

Kim McKenzie-Doyle / President of the Institute of Designers in Ireland

Institute of Designers in Ireland: President's Address

The theme for my presidency Balance by Design, hinges on two very important initiatives that I am very passionate about. The first 'Why Design' aims to address the gender imbalance in the Irish Design Industry

We ask why as designers, why not ask why of ourselves?

Why can't we have a balanced industry, when it's currently only 25% female across the board?

Why in many second level design courses there are more females than males studying, but that does not transfer into industry?

Why can't female colleagues get promoted as often as their male counterparts?

Why is there still a pay gap between the genders?

Why have we not taken responsibility for this?

My primary focus this year is to create a platform 'whydesign.ie' that would inform and communicate what Design actually is. The possible career paths in Design. Where to study Design in Ireland. To showcase practicing female designers, highlighting role models within the industry. It is aimed at second and third level female students, their parents, teachers and guidance councillors. We will also deliver a Diversity and Equality plan to the Irish Design Industry. This is phase 1 in attempting to resolve the gender imbalance.

I am delighted to say we have Deloitte Digital already on board as a gold level partner, with key supports from Goosebump, 256 Media and DellEMC and more following fast, work has already started on this project.

The second of the initiatives of the year: A national day of creativity in aid of mental health in Ireland called 'Mind over Matter'. We creatives are 25% per cent more likely to suffer a mental health issue in our lifetime than the general population. In 2017 we are partnering with Aware – A nationwide mental health organisation who have saved countless lives since its founding in 1985. We are looking for professional designers to get involved and support this, if you are interested please contact us.

My first action, day one, will be to produce a membership card for our members. It will act as a vehicle for discounts and special offers from our partners (CPD and Professional Services), free entry into IDI Bread and Butter (*our series of design talks which will happen bi-monthly*) which will be paid in for non-members. The personalised card will be delivered with the IDI code of conduct, an overview of the constitution, and an outline of your membership benefits.

On September 15th we host our annual Irish Design Awards, this year we are moving to a new venue and have many exciting new aspects. Look out for our international judging committee! We are delighted to partner with IADT on this years IDI Graduate Awards, we are working on making this bigger and better than ever.

I am really looking forward to working with the fantastic IDI team, already hard at work on all aspects of the organisation and these initiatives. If you would like to get involved, what are you waiting for?

#balancebydesign

The Institute of Designers in Ireland is the professional body representing the interests of Irish designers. Its function is to promote high standards of design, to foster professionalism and to emphasise designers' responsibility to society, to the client and to each other.

Founded in 1972, the IDI is Ireland's largest and oldest association of design professionals. It is recognised at national, EU and international level as the representative body for the Irish design profession. Our primary role is to act a voice for these designers and we always aim to keep people informed, engaged and enlightened on Irish design. We advocate and we develop policy on Irish design, lobbying government and fund design activities like Iterations. We financially support activities like the Graduate Design Awards, the Irish Design Awards and research activities such as, Iterations, running Design Enterprise Skillnet activity as part of our continued professional development offering.



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