

DESIGN DECLARES IRELAND

Evaluation Report for Creative Ireland, 2024



Clár Éire Ildánach
Creative Ireland
Programme





Evaluation Report for Creative Ireland, 2024

Acknowledgements

Design Declares wouldn't have been possible without the vision and commitment of the Institute of Designers Ireland and 100 Archive, who collaborated to establish the first global chapter.

Sincere thanks to the Design Declares steering committee, who have willingly given their time and expertise to the platform and programme development since day one.

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Thank you to The British Council for supporting the launch event, and to Belfast School of Art for supporting the Educate, Accelerate event in Belfast.

Finally thank you to all those who have volunteered their energy and expertise to growing the platform to where it is today.

Image Credits

Seán Casey: Launch Event p.7, 8, 12, 25, 28

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WOVE: Prelude p.18

Debbie Hickey: Design Leaders Conference 2024 p.13

NCAD Student Workshop p.13

D! Australia p.23

D! UK p.23



D! IRELAND



Panel discussion at Stamp Festival in Cork, 2024 — Charlotte Barker, CEO, IDI John Duggan, Johnson Controls and Tracey Ryan, Doctrine Skincare

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Oliver Jeffers speaking in
Ulster University at Educate
Accelerate in November 2024

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Design Declares is a growing global community of designers, design studios, agencies and institutions who declare a climate and ecological emergency, and are prepared to take action.

Design Declares Ireland launched in November 2023 as the first global adopter of the D! movement borne of a group of UK based designers. Brazil and Australia are also now live with the platform, with Japan, USA and UAE currently evaluating. We are building a connected community of designers, working together to tackle the climate emergency.



Panel discussion at the Design Declares Ireland launch event in Dublin, November 2023

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INTRODUCTION

In December 2022, the IDI were invited to an international round table discussion, hosted by the Design Council UK, to consider the role of designers in tackling climate change.

During this session, a group of designers presented their newly established initiative, Design Declares, to declare a Climate emergency and to galvanise the design community to take action. As part of this presentation, an invitation was extended to participants for global cooperation, and adoption of the platform for local markets.

As the national representative body of professional designers, IDI reached out to the 100 Archive, a communication design community, to convene a steering committee that might support the implementation of Design Declares in Ireland. Many of the steering committee were alumni of the Design Skillnet's Design for Sustainability and Circular Economy programme, and / or had a clear interest in driving change. Thus, Design Declares Ireland was born.

Less than a year later in November 2023, and with thanks to the Creative Climate Action Fund, we launched to a packed audience of over 150 design professionals in the Dean Townhouse, Dublin; and so began the journey towards better sustainable design practice for designers, their clients, design educators and students.



Above The audience looks on at the Design Declares Ireland launch event in the Dean Townhouse, Dublin, November 2023

Left Tania Banotti, Creative Ireland, speaking at the launch

8 ACTS OF EMERGENCY

What does it take to Declare? It's accepting we are in an emergency of climate and nature, and a commitment to do something about it. Here are eight places to start:

1. SOUND THE ALARM

Acknowledge and raise awareness of the climate and ecological crisis - including its roots in systems of oppression - in our organisations and our practice.

2. START THE JOURNEY

Invest in educating ourselves and our teams on methods of sustainable and regenerative design, and show leadership by making measurable change to our practice. The Design Declares Toolkit is a great place to start.

3. BRING CLIENTS WITH US

Meaningfully consider environmental and social impacts as part of every pitch, proposal and production process. Not every design output will be carbon neutral or fully climate friendly, but every project is an opportunity to make real progress.

4. MEASURE WHAT WE MAKE

Measure the environmental and social impact of our businesses and design projects, and hold ourselves to account for what we find out.

5. REDFINE 'GOOD'

Encourage, recognise and reward sustainable and regenerative design excellence in our industry through media and awards.

6. EDUCATE ACCELERATE

Build and foster intra- and cross-discipline knowledge networks to share tools, resources and best practice to accelerate progress in our industry.

7. DESIGN FOR JUSTICE

Create with and for the people who are disproportionately affected both by climate change and by the transition to a lower-carbon world.

8. AMPLIFY VOICES FOR CHANGE

Enable systemic change by working alongside policymakers, campaigners, ecologists, scientists, activists and others to strengthen local and national movements for change.

