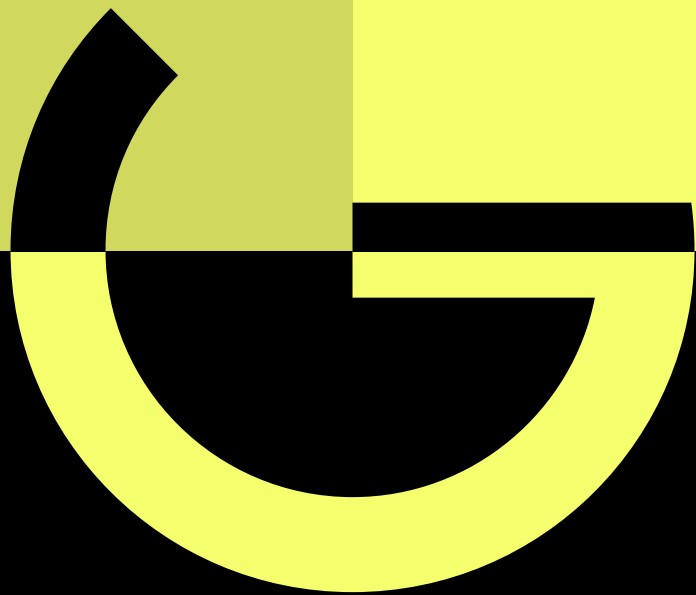


# Call for Entries



German  
Design  
Graduates  
2025



**Rat für Formgebung**  
German Design Council

# German Design Graduates

## Important Dates 2025

April 14th – May 12th	Call for Entries
September 4th – October 12th	Exhibition at MAKK, Museum für Angewandte Kunst, Cologne
October 18th – 26th	Festival exhibition at the Dutch Design Week, Eindhoven

## About Us

German Design Graduates (GDG) is the only nationwide initiative that promotes design graduates and renowned German universities and art colleges. The enormous range of graduate projects and their nuanced approaches to design provoke a discourse - not only about design itself, but also about design research and the future of design. The most important task of German Design Graduates is to showcase the quality and diversity of these academic achievements and practice-oriented solutions. The graduates are introduced to an international audience through formats such as networking events, exhibitions, and the Graduates Platform. They are supported through training courses and the German Design Award 2026 – Newcomer. This gives them a prestigious platform at the beginning of their careers.

German Design Graduates is organised annually by the German Design Council Foundation – Stiftung Rat für Formgebung.

## Participation

The annual call for entries is aimed at students and graduates of state-recognised art colleges, universities, and universities of applied sciences studying:

- Product or Industrial Design
- Textile and Fashion Design
- Communication and Digital Design

Participation in German Design Graduates is organised in two stages. Selected universities are nominated and can register for the programme (participation fee). Registration by the university enables its graduates from the last two semesters (April 2024 to May 2025) to submit entries. Individual and group submissions (max. 6 persons) are possible. In the case of a group project, at least one person must have graduated with this project and consequently be eligible to participate.

# Support programme

## Graduates Platform

All submitted projects are published on the Graduates Platform after editing, where they join projects from previous years to form a growing archive of young designers' topics and positions.

Selected works will also be promoted via the German Design Council's social media channels.

↳ [Graduates Platform](#)

## Training programme

All participants can apply for training courses to sharpen their personal profiles. In one-day workshops with and in companies, they receive practical impulses from the professional world. They can professionalise their skills in the areas of personal branding, public relations, design research, circular design, and implementation and subsequently expand their network. This year's partner organisations include MAGAZIN, NDION and the Institute for Design Research and Appliance.

↳ [Trainings](#)

## Museum exhibition

A team of curators selects around 45 graduate projects for a group exhibition.

Host: MAKK, Museum für Angewandte Kunst Köln

Duration: September 4th – October 12th 2025

↳ [Museum exhibition](#)

## Festival exhibition

The curated group exhibition presents around 20 graduation projects on the theme of cooperation and collaboration.

Host: Dutch Design Week, Eindhoven

Duration: October 18th – 26th, 2025

↳ [Festival exhibition](#)

## German Design Award 2026 –

### Newcomer

Five finalists from this year's German Design Graduates will be nominated for the German Design Award 2026 - Newcomer, which will be presented at the German Design Awards at Ambiente. All graduates participating in German Design Graduates 2025 are eligible to enter the German Design Award 2026 - Newcomer. The process will start at the end of May 2025.

## Cooperations & Recommendations

German Design Graduates is in close contact with institutions such as the World Design Organisation, BEDA, as well as international festivals and trade fairs. German Design Graduates regularly makes recommendations for their young talent programmes. This year's partners are the 'Ambiente Talents' and the exhibition 'Talents – Masters of the Future' at the International Crafts Fair in Munich.

# Submission Checklist

Projects can be submitted via an online form at [germandesigngraduates.com](http://germandesigngraduates.com). The application period runs from April 14th – May 12th 2025 and graduates can apply for several of the programmes listed above. Individual and group submissions (max. 6 persons) are possible. By submitting, the participating graduates accept the terms and conditions of German Design Graduates.   
↳ [Terms & Conditions](#)

## Personal Information

You will be asked to provide your contact details and diploma. This data will not be published. It is required for administrative and verification purposes. If a certificate is not yet available, a provisional confirmation of graduation from the university will suffice.

## Project Information

All submitted projects will be published on the GDG Platform after editorial review. GDG accepts no responsibility for the content of the final projects submitted. The GDG team reserves the right to make corrections to spelling

and grammar and image layout depending on the intended use.

