

Design Museum releases toolkit for reducing exhibition environmental impact in all 6 UN official languages

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[PRESS IMAGES](#)

The Design Museum today announces the translation of its industry-leading toolkit for reducing the environmental impact of exhibitions into all 6 UN languages.

The Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish versions have been developed with support from consultancy Culture Connect. Working in collaboration with [Art Jameel](#), an updated version of the guide (which includes regional case studies) has been produced in English and Arabic for the MENAT region (Middle East, North Africa, and Turkey).

The Design Museum's [Environmental Impact Toolkit](#) was created to be shared and used across the wider museum community. It consists of a written guide to reducing the environmental impact of exhibition design and an impact model to measure related carbon emissions.

The **Environmental Impact Model** enables museums to track and calculate the carbon emissions related to each of their exhibitions. As well as recording data, it is also intended to aid decision-making during the design process itself. This gives exhibition teams the ability to evaluate the carbon footprint of curatorial and design choices, such as the environmental merits of specific materials or the emissions involved in the shipping a particular object.

While the **Environmental Impact Guide** is based on the Design Museum's work, it offers core principles that transfer across the museum sector and can enable other institutions to reflect on the way they make exhibitions. This ranges from the design and construction of an exhibition to the energy of the communications used in its planning.

Supported by Future Observatory and funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), the Toolkit was first launched by the Design Museum in 2023. It emerged out *Waste Age: What can design do?*, a Design Museum exhibition that explored how designers can repurpose waste and forge a more sustainable industry.

In one of the first Life Cycle Assessments conducted on an exhibition in the UK, the Design Museum carried out an environmental audit of Waste

Age to calculate its impact and inform processes for future exhibitions. The Design Museum and Future Observatory subsequently commissioned consultancy URGE to collaborate on the Environmental Impact Toolkit.

Enabling institutions to identify areas of major environmental impact in exhibitions empowers them to make informed decisions that can lower the footprint of their activities. The Toolkit is intended to be used so that such considerations are embedded within the process of making exhibitions. This shapes - from the outset - how institutions work with commissioned designers, contractors and suppliers to communicate and deliver its environmental objectives.

The Design Museum is currently working with museums around the country to deliver bespoke advisory packages to support them on their journeys in this area.

Elise Foster Vander Elst, Head of Exhibitions and Environmental Impact Lead at the Design Museum, said: “Since the toolkit was launched last year, institutions from New York to New Zealand have been using our guide to inform their approach to producing exhibitions more responsibly. The tips on procurement, decision-making and how to measure CO2e have empowered colleagues around the globe, helping them understand where to focus attention for maximum impact. We’re delighted to be publishing this research in more languages to ensure it has even wider reach.”

-Ends-

Notes to Editor

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About Culture Connect:

Culture Connect is a consultancy specialising in unlocking the international potential of the cultural sector; harnessing its ability to build bridges between people, institutions and countries. Culture Connect supports cultural leaders and their team to identify, develop and deliver international partnerships and collaborations based on sound cultural, ecological and financial principles. Through our advisory services, they foster innovative and sustainable collaborative practices that enable cultural organisations to thrive in a complex globalised environment where business models, approaches to digital and partnership frameworks have to be re-invented.

About Art Jameel:

Art Jameel supports artists and creative communities. The independent organisation works globally, based at Hayy Jameel, Jeddah's home for

creativity and the arts, and at [Jameel Arts Centre](#), an innovative contemporary hub in Dubai. Art Jameel's programmes – across exhibitions, commissions, research, learning and community-building – are grounded in a dynamic understanding of the arts as fundamental to life and accessible to all.

About the Design Museum:

The Design Museum is the world's leading museum devoted to contemporary architecture and design. Its work encompasses all elements of design, including fashion, product and graphic design. Since it opened its doors in 1989 the museum has displayed everything from an AK-47 to high heels designed by Christian Louboutin. It has staged over 100 exhibitions, welcomed over seven million visitors and showcased the work of some of the world's most celebrated designers and architects including Paul Smith, Zaha Hadid, Jonathan Ive, Frank Gehry, Eileen Gray, Dieter Rams, Margaret Calvert and Yinka Ilori.

On 24 November 2016, the Design Museum relocated to Kensington, west London. John Pawson converted the interior of a 1960s modernist building to create a new home for the Design Museum giving it three times more space in which to show a wider range of exhibitions and significantly extend its learning programme. Since opening in Kensington in 2016, the Design Museum has hosted major exhibitions including *Stanley Kubrick: The Exhibition*, *Moving to Mars*, *Amy: Beyond the Stage*, *Sneakers Unboxed: Studio to Street*, *Electronic: From Kraftwerk to The Chemical Brothers*, *Charlotte Perriand: The Modern Life*, *Football: Designing the Beautiful Game*, *Waste Age: What can design do?*, *Ai Weiwei: Making Sense*, *The Offbeat Sari*, and *REBEL: 30 Years of London Fashion*.

In 2021, the Design Museum launched Future Observatory, a national programme for design research supporting the UK's response to the green transition. The programme is coordinated by the Design Museum in partnership with the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), which is part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).



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