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OUTLINE OF TEAM

**THE KEY PARTICIPANTS—INCLUDING THE
NUMBER OF CREATIVE PRACTITIONERS/
ARTISTS THAT RECEIVED FUNDING THROUGH
THIS AGREEMENT**

The Steering group is comprised of design professionals contributing their time and expertise at a fraction of their typical fee. Outlined below are the participants who received funding through the agreement:

Steering Group

Charlotte Barker, IDI
Brian Byrne, Lands
Danielle Deveney, Each&Other
Lara Hanlon, Portion Collaborative
Stephen Ledwidge, Chart Studio
Fiona O'Reilly, On the Dot

Social Media Team

Róisín Jordan
Michelle Urban
Amy White

Partners

Seán Casey, Photography
Luke Duggan, Videography



Charlotte Barker



Brian Byrne



Danielle Deveney



Lara Hanlon



Stephen Ledwidge



Fiona O'Reilly



Róisín Jordan



Michelle Urban



Amy White



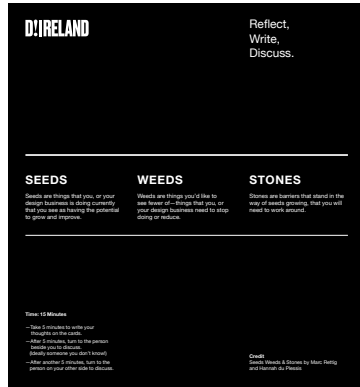
Seán Casey



Luke Duggan

The Steering group is comprised of design professionals contributing their time and expertise at a fraction of their typical fee.

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OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

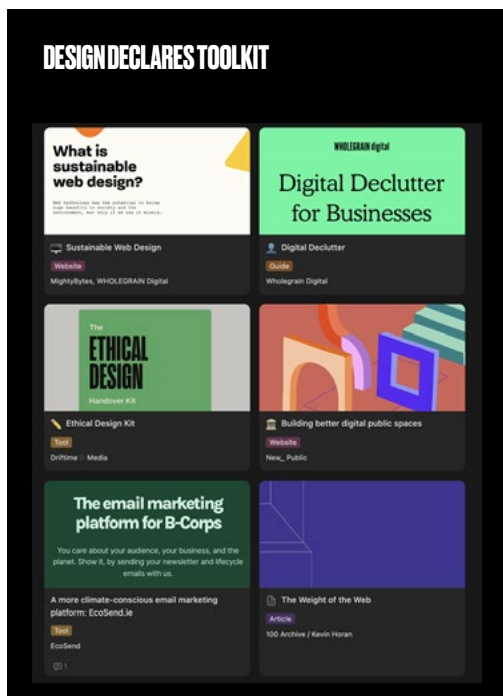


Predicted Outputs

- Establish a steering group and MOU between partner organisations
- Creation of infrastructure to support the project—communication channels, email, shared drives, processes/ways of working, roles and responsibilities
- Launch of website designdeclares.ie
- Establish open source toolkit and Notion site
- Launch event, as part of Design Week 2023
- X2 follow up events Q1 and Q3 2024

Further Outcomes Achieved

- WhatsApp group established for the Irish design community
- NCAD x Design Declares Educators Framework
- Explainer video
- Seeds, Weeds and Stones service design tool developed for workshops
- Reusable Design Declares pop-up event stands



Top Seeds, Weeds, Stones cards and workshop at our launch event

Above Reusable pop-up event stands from The Factory

Left Visual Communications section of the DI Toolkit



Lara Hanlon, Design Declares Ireland speaking at the Design Leaders Conference 2024

944  Instagram followers

948  LinkedIn followers

130 Social Media Post/Reels Published



NCAD instigated projects based on the DI! Toolkit—Our Manifesto by students Luke Carvill and Chris Kelly

188 DECLARATIONS AND COUNTING...

Predicted Outputs Achieved

- Gather signatories to the Design Declares Ireland pledge. Of the approximately 400 design studios we are aiming for a 10-15% uptake in the first quarter after launch (approximately 50 businesses to sign the declaration)—188 have currently declared.
- Members of the design community in Ireland recognise that there is a central resource for Climate Action for their industry
- Launch the Design Declares Ireland social channels
- We aim to migrate a proportion (40% +) of designers and studios from the IDI and 100 Archive channels. (100 archive, Instagram: 3850 followers, IDI, Instagram: 7310 followers). Target: 1500 followers in the first 12 months
- Instagram: 944 LinkedIn: 948 = 1892
- Publish the Design Declares Toolkit. Impact: Raised awareness of and engagement with the toolkit
- Establish a community of engaged designers that will take the work forward.

