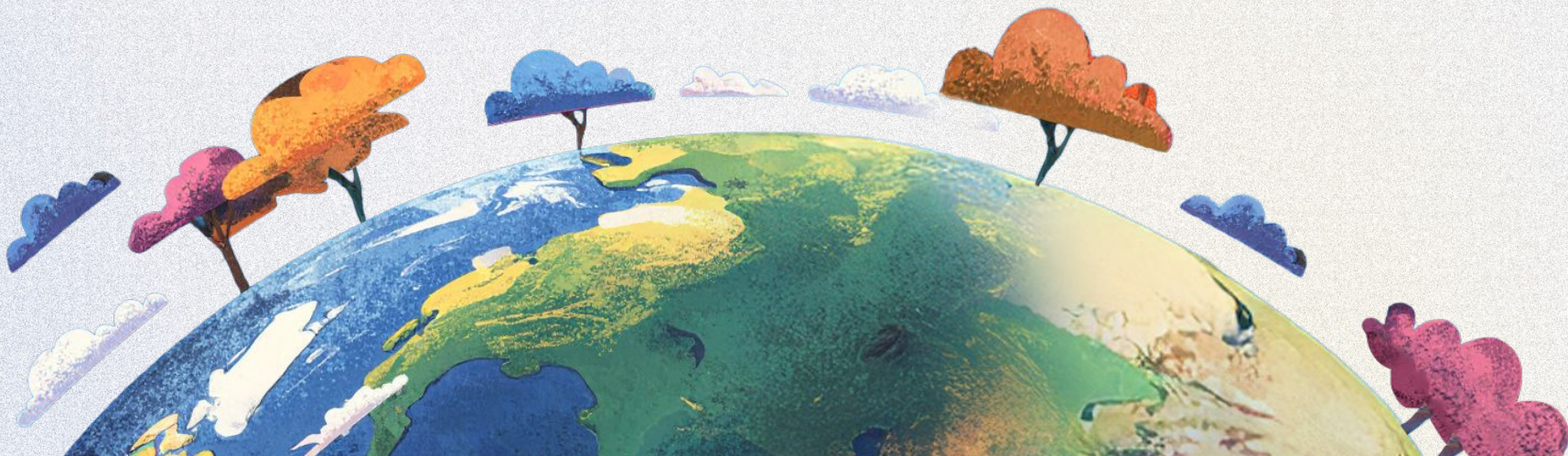


DESIGN CODES

Guidelines for purposeful and collective design action.

11 SEPTEMBER 2025



A call to codesign!

**A refined set of codes for design thought and action.
Relevant for a time of rapid Social, Political, Economic,
Natural, Technological upheaval and unsustainable growth.
Reimagine the impact of design with innovation, ethics,
responsibility, circularity at its core.**

For design which has renewed purpose.

At WDO, we are members of the only independent design organisation in the world. With roots in industrial design.



DESIGN PROMOTION ORGANIZATIONS



INDUSTRY



ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS



CIVIC BODIES



CITIES



The Collective

WHAT

WDO Leadership

A strategic initiative by the WDO Board and Leadership to create a guiding document. For our worldwide community to **design with intention for sustained impact.**



WHY

Fresh Mandates

Development of many Manifestos, Mandates recently in Design worldwide. Oath created by YDC. We are **observing, listening and absorbing.** Discovering best principles and practices.



WHO

WDO Community

Tapping into the working knowledge of our global network to understand the challenges / opportunities that we anticipate and must **proactively address as a professional community.**



NOV 2024 - FEB 2025

Absorb what exists

Immersion and synthesis of existing + new design guidelines + manifestos. Plus frameworks for actions around people, planet, places and profit.

JUNE - AUG 2025

Study Benchmarks

Decoding stated purpose, values and objectives of progressive design and innovation centered organisations.

SEPT 2025 - DEC 2025

Draft Design Codes

Recoding Design Codes. A prototype for hive mind of WDO Community, a common ground for codesigning futuristic Design Codes.

JUNE 2026

Design Codes

A shared, open source for the world. As a call and guidelines for action. Accessible on WDO digital handles.

Benchmarks provided by WDO BM



Benchmarks to be provided by WDO Member Organisations

NORTH AMERICA

29 Member Organisations

SOUTH AMERICA

4 Member Organisations

EUROPE

73 Member Organisations

AFRICA

6 Member Organisations

ASIA

99 Member Organisations

OCEANIA

5 Member Organisations

DESIGN **CODES**

Draft

Design is consideration, decisions and collective actions that result in sustained positive impact.

