VDID

VERBAND DEUTSCHER INDUSTRIE DESIGNER VERBAND DEUTSCHER INDUSTRIE DESIGNER

# Industrial Design. Challenges and Responsibility







VERBAND DEUTSCHER INDUSTRIE DESIGNER

VDID Codex of industrial designers. Missions statement and ethical values of the profession



The VDID (Association of German Industrial Designers) uses the term "industrial designer" as a professional title in the unisexual sense. Women and men are equally referred to.

Preface	6 to 7
1. The ethical manifest of industrial designers Guiding principles for responsible design	9 to 33
2. Focal points Industrial designers and the challenge of "future"	37 bis 57
Imprint	58 bis 60

#### Preface

As with members of other professions, industrial designers have a supra-personal responsibility. They act in accordance with a societal mission. Its content has not yet been clearly formulated. The VDID Codex of industrial designers describes how we understand this mission and which guiding principles we want to meet it with.

The VDID Codex of industrial designers serves as guidance for industrial designers. It is directed to companies and public institutions as contracting entities, to training facilities for design, to industry and its bodies as well as to politicians. As a matter of course, we also address other design institutions at home and abroad. The VDID Codex is intended to contribute to the fact that industrial design will be utilised in an even more meaningful way and its potential will be exploited far more in the future - for society and industry, consumers and companies as well as designers themselves. It offers far more than realised today.

The following issues covered by the VDID Codex make this clear:

- The VDID Codex discusses the important challenges in society, whose solutions industrial designers are considerably contributing to.
- It formulates the ethical values specific to the profession that are considered as binding by industrial designers.
- The VDID Codex outlines the quality criteria for the development processes and for their products.
- It serves as an orientation for responsibility and behaviour in everyday professional life.
- Finally, the foreseeable change in the image of the profession that is taking place gradually but consistently is being explained and made comprehensible to the extent possible in anticipation of the future.

As this list shows, the VDID Codex deals with basic issues of longlasting validity as well as with questions whose answers are more influenced by circumstances of time.

The ethical manifest of industrial designers Guiding principles for responsible design

Create effects

## one

The design of a physical form is the core competence of industrial designers. They understand the object as an interacting element within technical, social, cultural, ecological and economic processes. Industrial design is the conscious creation of effects that are achieved with the object. For people

## two

Industrial designers have the human in mind. Also when considering many other requirements, the product design always fulfils the functional, psychological and sociocultural needs of people.

Implement promises

# three

Industrial designers undertake to integrate their design.

Their products are effective, fulfil their tasks and maintain the quality their design promises.

Awareness of limits

## four

Industrial designers design for serial production – often in high production rates – and play their part in product diversity, which is typical for industrial societies. The profession and each of its members has to ensure that positive diversity does not turn into destructive sensory overload overwhelming the individual, affecting his performance and thus having a negative effect on the development of the society.

Widen the horizon

## five

Industrial designers as creative heads of innovation are committed and open to change. They regularly undergo further training in the relevant areas of their profession, keep themselves informed about the currently feasible and are interested in looking beyond their professional borders.

#### Committed cooperation



Industrial designers have an interdisciplinary orientation. They cooperate with other professions in an open and motivated manner.

The success of a product results from the competence of all people involved and the quality of their cooperation with the creative heads. Reasonable and fair

## seven

Industrial designers meet their customers, partners, employees and colleagues with respect.

They also follow the rules of reasonableness and fairness in competitive situations.

Responsible and loyal

# eight

Industrial designers know the influence their performance has on companies' success. They act in a loyal manner knowing they personally share responsibility for the economic well-being of their contracting entities and the respective employees.

For tolerance and diversity

## nine

Industrial designers welcome global cultural diversity.

They consider the open, tolerant co-existence of cultural tradition and modern trend a prerequisite for a value-oriented, humane and peaceful society.

Support sustainably

## ten

Industrial designers acknowledge their joint responsibility for the development of mankind and nature. They are committed to the triad of ecological, economic and social sustainability. Professional culture

## eleven

Industrial designers are facing challenges that they can best master jointly as a profession. Within the profession, design companies and employees, design professors and students agree on their responsibility and further development of the profession – on an open discourse, committed and without a social hierarchy. Only jointly they have the competence to define the professional contents of industrial design.