Further Outcomes Achieved

- Speaking to over 140 people at DLC designleadersconference.com
- 15-20 volunteers reached out to help
- Building a shared knowledge network with other creative sustainability projects—Architects Declare, Purpose Disruptors
- Brilliant content resource in Seeds, Weeds and Stones exercise
- Confirmation that NCAD has been using the toolkit to shape educational programming, and finding the resource excellent
- Designer in touch who confirmed using DI! Toolkit to inform project and used the URL in the final print job to promote further
- Presentation of DI! as a STAMP! Event in Cork, with support from Enterprise Ireland
- Ran an event in Accenture along with another CCAF project: Purpose Disruptors
- Presentation of DI! Ireland to students, academics and visitors at [DICE Conference](#), Atlantic Technological University, Donegal
- Opportunity to guest lecture in NCAD on the topic and toolkit
- HeyLow using the DI! as a 'proud member' badge (They design low-carbon websites)
- Creative Boardroom - developing a model of 8 Acts
- Workshop in Deloitte in September
- Building a relationship with The British Council

BRING CLIENTS WITH US



Impact Beyond Designers

It's important to note that the power of Design Declares lies in the multiplier effect of designers having knowledge and transferring this to their clients' businesses. For example, we ran workshops in Deloitte, Accenture and Each&Other by invitation, all of whom are businesses that work with global companies in the tech, pharma, public sector, construction and product design space. When over 80% of all product-related environmental impacts are determined during the design phase of a product, you can see that the role of a designer is significant.

80%

Of all product-related environmental impacts are determined during the design phase

Soft outcomes

- Learning how to run a sustainable event - printing responsibly on 100% recycled paper with eco inks, by printers that use self-generated green energy. Consciously designed for zero waste
- Learning more about sustainability action and priorities for change
- Building a network with broader sustainability projects through the Creative Ireland residential, Borris house
- Relationship with sustainable event supplier, Native Events, and opportunity for IDI to collaborate on a new programme of work with them for the creative industries
- Opportunity to solidify the relationship between 100 Archive and IDI to create a more comprehensive voice of design

A huge thank you to Design Declares Ireland— we were thrilled with the engagement. There was a lot of enthusiasm.

Conor Nolan, Head of Design, Deloitte Digital



The Deloitte Team taking part in the D! Seeds, Weeds and Stones workshop

STAMP FESTIVAL

In May 2024 we held a Design Declares event in Cork as part of the STAMP! Festival of Creativity, and assembled participants working in, teaching and studying design.

The first of our regional events, this was an opportunity to bring together designers from the South East, South and South West, as well as design educators. It was a chance also to include Enterprise Ireland, and showcase the range of supports they have available to EI and LEO clients that can help design businesses progress on their green transition. We took this opportunity to break out the range of supports available through Enterprise Ireland, and add the information to the toolkit—see sample supports below.

It also provided an opportunity for design businesses to connect with each other, providing peer-to-peer support.

Speakers included

- Dee Corcoran—Founder of Cork-based Chapter Design
- John Duggan—Design Director, Johnson Controls
- Tracey Ryan—Doctrine Skincare

Following the event, we received the following impact update from John Duggan, demonstrating the effectiveness of the platform →

Sustainability supports on NEH gov					
Agency	Support Title	Support Headline	Description	Type of Support	Relevant Act(s)
Enterprise Ireland	GreenStart	Start your sustainability journey	This is an entry-level sustainability grant. It helps you to introduce ways to be more sustainable in your day-to-day operations. It aims to improve your operational performance through better efficiency so you can lower your costs and be more competitive.	Grants & Funding	1. Sound the alarm 2. Start the journey
Enterprise Ireland	GreenPlus	Become more environmentally friendly and develop your team's skills	With the GreenPlus sustainability grant, you can make your business a greener one by developing an environmental policy that is in line with international standards. This helps businesses to play their part in creating a sustainable future.	Grants & Funding	4. Bring clients with us 8. Amplify voices for change?
Enterprise Ireland	Climate Action Voucher	Become more sustainable and eco-friendly	Through training and advisory services, your business will find areas for improvement, and develop a plan to reduce emissions and become more resource efficient.	Grants & Funding	4. Measure what we make
Enterprise Ireland	Capital Investment for Decarbonisation	Invest in carbon-reducing technologies	This grant is designed to help businesses pay for the changes needed to reduce their carbon emissions, making their operations more environmentally friendly. Investing in new tools, research, ideas, and green technology can help your company reach its goal of zero carbon emissions faster.	Grants & Funding	1. Sound the alarm 2. Start the journey 3. Bring clients with us 6. Educate, accelerate
Enterprise Ireland	Energy Monitoring & Tracking Systems	Track energy use and reduce your carbon footprint	This fund supports your business in putting the systems in place to lower your energy bills and improve energy efficiency. It helps businesses see how much energy they are using and understand where they can cut back and become more sustainable.	Grants & Funding	1. Sound the alarm 2. Start the journey 4. Measure what we make
Local Enterprise Office	Green for Business	Start building a more sustainable business	By becoming more sustainable, you can make day-to-day operations more efficient, reduce your costs, improve your	Grants & Funding	1. Sound the alarm 2. Start the journey 3. Bring clients with us





