

Press Release
02 June 2026

Open – Design Week launches on 5 June with more than 200 events across the region



10 days, 4 cities, more than 150 venues: From 5 to 14 June 2026, Open – Design Week Frankfurt RheinMain will take place as the flagship festival of World Design Capital Frankfurt RheinMain 2026 (WDC 2026). As the centrepiece of the WDC program, the new format offers far more than traditional exhibitions. Talks, film screenings, architectural tours, workshops, conferences, city walks and community events provide fresh inspiration while creating opportunities for exchange and connection.

Open – Design Week offers a unique opportunity to experience first-hand how design shapes our cities, our everyday lives and wider social developments.

Program Highlights:

- Across four Focus Days (9–12 June) in Frankfurt, Offenbach, Darmstadt and Wiesbaden, visitors will have the opportunity to explore more than 150 studios, companies, universities, workshops and cultural venues, experiencing design processes where they actually take place.
- A wide range of additional events will be hosted within a series of
- curated thematic hubs, known as Spaces. These bring together diverse perspectives on design, ranging from circular economy initiatives at Circle Cube in Offenbach and international creative exchange at Massif E to the theme of Shared Resources at Danzig am Platz in Frankfurt.
- The program is complemented by a number of high-profile
- professional events, including Creative Industries Day (5 June), World Industrial Design Day (10 June) and the Forward Festival (11–12 June).
- The World Heritage Festival at Darmstadt's Mathildenhöhe and the opening of the exhibition *A Step Ahead / Einen Schritt voraus*,
- celebrating the 125th anniversary of the renowned Artists' Colony, will take place during the first weekend of Open – Design Week.
- On 6 June, *Rooftop Day Frankfurt* invites visitors to experience the city from new perspectives, featuring a presentation on Frankfurt's future

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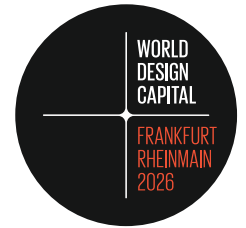
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Cultural Mile at the Jewish Museum alongside guided tours of selected high-rise buildings and rooftop locations.

- The new film by Gary Hustwit, *What Are People For: Design Philosophy* by Patrick Whitney, will celebrate its world premiere on 6 June at Massif E.
- The full program is available at: wdc2026.org/en/constellations/open



Open – Design Week Frankfurt RheinMain has been conceived as a long-term catalyst for the region and is intended to become a permanent fixture in the regional cultural calendar beyond 2026. As part of the New European Bauhaus Festival 2026, *Open* is also embedded within a Europe-wide network dedicated to sustainability and social innovation.

"*Open* showcases the extraordinary creative energy of the Frankfurt RheinMain region and highlights the role design plays in fostering social cohesion, innovation and democratic participation," says Carolina Romahn, Managing Director of World Design Capital Frankfurt RheinMain 2026. "Design is not merely exhibited here; it becomes something people can experience as part of everyday life."

Four cities, four themes: the week of open doors and its Focus Days

Open – Design Week connects the region across municipal boundaries. In Frankfurt, Offenbach, Darmstadt and Wiesbaden, studios, agencies, workshops and companies will provide behind-the-scenes insights into their work on dedicated Focus Days. What happens behind the scenes at internationally renowned design agencies? How do innovations emerge within industrial research environments? And how does design shape our urban everyday lives? The Focus Days invite local communities and residents from across the region to discover places they pass every day without knowing what happens inside them – whether a courtyard studio in Offenbach, a high-tech laboratory in Darmstadt or a creative agency in Frankfurt.

- 09 June | Frankfurt: Urban spaces, brands and emerging technologies (featuring *MESO Digital Interiors, hauser lacour, LAX CYCLES and others*)
- 10 June | Offenbach: Creative production and social transformation (featuring *madhat, Büro Schramm für Gestaltung and others*)
- 11 June | Darmstadt: Technology, academia and innovation (featuring *Riese & Müller, Merck, SCHUMACHER Brand + Interaction Design and others*)
- 12 June | Wiesbaden: Communication, brands and contemporary lifestyles (featuring a Design Walk through the city centre, 3Deluxe, Scholz & Volkmer and others)

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International reach and program highlights

Alongside the Open Doors program and the activities hosted within the Spaces, a range of high-calibre professional events further enrich *Open - Design Week*.

