

Marc O’Riain / President of the Institute of Designers in Ireland and Registered Designer

Institute of Designers in Ireland: President’s Address

The Institute of Designers in Ireland is the the largest organisation of professionally based designers in Ireland. It represents the diverse nature of design on this island, from the pixel to the city. As such the organisation does a number of things, we organise and promote the highest standards in design, we encourage debate, we advocate and we develop policy on Irish design, lobbying government and supporting design activities like Iterations. We financially support education activities like the Graduate Design Awards and research activities such as, Iterations, and organising CPD activity as part of continued professional development.

This year my focus is on bringing added value to IDI membership. I set a target of 500% growth in membership this year and I am happy to say we are at 400% on writing this and hope to make our target by the time the IDI awards roll around. To this end we dropped individual membership to €150 and created a number of group and institutional memberships which have been very popular.

The additional membership has allowed us to increase our offerings. We redesigned our website in August as a central point of communication and interface with the design community. Here we created a “Find a Designer” directory aimed at clients. We developed a fully online awards entry system with a better user experience. All events like Design Social and CPDs are advertised on the website. Most recently we introduced Registered Designer in Ireland.

On Thursday 5th of November we will host the IDI Graduate Design Awards and Exhibition in DIT Grangegorman. The IDI Awards Exhibition at Teeling’s Distillery will follow this on Thursday 12th of November with the main awards being held at the Marker Hotel on 26th of November.

Commentary

The lack of a professional level of recognition and control of design practice has been talked about for too long in this country. We are ending that argument and have set up a voluntary non-statutory register of Designers. You are not forced or obliged to join. The Register of Irish Designers acknowledges the professional level of

design education, practice, advocacy, research and achievements based on a rigorous and quantitative analysis. The term ‘Registered Designer’ will be a mark of quality assurance for the design industry, to its clients and the public as a whole, beginning to address issues of consumer confidence and consumer protection. It is hoped that in the future, and with the support of the design community, the Institute Designers Ireland will seek to establish the register on a statutory level. There is a charge for registration but this money is sequestered to support and subsidize CPD, a requirement for all registered designers. The IDI administers the Register of Designers in Ireland but would hope to see senior members of ICAD and the RIAI join the Registration Assessment Committee in time.

I believe we are a small country and we need to work together, with our sister institutions who represent design and individually outside our discipline. In the latter end of my tenure I aim to target the creation of regional IDI chapters and the expansion of IDI activity in the regions.

I hope that this year makes a difference to you, as a designer or as a consumer of design. As a design community we need to see our representative institutions as a route to reinvest in our practice, a way to promote design so all boats do rise. I commend all those who have worked hard in the IDI to bring you these new offerings and I invite you to join us, get involved and help make designing in Ireland a better career, a better community and a better environment.



Marc O’Riain

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