Dee Corcoran, Chapter,
speaking at STAMP
Festival, Cork, May 2024

Build an
knowled
resourc
progress

CASE STUDY

JOHNSON CONTROLS



Above John Duggan, head of design, Johnson Controls International in conversation with Charlotte Barker, CEO, IDI

John Duggan, Head of Design at Johnson Controls International, a multinational firm of 10,000 employees globally, gave us an update on the impact Design Declares has had on their department at JCI.

“Since our Design Declares event we have activated Steps 1, 2, 3 & 4 of the 8 Acts of Emergency and we have started some initiatives I wanted to share with you. Some are directly related to design, others are indirectly.”

1. There is no longer a JCI logo on my email signature—a simple thing you might say, but when you multiply that by 100,000 employees and how many emails get sent in this organisation, it could potentially be a massive digital carbon footprint saving. We have started at department level and hope to get it to board level, and are currently in talks with the Brand team on this to make it enterprise level and change the email signature on our Brand portal to omit the jpeg file.
2. We have set up an internal sustainability team with Global Creative who meet every 2 weeks to discuss what we can do as a design department to achieve our Sustainability goals. We are currently writing our mission, vision and goals and are aptly named the GC Green Team
3. We are looking into a Digital Declutter week/month for the department with the aim that we get our own house in order first (team of 40 people) change the mindset and do a digital declutter of our Sharepoint (600,000 assets). We are working with IT to measure what we have now and then what we have after the declutter. This would include deleting and purging duplicate files on our shared server. Also unsubscribing to emails that we don't want or need. Small steps but all part of changing the mindset. The idea then would be to gather this data and present it to the Cork site and do an initiative with the Cork site for a Digital Declutter (roughly 300 people on site). The overall aim would be for us to have the data to back this initiative up so we could go to enterprise level by next April when it is Digital Declutter Day.
4. Finally and not directly design related we are going to do a Sustainable Fashion Show in our office in September. The clothes modelled will all be from Oxfam and we are working with them as a local charity and raise funds for them through our in company funding model (volunteer hours are \$10 per hour per person and any donation by a JCI employee gets matched 100%). The event will be open to the whole building so we predict about 100-150 people will attend. There will be pop up shops selling sustainable products after the fashion show. To tie in with our GC Green Team we will only advertise this event digitally – no printing of flyers or posters – we will only use second hand banners etc. for dressing the area...all good fun but with a sustainable theme throughout.



Above + Below Seeds, Weeds, Stones workshop at Stamp

Right Tracey Ryan, Doctrine Skincare, during the panel discussion



DRIVING CHANGE IN EDUCATION



On Monday 25th November, we hosted our final event of the year, Educate Accelerate, at the Belfast School of Art.

The evening featured a keynote by the ever-inspiring author, illustrator and artist Oliver Jeffers, who suggested we don't have a climate problem so much as we have a story problem. As an innate storyteller himself, he inspired us all to see the unique power of storytelling to change our course in order to sustain life and our planet.

A big part of our event was hearing from design educators across Ireland about how they've embedded sustainability into their practices and curriculum.

Lisa Zimmermann from MTU, Cork introduced us to her innovative water fibre recycling lab, where they collected waste paper produced in their departments while teaching art and design, and processing them into paper to reuse with students.

Adam de Eyto from TUS, Limerick, gave a brilliant presentation on design for sustainability and circular economies, and gave us a brief overview of the Level 9 course he's running in partnership with Design Skillnet (a few of us on the Design Declares team have completed this course and highly recommend it!)

