

PRESS RELEASE

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**German Design Graduates 2025 | 04.09. – 12.10.2025 | Museum for Applied Arts Cologne (MAKK)**

Cologne/Frankfurt am Main, 14 August 2025



### **“Dare to Design – Spaces of Care” presents the year’s best graduation projects**

What happens when design gets involved? What role does it play between democratic erosion and ecological crises? From **4 September to 12 October**, the initiative **German Design Graduates**, supported by the German Design Council, will present the annual exhibition “Dare to Design – Spaces of Care” at the **Museum for Applied Arts Cologne (MAKK)**.

**45 projects and concepts** by emerging design talents address urgent issues and socio-political challenges of our time. In their diversity, the graduation projects reflect design’s innovative power. Going beyond the traditional concept of design and pure form, they invite discussion on an expanded understanding of the discipline: design as a collective practice and an act of care.

The **press preview** will take place on **3 September at 5:30 pm** in the presence of the exhibitors and mentors from business and culture. During the tour, nine particularly outstanding projects will be presented as “Spotlights”. At 7 pm, the exhibition will be officially opened by Dr Petra Hesse, Director MAKK, and Lutz Dietzold, CEO German Design Council. This will be followed by a panel talk between Julia Kostial, Director Foundation Deutsches Design Museum, and three mentors, offering an interdisciplinary change of perspective.

## Comments on the exhibition

“By presenting the most interesting graduation projects from across Germany, the German Design Graduates pursue a unique ambition that goes far beyond a mere talent show: here you can witness Germany’s design potential and visionary thinking. I am delighted to provide this initiative with a stage through the special exhibition ‘Dare to Design – Spaces of Care’ at the MAKK.” **Petra Hesse, Director MAKK**

“Designers are active – and sometimes activist – mediators and translators. Through their designs, they help strengthen social cohesion and uphold democratic values. In their research-driven and creative practice, they enrich other disciplines. The works of the German Design Graduates are a striking demonstration of this.” **Viktoria Lea Heinrich, Design Historian**

“In a world shaped by experts, perhaps the great opportunity for young designers lies precisely in not being one. The Graduates can combine industries, technologies, and scientific disciplines in new and unconventional ways – unencumbered by entrenched patterns of thought.” **Johannes Voelchert, Innovation Design Lead, On Shoes**

“In a field of tension between social inequality, ecological crises, and economic uncertainty, design can have a meaningful impact. This requires designers to see themselves as an interface between disciplines, people, and systems. This does not mean being an expert in all fields, but it does require openness to working together – and to understanding one another.” **Juni Sun Neyenhuys, Designerin Material Experience**

## Key informations

“Dare to Design – Spaces of Care” at the Museum for Applied Arts Cologne (MAKK),  
An der Rechtschule 7, 50667 Cologne

**03.09.2025, 5:30-7 pm | 7 pm**

Preview for invited guests and press, followed by the opening with free entry.

**04.09. – 12.10.2025**

Tuesday – Sunday, 10 am-6 pm, 04.09. and 02.10. 10 am-10 pm

**Project organiser:** Rat für Formgebung – German Design Council

**Partners:** Museum for Applied Arts Cologne (MAKK), ambiente, A&W, ndion.de

**Supporters:** Druckerei Kettler, Berberich Papier und Fassbender Tenten Baustoffhandel

**Exhibition design:** Concept and implementation by Studio für Gestaltung Köln, low-emission and resource-efficient thanks to borrowed materials from the local construction industry.

**Project lead:** Katrin Krupka

### **About German Design Graduates**

Supported by the German Design Council, German Design Graduates is the only nationwide initiative dedicated to promoting young talent among graduates in design and related disciplines. Since 2022, the annual “*Dare to Design*” exhibition has been held in collaboration with changing museums. For this year’s edition, curators Katrin Krupka and Leonie Zebe selected from several hundred submissions across product and industrial design, communication and digital design, and textile and fashion design.

### **About German Design Council**

The German Design Council is the authority on design in Germany – since 1953. As a thought leader, it bears a special responsibility to unlock the potential of design for a sustainable future. To this end, it brings together business and design – for circular design, transformation, and economic success.

If you have any questions or require press materials, we will be happy to assist you.

### **Press Contact**

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