Stand up for the Codex

# twelve

The commitment to these principles of action for industrial designers includes promoting their acceptance among colleagues, in industry, politics and the public. This also includes facing conflicts related to standing up for the ethics of industrial design.

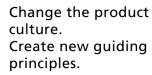
Focal points
Industrial designers
and the challenge
of "future"

Our society is driven by a powerful strive for development. It is looking for energy and competences that appear helpful in solving acute challenges and for visionary attempts, and assigns them respective tasks. As an influential part of the society's functionality, industrial design is unavoidably being included in the system of assigning these tasks.

This assignment of tasks is mostly done without a formal postulate, but rather in the style of unspoken consensus with a moral obligation. The one who evades this, quickly loses ethical standing. The one who accepts and fulfils the tasks, will be respected as a fundamental part of the society and supported accordingly.

Industrial design is facing major and diverse challenges. In some cases, it remains uncertain whether they can actually be overcome. Expectations of designers' commitment, sensitivity and creativity are accordingly high.







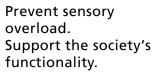
Increasingly more people participate in the modern consumer world. Due to growing markets in the Far East and South America, mass consumption and mass production have reached unforeseeable dimensions. In order to avoid an ecological disaster, the entire consumer ideology has to be aligned with the natural environment. Responsible resource efficiency and sustainability have to replace wasteful consumption and hectic and short life spans.

These new guiding principles born out of ecological necessity should not be a tribulation, because this way they will not receive lasting support from the (world) population.

They rather have to have a positive connotation. Therefore, the new guiding principles also require new models - desirable products that also embody these values with their design.

Industrial designers have to help these new models to achieve global success by developing fascinating product strategies. Only an innovative product culture enables a permanent involvement of all people in a prospering global economy.







Modern civilisation is based on the generation of knowledge as well as spreading it faster and using it more appropriately. Meanwhile, however, decisive information and trivial stimuli are randomly flowing at people with a force and quantity that has never been seen before. Due to being overwhelmed when processing them, this results in a desensitisation of perception for many people. It affects coordinated actions and causes physical and psychological problems such as stress or allergies.

Industrial designers can avoid such sensory overload with their creative possibilities.

They strengthen people and they support the information society's functionality that determines our collective existence in unforeseeable future.



3.

Provide orientation. Support securehandling.

Goods in the product world have to be vivid and self-explanatory. Industrial designers ensure that people quickly recognise products' qualities, use their functions intuitively and accurately and effectively exploit their possibilities of use.

Professional design provides orientation, supports secure handling and promotes self-confidence.

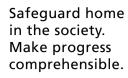




People with very different prerequisites come together in our pluralistic society.

Industrial design ensures that all people if possible are able to handle the products - irrespective of their cultural origin, age, education or potential physical restrictions. Design has a socially integrated function and should not cause exclusion due to carelessness or ruthlessness.



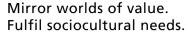




Technological progress changes the face of the world. It introduces new products with unusual functionalities into new areas of life. The participation in modern society is often no longer possible or only to a limited extent without mastering highly technological instruments.

Industrial designers make sure that people understand innovations and get acquainted with them. This makes change comprehensible and progress is not being paid by alienation. High-quality industrial design contributes to the fact that people feel at home in their environment and approach the world in a relaxed way.





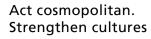


Industrial design creates products as useful utensils for everyday use – and also gives them qualities that reach beyond practical functionality.

Products with such a design are being used by customers as a component to design their private and professional sphere. Professional design turns them into symbols of values one can identify with. This way, things turn into objects users can identify with. Due to a design's visual expressiveness, these products are suitable to non-verbally convey personal and collective attitudes and positions in a social environment.

The design assumes a communicative role and fulfils sociocultural needs. It creates everyday objects that become the vehicle of everyday culture; this makes them part of the culture per se.