The festival begins with *Creative Industries Day* (5 June) and the *World Heritage Festival* at Mathildenhöhe (6-7 June), which celebrates 125 years of design history through the exhibition *A Step Ahead / Einen Schritt voraus* while also serving as a platform for contemporary design discourse.

Also on 6 June, acclaimed filmmaker Gary Hustwit's latest work, *What Are People For: Design Philosophy* by Patrick Whitney, will celebrate its world premiere at Massif E. The documentary explores how design can shape social and democratic processes through the ideas of design theorist Patrick Whitney. Director Gary Hustwit, producer Ashley Lukasik and Patrick Whitney himself will be present for a post-screening discussion. The event is organised in cooperation with the German Design Council.

As part of *Rooftop Day Frankfurt* (6 June), visitors are invited to experience the city from new perspectives. Plans for Frankfurt's future Cultural Mile will be presented on the terrace of the Jewish Museum, while guided tours of selected high-rise buildings will offer insights into the architecture of the city's iconic skyline.

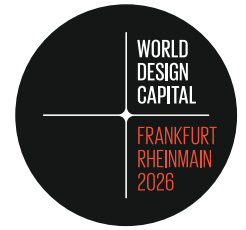
Another highlight will be the presentation of the *WDC x Brompton Special Edition* at Massif Central from 5 to 11 June. The project emerged from an open call inviting designers and emerging talents to reinterpret Brompton's lightweight P Line folding bicycle through their own colours, graphics and design concepts. The limited-edition bicycle will subsequently be raffled as part of a public prize draw.

On 10 June, *World Industrial Design Day FRM (WIDD)* will underline the social relevance of industrial design. Throughout the week, representatives from UNESCO Cities of Design including Montreal, Helsinki, Busan, Taipei, Detroit and Graz will come together to share international perspectives on design, innovation and urban development. A *Meet & Greet* will take place on 11 June in the Shared Resources Space at Danzig am Platz.

From 13 June onwards, the exchange program *Form Follows Friendship* will bring together emerging designers from Germany and the Netherlands who have developed projects exploring topics such as artificial intelligence and the circular economy.

Also on 13 June, the brand eins discussion event *Echt jetzt. An Evening for the Analogue* will focus on direct encounters and public debate beyond digital spaces. Towards the end of the week, events such as the renowned *Forward Festival* – one of Europe's leading conference and event platforms for creativity, design and communication – and the TOKONOMA Open-Air Craft Fair will shape the festival program.

On 12 June, the dance performance *BEAT BY BITS* will bring the social and political dimensions of techno culture into the heart of Frankfurt, with performances at 5 pm and 7 pm on Goetheplatz.



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Thematic hubs: The Spaces at the heart of the local creative scene

Throughout Open – Design Week, seven thematic Spaces will serve as key platforms for dialogue and exchange between design professionals and the wider public.

Museum Angewandte Kunst, Frankfurt: Next Generation Space

The Next Generation Space explores design education, cultural production and sustainable consumption, showcasing how emerging designers are developing responses to some of the most pressing challenges of the future.

The WDC Hub also brings together young talents and initiatives, including the Hessen Design Competition, the international Gender Design Network and the exchange program Form Follows Friendship.

Address: Schaumainkai 17, Frankfurt

Massif E, Frankfurt: Worldwide Creative Space

Located in the former E-Kinos cinema complex in Frankfurt city centre, Massif E becomes a meeting point for exchange, talks and international design culture.

Exhibitions, talks and film screenings bring together designers, creatives and the wider public, including the *Forward Festival*, one of Europe's leading platforms for creativity, design, communication and digital art. The world premiere of the documentary on design pioneer Patrick Whitney will also take place here.

