

## World Design Capital Helsinki 2012 Program

WDC Helsinki 2012 promoted design with 550 projects and 2,800 events. The programme was implemented by a network of 14,500 people in 290 organizations in Finland and abroad.

The goal of WDC Helsinki 2012 was to develop the city through design. The purpose of the programme was to inspire all to participate in improving their environment and to demonstrate the possibilities of design in the promotion of welfare and competitiveness.

About 90 percent of the 2,800 events organized during the year were open to the public and 80 percent were free of charge. In addition to various events, the programme involved people through vast development projects.

The programme was formed:

- Via projects started by the International Design Foundation

- Via projects started by the participating cities, the state, the universities and applied universities, the design organisations, foundations and corporate partners.
- Via an open call for programme proposals

### Proposal phase and programme launch

The first programme proposal phase of World Design Capital Helsinki 2012 ended on 11 February 2011. WDC Helsinki 2012 received more than 1,000 proposals, many of which consisted of sub-projects. The number of proposals exceeds expectations. Negotiations on proposal execution were conducted during the spring of 2011, and agreements were made throughout the year.

The programme of roughly 250 projects was published on 7 November 2011. It was the most extensive design programme ever realised in Finland and one of the largest in the world.



WDC Helsinki event "Taste the World" 19.5.2012. Photo: Maarit Hohteri / Youth Department.

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### Programme categories

The programme was divided into six categories

- Transforming the City
- Rethinking Design
- Year of Events
- Exhibitions
- Encounters
- Communications

The Transforming the City category included development projects stemming from the transformation of the urban development. Rethinking Design introduced areas of application, such as service design, strategic design and information design.

The Year of Events category included various public events. Exhibitions numbered over 100.

The WDC Helsinki year saw Encounters such as expert forums and seminars, as well as Communications such as books, magazine, online publications and electronic applications.

### Pavilion

Placed in an empty lot, the Pavilion was the Heart of World Design Capital Helsinki where a better city was designed. It was also a meeting point where one could experience the WDC Helsinki 2012 year. The Pavilion offered a programme open to everyone from Tuesday until Sunday between 12 May and 16 September 2012. It was located in Helsinki between Design Museum and the Museum of Finnish Architecture at Ullanlinnankatu 2-4.



Pavilion. Photo: Veikko Somerpuro / Stara.

WDC Helsinki 2012 Pavilion was a joint project by Aalto University, the Museum of Finnish Architecture, Design Museum, UPM and World Design Capital Helsinki 2012. The aim was to create a new, open meeting place in an urban environment and to offer a sense of community as well as to provoke discussion on better cities.

The Pavilion's programme was coordinated by think tank Demos Helsinki and implemented by more than a hundred different parties from designers to non-governmental organisations and from civil service departments and civil servants to urban activists and universities. The creators' and visitors' eagerness speaks of the major demand for an activity base such as the Pavilion.

The Pavilion offered free-of-charge, open programme and entertainment on 105 days in total. The wooden pavilion designed by Aalto University Wood Studio's student and expert team represented new age architecture and embodied Finnish wood building at its best. There were 80,000 visitors to the Pavilion in total.

More than anything, the Pavilion transformed a car park into a space for learning, doing and sharing.

The Finnish Association of Architects SAFA conferred its sustainable development award

TunnustusPAANU (Recognition SHINGLE) to the Pavilion on 6 March 2013. SAFA awarded the Pavilion as a socially sustainable project, as a citizens' living room, as an inspiring venue for city events, and as a facility that enabled novel activity. The jury stated that the groups who envisioned the Pavilion project advanced sustainable development in the built environment and offered an example for all actors in the building and construction sector.

### Kauko

World Design Capital Helsinki 2012 wished to stimulate discussion on how design can make residents' everyday lives better, more convenient and functional.

In Kauko Café, residents in the World Design Capital Helsinki 2012 were shown the impact of good design and poor design on customer satisfaction in a café environment. People around the world controlled the café through the website, and the effects were seen on the customer's seats, tables, and light and sound effects.

Visitors to the website were able to control the café's design – chair and table height, lighting, music and other sounds. When a passer-by sat down at Café Kauko, another person could

at the same time control and follow the visitor's coffee break on the café's website.

The Kauko Café, created in cooperation with Hasan & Partners, became a popular success in international marketing competitions. It received 7 awards at competitions including the Eurobest, Epica and Golden Hammer competitions, and 11 honourable mentions at the Cannes Lions and Cresta competitions, among others.

At the beginning of February 2012, a [video article](#) on Kauko became the most-watched piece of online news on the BBC.

Kauko was on display for two months at the Forum shopping centre in central Helsinki and remotely-controlled through the Youdesign.fi website. Both the café and the website were hugely popular.

### Examples on the International Design Foundation events

In addition to the open call for proposed programme, the International Design Foundation produced some events highlighting the themes of the year.

- **The World Design Capital gala** brought together a global design audience to witness the presentation of three major design awards: the World Design Impact Prize, the Alvar Aalto Medal and the Estlander Prize. The gala was held in Lahti on 2 February 2012.

- The **WDC Helsinki 2012 Open Doors Weekend** from 3 to 5 February 2012 highlighted the themes of the year with 180 events. The events offered design in surprising forms and places, performances, guidance for visitors, lectures, workshops and ideation projects.
- **INDEX: Award Exhibition** took over the centre of Helsinki from 10 May until 10 June 2012. The free open-air exhibition invited everyone to see works by the finalists for the world's biggest design award and presented design that has the capacity to improve people's lives all across the world.
- **Everyday Discoveries - International Design House Exhibition**, WDC Helsinki 2012's main exhibition, filled Suvilahti area between 6 and 16 September 2012. Solutions by hundreds of designers from 23 countries arrived at the exhibition to offer concrete examples of design solutions that different countries have for the same everyday situations.
- **The WDC Helsinki 2012 closing summit and evening ceremony** was held in Helsinki on Thursday, 29 November 2012. At the events, all eyes were on Cape Town as Helsinki passed on the title of World Design Capital.



Photo: Elisabeth Heinrichs / Visit Helsinki.



The WDC Helsinki 2012 Opening Ceremony was celebrated at Helsinki's Senate Square on 31 December 2011. Photo: Lauri Rotko