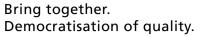
In the course of globalisation, design is one of the connecting elements between peoples.

However, industrial design is characterised by main cultures - companies from other cultural regions adapt to this.

Consequently, this instinctively results in a one-sidedness to the disadvantage of the other cultures that has not yet been solved, and these cultures have increasingly less influence on the design of their utensils for everyday use. Therefore, regional cultures are at risk of being displaced to the local history museum and their participation in current life is disappearing. This means they are losing their sociopsychological importance. This bears risks for the international community. Many tensions between cultures are based on the fear of cultural loss of home

As about five decades ago the importance of the ecological balance was acknowledged, now an awareness of global cultural balance has to be developed. Industrial design can play a decisive role in the development of concrete solutions effective in the society. It is important to actively maintain respect for other cultures and allow them to have influence in the world of design. Ensuring cultural diversity and plurality of values will be one of the most important contributions of designers to a modern global community with a human face.



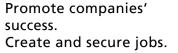




Industrial designers bring together and assume an essential sociopsychological role for democracy.

> High quality in design has to be producible in a cost-efficient way and introduced into all social classes and all areas of life at comparatively affordable prices. Also therefore, industrial design is oriented towards serial production of goods. Here, the responsibility to create a meaningful design that offers valuable quality and takes the users' individuality into account, despite the mass requirements, is particularly high. The use of industrial designers also for serial products enables to overcome the banality of mass production.







Design has a direct impact on people and stimulates their buying behaviour.

The success of all parties involved in the development, production and marketing of a product and its maintenance over the entire product lifecycle is often disproportionately increased by industrial designers' performance. Industrial designers have a special obligation of loyalty vis-à-vis their contracting entities or employers. They give their best for the existential success of a company, for the creation of new jobs and the protection of existing jobs as well as for increasing certainty about the future.



Joint responsibility in the whole.
Professional awareness.



The influence of their work presumes particular responsibility on the part of industrial designers. They have to reflect their actions critically. They have to show initiative vis-à-vis industry and politics where their expertise shows that decisions have to be made.

They can only live up to their responsibility if there is an intensive dialogue within the profession and if they present themselves as a united front.

The initiators and parties involved in the project "VDID Codex of industrial designers"

The VDID wishes to thank all who participated in the development of the VDID Codex with lots of expertise and passion in the past seven years.

Susanne Lengyel President of the VDID Verband Deutscher Industrie Designer e.V. in July 2012

### Parties involved in the development process

Ingrid Budde
Paul Budde Frank
Detering Raoul
Dinter Manfred
Dunst Barbara
Gröbe Helmut
Jochum Georg
Kaserer Volker
Kastl Carina
Kunert Iris
Laubstein
Manuela Moldenau

Manuela Moldenau
Angelika Mörlein
Peter Naumann
Martin Nussberger
Jutta Ochsner
Horst B. Scherer
Wolfgang Seehaus
Georg F. Simonis
Wanja S. Steinmaier
Volker Stumpf
Anne Sudrow
Manja Unger-Büttner

#### Sabine Unger Marc-Gregor Weidt Christian Zimmermann

#### Special thanks go to

Wolfgang Baier Markus Hirche Franz Hohenthaner Peter Knopp Matthias Nirschl Otto Sudrow Michael Suthmann Marion Thomas Rainer Zimmermann

> Moderator and co-author Ralph Habich, Habich CI

Project lead Stefan Eckstein

Editor

VDID Verband Deutscher Industrie Designer e.V.

VDID Geschäftsstelle

Verband Deutscher Industrie Designer e.V. Markgrafenstraße 15 10969 Berlin, Germany

Design

Gestaltungsbüro Schultes

Telefon + 49 (0)30/74 07 85 56 Fax + 49 (0)30/74 07 85 59

vdid@germandesign.de www.vdid.de

Images

flickr:

Quinn Anya (Seite 46) Intrepid Traveler (Seite 48) Yamil Gonzales (Seite 50, l.) Loop Oh (Seite 52)

Stefan Eckstein

2014 December