Address: Zeil 125, Frankfurt

Neue Kaiser, Frankfurt: Creative Value Space

At Neue Kaiser, the focus is on design as an economic driver: how does design generate new business models, entrepreneurship and innovation? The venue will host the *9th Creative Industries Day*, among other events. The program also includes the exhibition *Award-Winning – Design from Hesse* and works by renowned British photographer Rankin.

Address: Kaiserstraße 30, Frankfurt

Danzig am Platz, Frankfurt: Shared Resources Space

Occupying approximately 500 square metres of temporarily repurposed urban space, the Shared Resources Space is one of the central venues of *Open – Design Week*. In collaboration with rent.group, the program explores topics including circular economy, sharing models and sustainable consumption. Emerging designers such as Studio Tobias Hirt and RAFT Collective meet established practitioners including Jain&Kriz and DigitaLicht, alongside representatives from architecture, business and related disciplines. The exhibition *Constructive Alps* presents award-winning architectural projects from across the Alpine region, demonstrating how sustainable building practices can be combined with regional construction traditions.

Address: Henschelstraße 18, Frankfurt



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Designhaus Darmstadt – Innovative Industries Space

From 11 to 13 June, Designhaus Darmstadt will host an exhibition dedicated to the local design scene while serving as an open platform for exchange and new ideas. On the evening of 11 June, host organisation Hessen Design e. V., together with Mayor Hanno Benz and WDC 2026 Managing Director Carolina Romahn, will welcome guests to the *OPEN Dialogue* reception from 6 pm.

Address: Eugen-Bracht-Weg 6, Darmstadt

WerkRaum Wiesbaden – Future Community Space

WerkRaum Wiesbaden transforms a vacant department store unit into an open venue for culture, exchange and democratic participation. Located in the former SportScheck premises, the project explores new possibilities for the future of the city centre.

Address: Langgasse 5–9, Wiesbaden

Circle Cube, Offenbach – Circular Construction Space

Located in Offenbach's harbour district, Circle Cube presents projects, material innovations and system solutions that demonstrate practical applications of circular principles in architecture and construction. The focus is on modular building systems, recycled materials, adaptive reuse strategies and digital tools for resource-efficient design.

Address: Hafenallee 61, Offenbach

Guided tours and design food guide

Visitors who prefer not to explore the Focus Days independently can take advantage of a comprehensive program of guided tours. *Design Trails* on foot, *Design Rides* by bicycle and the comfortable *Design Shuttles*, operated in partnership with mobility partner MAZDA, offer exclusive insights into the local creative scene. They connect visitors directly with renowned agencies, studios and exhibitions across the participating cities. Further information is available at wdc2026.org. Culinary highlights are provided by *Where Designers Eat*, a food guide curated and designed by HalloBasis. Featuring insider recommendations from creatives across the region, the guide is available both on site and as a Google Maps list.



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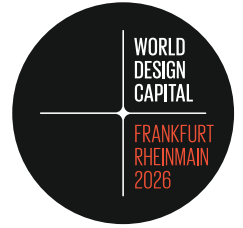
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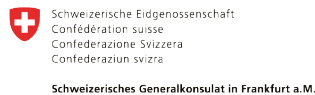


What is WDC 2026?

World Design Capital® (WDC) is an initiative of the internationally recognised non-governmental World Design Organization® (WDO). The designation recognises cities and regions that use design as a driver of economic, social, cultural and environmental progress. Frankfurt RheinMain (Germany) has been awarded the title for 2026 under the theme: *Design for Democracy. Atmospheres for a Better Life*. Previous World Design Capitals, awarded biennially, include Turin (Italy), Seoul (South Korea), Helsinki (Finland), Cape Town (South Africa), Taipei (Chinese Taipei), Mexico City (Mexico), Lille Métropole (France), Valencia (Spain), and most recently the binational designation of San Diego (USA) and Tijuana (Mexico). Busan (South Korea) has been selected as World Design Capital 2028. Further information is available at wdo.org.



Open Partner:innen



Kooperationspartner Filmpremiere



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