Above Oliver Jeffers delivering the keynote address at Educate Accelerate in November 2024



Above Panel discussion with Danielle Deveney, DI Ireland, Peter Evers, IADT + Pitchdrop and Danielle Townsend, IDI + Bounce

Right Dr Brian Dixon, Head of Belfast School of Art



Aoife McInerney from NCAD, Dublin spoke about how she brought the Design Declares toolkit to life in the classroom, restructuring their Design Practices module for second years to teach them fundamental design skills through the lens of sustainability. Week by week, they explored our 8 Acts of Emergency, giving students a clear narrative which connected each week's discussions and activities to a broader purpose.

Danielle Deveney led a conversation with IADT's Peter Evers and IDI's Danielle Townsend, both of whom are providing spaces for designers to come together and speculate on the future of design and the role experimentation plays.

Joanne Grant, Managing Director of JCDeacaux, shared her invaluable insights into her participation in Creative Boardroom: Collaborate 4 Climate initiative. This initiative aimed to generate dynamic and creative solutions to rethink 'business as usual', bringing together Chartered Directors and design students to address significant challenges that the climate urgency presents.





Joanne Grant, Managing Director JCDecaux Ireland, speaking at Educate Accelerate, in Belfast, November 2024

GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

Right The 8 Acts of Emergency a publication produced by Design Declares UK

Below Design Declares Australia launch event



As the first global adopters of Design Declares, Ireland has been instrumental in paving the way for additional territories to come on board.

We continue to work closely with Design Declares UK, sharing resources, developing a franchise contract and setting expectations for how a local platform can scale globally. We meet global chapter leads twice a year, and aim to collaborate on presentations. We have shared our Seeds, Weeds and Stones exercise template to have a design thinking mechanic that is proprietary to Design Declares and can be replicated throughout the world.

Since Ireland launched, we have seen chapters start up in Brazil and Australia; D! UK are in talks with Saudi Arabia, USA, Japan and Portugal.

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RELEVANT FINDINGS

It is abundantly clear that despite the understanding of the need to tackle climate change, there has been a gap in the knowledge of designers in how to design for the planet. Since launching Design Declares, we have been encouraged by the ownership taken by individuals and the recognition that they can do their part.

There is a reticence to engage for fear of being seen as 'not-knowing', particularly in relation to clients. Therefore incremental change is more comfortable for most designers, to avoid falling foul of being seen as 'expert' when they may not feel as such.

There is a greater desire from designers at the outset of their careers to engage in positive climate action and a fear that their concerns may not be heard by managers. It quickly became a crucial part of the narrative that we need to ensure that design leaders are creating the space and time for designers to implement the changes needed within their own practice.

Using a service design tool called Seeds, Weeds and Stones, we have been able to produce a consistent set of insights that have allowed us to shape the direction of travel for Design Declares.

We also learned that despite providing a toolkit of curated resources, there is still a desire for further support in knowing where to start by many participants. We hope to prepare a playbook for 2025 that will support declarees on their journey to respond to this need.

Seeds, Weeds and Stones: Sample Insights

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Participants emphasised eco-conscious choices: prioritising public transport, promoting remote work, reducing digital footprints through educational workshops, or switching to dark mode on websites.

.....

Participants highlighted their commitment to the circular economy. Whether that's imagining a circular future personally and professionally, exploring how medical devices can have a second life, or rethinking product life cycles and minimising waste.

.....

Education was a prominent theme. Participants are researching sustainability, developing toolkits, and creating podcasts to share knowledge. Many noted the importance of educating clients, stakeholders, and the next generation of designers too.

.....

Knowing what to do isn't enough—capacity is a constant challenge. Between the overwhelming number of non-circular options and the challenge to access funding, it isn't easy to make progress. Some reflected on the struggle to make time for research or promote their work.



Seeds, weeds and stones
workshop at the Design Declares
Ireland launch, November 2023

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CONCLUSION

Not only did we achieve all we set out to achieve with Design Declares in its first year, it surpassed our expectations. The level of positive engagement has been encouraging, and the ownership taken by some participants surprising in an extremely positive way.

Finally - we are delighted to report that Design Declares Ireland is paving the way for other global chapters, having achieved more in year one than other chapters. We have self-organised and activated very quickly, and this is in no small part due to the fact that we have been funded for this programme. Having a budget to activate with has made a significant difference to the impact we have been able to achieve across the island of Ireland.



Top Dr Kerry McCall Magan, British Council and Elin Burns, Deputy Head of Mission, British Embassy at the Design Declares Ireland launch event, in the Dean Townhouse, November 2023

D!

www.designdeclares.ie
hello@designdeclares.ie

Find us on Instagram and LinkedIn