## Title and Subtitle

**Description** (Max. 1000 characters incl. spaces)

**Tags** (See [Graduates Platform](#))

## Images

- 1 title image (3 MB) / 1 title image (3 MB)
- no collages
- photography, drawings, renderings
- max. 200 dpi / max. 200 dpi / only RGB
- accepted files: png, jpg, jpeg, gif

## Video

Optionally, a video can be linked. The video is not embedded directly into the GDG website. Users are redirected to the external provider's page. The video must be public – no login required – otherwise users will not be able to view it.

## Thesis

Optionally, the thesis itself may be uploaded as a PDF (max. 12 MB). It will not be published. However, it may be used by the curators and partners to assess the project.

## Exhibit

The details of the exhibit will not be published. They will be used for the curators' evaluation.

- Analogue / digital exhibit
- Power requirements
- Exact description of the exhibit
- Number, size, material of objects
- Image material

## Trainings

Interested individuals are asked to submit a short motivation (max. 250 words):

### Personal Branding

- What challenges do you see in your self-marketing?
- What goals would you like to achieve with the training?

### Public Relations

- What challenges do you see with regard to your PR strategy?
- What goals/target groups do you want to reach with your communication?

### Design Research

- Would you like to do a doctorate? If yes, on which topic; What challenges do you currently see for this?

- Have you already completed your doctorate? If so, what role does design research play in your career planning?

### Circular Design

- What would you like to improve in your design in the direction of circular design; What knowledge do you lack?
- Who/what would you like to reach with your product? Who could help with further development?

### Implementation (MAGAZIN)

Your product concept or design as a presentation in PDF format (maximum 10 pages and 6 MB) and, if selected for the exhibition, a 1:1 prototype of your design.

# Selection Process

A team of curators and partner organisations will select projects for the museum and festival exhibition as well as their trainings.

## **Evaluation Criteria**

Submissions are assessed according to their conceptual quality, degree of innovation, autonomy of the design and its potential. The criteria serve as a guide and are not legally binding.

### **General criteria**

#### *Innovation & Impact*

To what extent does the project respond to current challenges and/or future issues? To what extent does the project have a transformative character? To what extent does the design initiate change processes? To what extent did the desired impact of the design guide its strategic development?

#### *Design & Construction*

How does the project combine formal and functional qualities? What aesthetics are developed through

the production methods and the use of materials, new technologies and/or craftsmanship? How user-friendly is the project?

#### *Presentation & Communication*

Is the project presented adequately in text and images? How is the symbolic and emotional content of the visualisations made clear? To what extent are digital and analogue methods used appropriately?

### **Specific criteria**

#### *Society & Culture*

To what extent does the project mediate between existing and thinkable cultural/social practices? What are the aspects of the culturally and socially compatible design proposal with regard to the acceptance of innovative concepts and technologies?

#### *Sustainability & Circular Thinking*

To what extent have sustainable materials and/or the integration of energy-efficient production processes been taken into account? To what extent can circular thinking - from material sourcing to production, sales,

use, and end of life/reuse/reintegration - be recognised?

#### *Research & Transfer*

To what extent does the project build on your own or current research findings? How are the research and design processes interlinked? To what extent does the project benefit from interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary approaches?

# Benefits

## Benefits for all participating graduates:

German Design Graduates allows all participating graduates to build connections and make their work accessible to a broader public.

- Presentation of all participating graduates and their projects on the German Design Graduates website and the German Design Council's social media channels
- Gain reputation in professional circles through media visibility
- Opportunity to build a professional network at networking events

## Benefits for selected participating graduates through:

### Exhibitions (Museum or Festival)

- Reputation building through exhibitions in internationally renowned museums and at design festivals
- Recognition through selection by highly respected curators
- Exhibition space in curated, designed group exhibitions
- Opportunity to participate in events such as openings, panel discussions, and partner events to expand your personal network
- Accompanying communication measures on a national/international level
- Subsidies for travel expenses
- Press releases and PR activities
- Unlimited use of the respective label 'Exhibitor 2025'
- Special presence on the website and social media channels of the German Design Council
- Special networking opportunities and cross-university, interdisciplinary discourse

### Training Programmes

- Opportunities for professional and personal development in the areas of personal branding, public relations, design research, design education, circular design and implementation
- Development of a professional network
- Subsidies for travel expenses
- Accompanying communication measures on a national/international level
- Unlimited use of the respective label 'Trainee 2025'

## German Design Council Foundation

The German Design Council is Germany's leading authority on design. Since 1953. As a thought leader in the field, it is committed to realising the potential of design for a sustainable future. The German Design Council connects business with design – for circular design, transformation, and economic success.

## Contact

For questions regarding German Design Graduates, please contact:

Katrin Krupka

Project Manager German Design Graduates

[katrin.krupka@gdc.de](mailto:katrin.krupka@gdc.de)

+49 69 247448-695

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## Organisation

Stiftung Rat für Formgebung  
Messeturm  
Friedrich-Ebert-Anlage 49  
60327 Frankfurt am Main

Tel. +49 69 24 74 48-600

Fax +49 69 24 74 48-700

Email: [info@gdc.de](mailto:info@gdc.de)

Vertretungsberechtigt und v.i.S.d.P.:  
Lutz Dietzold, Geschäftsführer des Rat  
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### Datenschutz

[https://germandesigngraduates.com/  
datenschutzerklaerung/](https://germandesigngraduates.com/datenschutzerklaerung/)

### Imprint

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