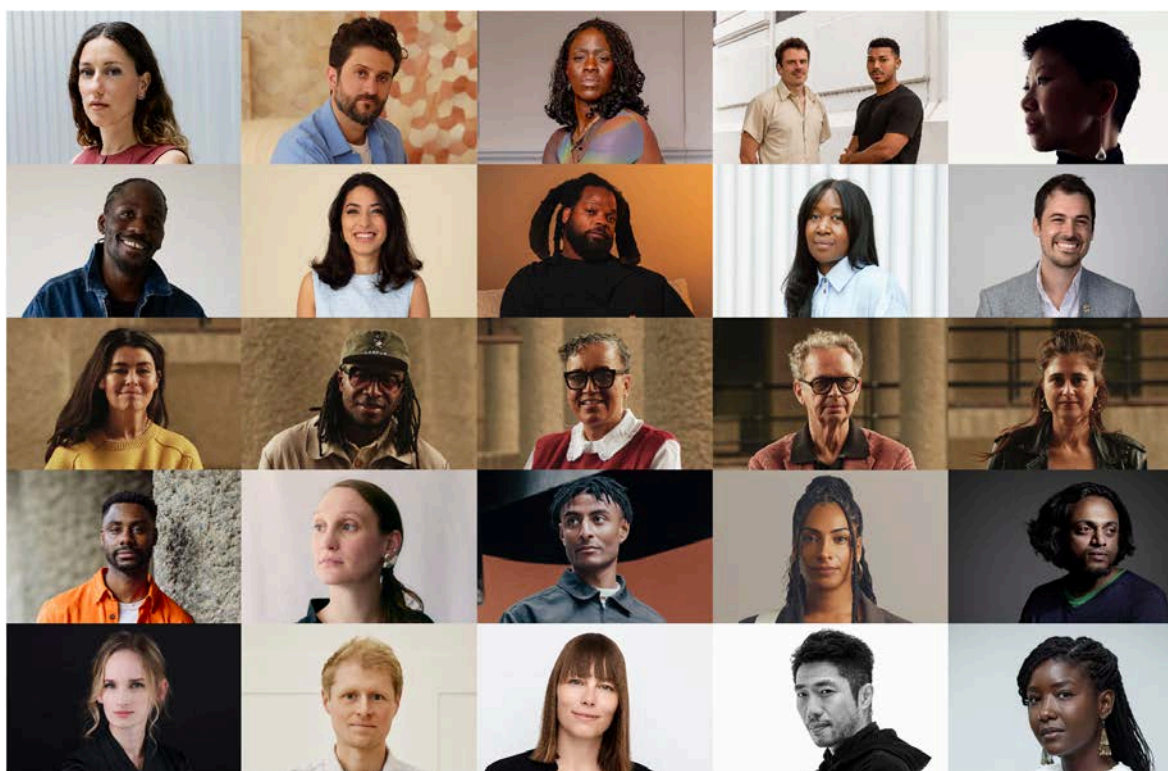


PRESS RELEASE

17 March 2025

The Design Council names ‘25 for 2025’ design trailblazers changing the industry ahead of the World Design Congress London



The Design Council’s ‘25 for 2025 World Design Congress Trailblazers’ profiles 25 designers from around the globe that are innovating and reshaping the industry, ahead of the World Design Congress London 2025.

The 20 Trailblazers were nominated by the prestigious programme’s recently-appointed ambassadors Tom Dixon, Professor Lesley Lokko OBE, Es Devlin, Suhair Khan and Foday Dumbuya for leading and redesigning the industry in 2025 – together making up the ‘25 for 2025’.

The Trailblazers include designers and design thinkers, who are working to design innovative solutions to the climate crisis, including fashion designer Priya Alhuwalia, bio-designer Natsai Audrey Chieza, product designer Fernando Laposse, and architect Arthur Mamou-Mani.

Featuring keynotes and case studies from leading design visionaries, the two-day programme will include keynotes from leading British designer Thomas Heatherwick, Earthshot prize winner Charlot Magayi and founder of Fairphone, Bas Van Abel.

The World Design Congress 2025 will take place on 9 and 10 September at the Barbican Centre in London, with Early bird tickets now on sale.

The Design Council today announces its '25 for 2025 World Design Congress Trailblazers' ahead of the prestigious **World Design Congress™** – which will take place later this year 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 sector.

In a remarkable moment for the UK's design industry, the event will bring together over 1,000 designers, design advocates and policymakers, to showcase some of the most innovative design solutions to the climate crisis from designers and business leaders through keynotes, interactive workshops and exhibits.

Celebrating leading voices in sustainable design, the 20 Trailblazers were selected by five ambassadors appointed by the Design Council representing UK leadership in 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**. The five ambassadors, along with the 20 Trailblazers, form the '25 for 2025' for the World Design Congress London.

From fashion to AI, material solutions to the built environment, the ambassadors have shared their knowledge and expertise through nominating designers that are redefining the industry through environmental solutions. All 20 nominated designers have been selected for their potential to inspire meaningful change at the intersection of creativity and environmental sustainability. Championing narrative-driven principles, pioneering next-generation materials, reshaping educational and creative frameworks, and democratising design through emerging technologies.

