

What we do

... and what we don't do

What is the Design Council?

We are the national strategic body for design.

What does that mean?

We believe design can help people to do what they do, better. We're funded by the UK government, and we promote the use of design throughout the UK's businesses and public services. We demonstrate that design can play a vital role in strengthening our economy and improving our society.

Why does the Design Council exist?

We have a goal - to help UK managers become the best users of design in the world, supported by the most skilled and capable design professionals.

What is the Design Council doing to realise that goal?

Our work is divided into five areas:

- We influence national [policy](#), making sure design is at the heart of government thinking.
- We direct a programme of design support for UK [businesses](#).
- We initiate new thinking on ways to design public services around the needs of people who use them.
- We run a programme called Designs of the time (Dott), which gets people involved in exploring how [design can improve their lives](#).
- We provide the UK with authoritative design research, knowledge and signposting. Indeed, this website aims to offer information, advice and debate for all users, buyers, students and practitioners of design.

That wasn't what I thought the Design Council did...

The Design Council has existed for more than 60 years, and in that time our remit has changed quite a bit. Some of the things we used to do are now provided by other organisations. Some of the things we do now are new services that we have developed because the UK needs

different things than it did in 1944.

But if we don't do what you think we do, we hope that we can tell you someone who does.

Below are some of the questions we regularly get asked. In each case, we'll tell you if we can help. If we can't, we'll signpost you to another organisation or information resource that we think is best-placed to answer your query. (And if the information we give you isn't helpful, please tell us.)

Can I become a member of the Design Council?

Actually, you can't - but only because we don't have a membership scheme or accreditation programme. If you want to come and work for us, please have a look at our [jobs](#) page.

If you are a designer, you might be interested in reading more about the [Chartered Society of Designers](#), which offers individual membership.

If you run or work for a design business, you could contact the [Design Association](#) which offers an accreditation scheme.

Design businesses and design buyers interested in representation, training and events for designers and clients can contact the [Design Business Association](#), the trade body representing designers, or [British Design Innovation](#), a not-for-profit membership organisation focusing on collaborative innovation by designers & industry.

I need a designer – can you recommend someone?

As a government-funded organisation, we have to remain impartial, so we don't currently recommend designers or design businesses.

But we can recommend alternative sources of information, such as the four organisations listed above, who can advise you.

Does the Design Council advise businesses on the use of design?

Our Designing Demand business growth support programme advises businesses on how to use design to boost competitiveness. The programme, launched in 2006, is running in three regions of the UK, and we expect it to be available across England by 2008. For full details, visit [/www.designingdemand.org.uk](http://www.designingdemand.org.uk).

For useful listings of organisations that can help your business, visit our [Directory listings](#) section. You can also find comprehensive information and advice on using design in the [About design](#) section of this website, as well as [case studies](#) of design in action.

Does the Design Council offer funding? Do

you endorse products or services?

The Design Council is a strategic body, so we don't offer funding or endorsements directly to individuals. You can find information about places that do offer or advise on funding for [designers](#) or [businesses](#) in our Directory listings section.

How can I access Design Council publications?

The Design Council produces a number of publications which are available to download from our website. It is also possible to order hard copies where these exist. You can find a full list in our [Publications](#) section.

Can I use Design Council articles or images, or link to the website?

In certain cases we allow limited reproduction of some of our text and images. Full details of our conditions and our downloadable consent form can be found on our in our [Conditions of Use](#).

Does the Design Council still have an exhibition centre and shop? Do you welcome visitors?

While we frequently invite members of both design and business communities to meetings and events at our headquarters in Covent Garden, The Design Council's offices are no longer open to the public.

Our exhibition and shop space in London's Haymarket closed in 1994. These days you can contact us and join our debates online through this website.

The UK has a number of excellent design exhibition spaces. The [Design Museum](#) in Shad Thames, London has a shop and café as well as regularly changing design exhibitions, while the [Victoria and Albert Museum](#) in South Kensington has a diverse art and design collection. In Glasgow, [The Lighthouse](#), Scotland's Centre for Architecture, Design and the City, has galleries, a conference centre, shop and restaurants.

How can I find out about a product that has received a Design Council award in the past?

The Design Council Archive at the Design History Research Centre at the University of Brighton documents the history of the Design Council from its foundation in 1944 to the present. As such, it also holds information on Design Council awards. For information on the Millennium Products initiative, please refer to the Our History section.

Does the Design Council run any award schemes?

You can find lots of information about awards and competitions in our Directory Listings section.

The Design Council only runs one award scheme, the Prince Philip Designers Prize. This prize is awarded annually to an individual designer or leader of a design

team, selected from nominations by a number of design organisations. Read more about the [Prince Philip Designers Prize](#) here.

I want to be a designer - do you offer careers advice? What courses do you recommend?

We can't endorse specific design courses or educational institutions, but you can get information on all undergraduate design courses at the [UCAS website](#). UCAS publishes a guide called Progression to Art & Design in May each year (available from the publications section of its website). Other useful sources of advice on design education include the [Times](#) and [Guardian](#) websites.

For careers advice on working across the creative economy, visit www.yourcreativefuture.org. Your Creative Future provides an overview of the diverse careers available in the creative industries, from graphic design and crafts to book publishing and games design.

Do you have other questions about us and what we do? [Contact us](#) and we'll answer your queries.

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Our Business Plan

We're making progress in moving design to the heart of national life. Our Business Plan for 2006-07, National Design Policy in Practice, sets out how we're going to build on our successes over the next year.

It gives details of the work we'll undertake to drive business competitiveness, improve public sector performance and strengthen training, education and skills development for the design sector. And the document also outlines our goals for the year.

[Business Plan 2006-07](#)

Our Corporate Plan

The role of design is essential to the process of generating the new ideas and ways of doing things that will improve all our lives. We have developed a new programme to improve business performance and enhance public services through a demonstration of the practical power of design.

This Corporate Plan sets out our new programme - the challenges we face and how we intend to address them. It describes the new delivery mechanisms we will introduce in a reshaped organisation, the measures we will use to assess the impact of our work over time, and the costs of implementing the plan.

[Corporate Plan](#)

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