Design acts with purpose, reframing the most wicked problems in the world as potential shared and equitable opportunities for people, places, planet and profit. **Design anticipates shifts, responds proactively.**

Design Codes serve as a guiding light, a call to shape a community and a commitment, a blueprint to design for a better world.

Pillars



Respect Culture

Acknowledge wisdom of the past, progress with pluriversality, diversity and inclusion in the present and create equitable futures.



Design As Nature

Destroy with grace. Preserve with intention. Create with acute awareness. In a process of constant renewal with circularity.



Embrace The Future

Design and deploy technologies of the present to shape safe and regenerative futures for humanity and a living planet.

Design for all.

Design not just for privilege but also with and for the marginalised or displaced; for urban and rural citizens; for persons with disabilities and determination.

Serving equitable societies with fewer disparities in health, wealth, education, by creating the right to work for all.

With the will to solve the greatest challenges of discord, poverty, inequality, hunger, and food insecurity. To make a genuine effort to restore peace and harmony worldwide.

Design for rich and thriving cultures.

Recognise and accept plurality, pluriversality, preserve and revive indigenous knowledge and cultures.

Respect craft traditions, the intellectual property rights of the practitioners with fair value for their practice and produce.

Design better behaviours, ways of life and sustainable cultures.

**Design for physical
and emotional
wellbeing, wellness.**

Guide advances in science, biology and technology towards the wellbeing of individuals and families. Enabling a shift towards holistic wellness even as we improve care for illness.

Creating systems to better manage emotional wellbeing within the creative profession and in physical and digital spaces for all.

**Design for future
proof communities
and societies.**

Reimagine the boundaries of education to be flexible, adaptive for continuous learning, growth and application. To enable fluid adoption of new knowledge, empowering through continuous reskilling, capability building and instilling entrepreneurial confidence.

Create systems for societies to take collective responsibility and be adaptable, mobilise resources to mitigate negative impact.

Design for a living planet.

Nurture the ocean, mountains, rivers, land, wind and sun as abundant and replenishable resources for all creatures and humankind.

Forge partnerships and strategies to revitalise local ecologies, check extractive and exploitative practices.

Design and deploy viable and affordable technologies for climate resilience and planetary health.

Design for circularity, sustainability and regeneration.

Create, recognise and utilise regenerative materials, enable their adoption with new designs. That contribute to the zero waste objective.

Ensure circularity, reframing waste as an opportunity and giving people the choice and systems to repair and reuse products.

By embedding renewal into every stage of production and consumer consideration, design led innovation can and must transform industries and markets.

Design for resilient habitats.

Design eventuality ready public infrastructure as future proof and thriving ecosystems to sustain life for six generations to come. Preserve biodiversity and vanishing species that come in the way of progress for the here and now.

Design for all life.

Create with compassion for all living creatures, flora and fauna. Honor life in all its forms. Protect ecosystems, and respect the rights of every creature. Let design be a force that unites, nurtures, and ensures a thriving future for all life on Earth.

Design for better governance, public policy and lovable cities.

Make governance more effective and citizen-centric by unlocking partnerships that spark collective imagination and action, creating policies and systems that build trust, equity, and resilience.

Reimagine urban living systems to elevate quality of life—where vibrant public spaces, smart systems, and inclusive communities converge to nurture wellbeing, belonging, and active civic engagement across our interconnected world.

Design for resource sharing, optimisation and radically regenerative business models.

Create more with less—simple, efficient, and innovative solutions that serve both basic needs and aspirational experiences. Reframe business as a force for good, moving beyond minimizing harm to actively restoring ecosystems, uplifting communities, and replenishing the resources we draw upon. Every design choice becomes a catalyst for renewal, benefiting people, planet, and generations to come.

Design for AI with conscience and compassion.

While new technologies, especially AI, enable faster, smarter ways of working, true progress is when we are doing the right thing, in the right way. Design AI systems that put fairness, transparency, and care first, to advance humanity, protect dignity, and foster trust in an increasingly connected world.

Design for ethics.



Weave justice, empathy, and responsibility into every system.

Design with integrity for a just and equitable society. Where diverse voices are heard and the rights and safety of all are careful considerations.

Make design accountable as humanity's universal conscience.

**By collectively taking a positive and creative solve : resolve : evolve approach,
to design for a better world.**

WDO welcomes your participation and contribution in defining the refreshed purpose of design. And your suggestion of benchmark / design led / progressive organisations / institutions.

Member Contributions | DEC 2025 | For any clarifications : communications@wdo.org

Design for

▲ Your contribution in 3-6 words.

▲ My Benchmark (Design centered and progressive) Organisation

▲ My Name

▲ My Designation + Organisation

▲ Yes I am Interested in joining a workshop

Thank You