At the front of their fields, the Trailblazers are changing the face of sustainable design within the industry and beyond. Spearheading initiatives such as founding a fashion brand that works exclusively with vintage, recycled and deadstock fabrics (**Priya Ahluwalia**); combining natural materials and traditional techniques to create *Totomoxtle*, a veneer material made from native Mexican corn husks (**Fernando Laposse**); harnessing biodesign and bacterial dyeing processes to lead the future of sustainable textiles (**Natsai Audrey Chieza**); and using waste seafood shells to make new packaging solutions, which biodegrade in soil and marine environments (**Insiya Jafferjee**).

The Design Council's '25 for 2025 World Design Congress Trailblazers' are:

- **Priya Ahluwalia**, Fashion Designer, Founder of Ahluwalia
- **Jayden Ali**, Architect, Co-Curator of the British Pavilion at the 2023 Venice Biennale
- **Assimply Studio**, Experimental Design Studio

- **Natsai Audrey Chieza**, Designer, Founder of Faber Futures
- **Michael Bennett**, Spatial Designer
- **Nzinga Biegueng-Mboup**, Architect
- **Shajay Bhooshan**, Architect, Senior Associate at Zaha Hadid Architects
- **Sebastian Cox**, Furniture Designer
- **Es Devlin**, Artist & Stage Designer
- **Tom Dixon**, Industrial Designer
- **Foday Dumbuya**, Fashion Designer, Creative Director & Founder of LABRUM London
- **Phoebe English**, Fashion Designer
- **Arthur Huang**, Structural Engineer & Architect
- **Insiya Jafferjee**, Product Designer, Co-Founder & CEO of Shellworks
- **Suhair Khan**, Creative & Technology Leader
- **Fernando Laposse**, Designer
- **Emmanuel Lawal**, Industrial / Product Designer
- **Professor Lesley Lokko OBE**, Architect & Academic
- **Kieron Anthony Lewis**, Graphic Designer & Writer
- **Arthur Mamou-Mani**, Architect, Founder of Mamou-Mani Architects
- **Sara Martinsen**, Designer
- **Charlotte McCurdy**, Interdisciplinary Designer
- **Kusheda Mensah**, Product Designer, Founder of Modular by Mensah
- **Marjan van Aubel**, Solar Designer
- **Dr Sophia Wang**, Artist & Researcher, Co-Founder of MycoWorks

The '25 for 2025 World Design Congress Trailblazers' designers will be profiled on the World Design Congress digital platform, which is now live to the public. They will have the opportunity to lend their voice to amplify the crucial theme of Design for Planet and share their ongoing journey within sustainable design as part of this once-in-a-generation event. With a vision for innovation and real-world impact, the Trailblazers exemplify the power of design in breaking boundaries and driving change to create a better world for both people and planet.

Covering a wide variety of themes from across the sector, the Congress will highlight how designers around the world are implementing circular design practices, restoring and empowering communities and ecosystems, and engaging in cross-sector collaboration – showcasing innovative designs that are already impacting a sustainable future for all.

Audiences will have the opportunity to hear from leading British designer **Thomas Heatherwick** and Earthshot prize winner **Charlot Magayi**. The lineup will also feature founder of Fairphone **Bas Van Abel**, sustainability and circular provocateur **Leyla Acaroglu**, co-founder of COLLINS **Leyland Maschmeyer** and architect **Indy Johar**.

Sebastian Cox, Furniture Designer and '25 for 2025' Trailblazer, said:

"It's been clear to me for a number of years that governments lack the long-term thought to act seriously enough regarding the biodiversity and climate emergencies. Large advances in clean energy, for example, have been driven by markets rather than policies and so it appears that the role of designers, consumers and producers must shape these positive market shifts to design for the planet."

Michael Bennet, Spatial Designer and ‘25 for 2025’ Trailblazer, said:

“Design isn’t just about what we build, it’s about what we leave behind. If we’re not designing with the planet in mind, we’re designing for our own extinction.”

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 Trailblazers bring together different expertise and perspectives, pushing boundaries in their disciplines. Uniting in the conversation against the climate crisis is a necessary step in influencing and inspiring other designers to do the same, no matter where they are in their journey.

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.”

Bharat Kapoor, Partner & Global Lead of PERLab, Kearney said:

“Kearney’s approach to design reimagines the status quo, starting with impact and challenging conventions at every stage—from strategy to prototype—to create lasting value. Our partnership with the Design Council builds on our ambition to unite visionary leaders and develop bold ideas to redefine product and service design, focused on advancing human centricity, technology-driven innovation, and long-term sustainability.”

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, global management consultancy Kearney and Zaha Hadid Architects.

Early bird tickets to the World Design Congress London 2025 are now on sale on the World Design Congress [website](#).

-

ENDS

-

Notes to Editor:

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

Rioco Green

Design Council Press Office

designcouncil@modusbpcm.com
+44 (0) 7833 476 094

World Design Congress

Open Call for Contributors

The World Design Congress 2025 invites designers, practitioners, and change-makers from around the globe to contribute their perspectives, insights, and expertise to this year's programme. We are opening up opportunities for exceptional voices to be placed within existing panels, workshops, or sessions.

This is your chance to join global experts on stage, share your work, and drive forward the conversations shaping the future of design for people and the planet.

For more details, please visit designcouncil.org.uk.

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.

designcouncil.org.uk

@designcouncil

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.

wdo.org

@worlddesignorg