

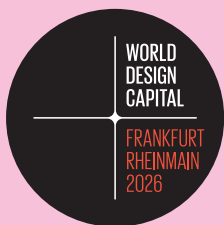
World
Frankfurt

Design
RheinMain

Capital
2026

Programme

WDC 2026
in May/June



Frankfurt RheinMain is World Design Capital 2026

Our region has been awarded the international title of World Design Capital for 2026. This means that for one year, we will demonstrate how good design can improve our lives.

WDC 2026 provides a platform for testing new ideas for a sustainable, equitable and liveable future.

What is a World Design Capital® (WDC)?

Every two years, World Design Organization (WDO)® awards the title World Design Capital® (WDC) to a city or region that uses design to drive economic, social, cultural, and progress. In addition to Frankfurt RheinMain (Germany) in 2026, WDO has recognised the following cities biennially: Torino (Italy); Seoul (South Korea); Helsinki (Finland); Cape Town (South Africa); Taipei (Taiwan, Chinese Taipei); Mexico City (Mexico); Lille Métropole (France); Valencia (Spain), San Diego (USA) and Tijuana (Mexico) as the first binational designation and most recently (South Korea) for 2028. Frankfurt RheinMain (Germany) holds the title for 2026 based on the guiding idea of *Design for Democracy. Atmospheres for a better life.*

What is the World Design Organization (WDO)®?

World Design Organization (WDO)® is a globally recognised non-governmental organisation with consultative status at the United Nations. It is committed to promoting and advancing industrial design as a driver of positive change. Since its founding in 1957, WDO has supported more than 215 member organisations worldwide and reaches hundreds of thousands of designers through innovative programmes and initiatives dedicated to “design for a better world”.



**Thematic focus
in May**

Shaping Living Environments together

How we live, build and move shapes our daily lives. Sustainability, climate protection, technological innovation and social participation all play a role. In May, public spaces and participatory formats emerge – including joint cooking and gardening – that enable encounters and strengthen engagement. The focus is on how design can bring nature back into the city, facilitate sustainable practices and deploy technology responsibly – from climate-adapted construction and modular forms of housing to circular architecture and future-ready mobility: towards a shared, resilient, sustainable and inclusive future.

Our May highlights

A selection of particularly recommended events related to the WDC thematic focus in May can be explored here. Many more events are available at wdc2026.org.

WerkRaum Wiesbaden — Offen für deine Ideen

City centres are undergoing transformation: department stores are closing, creating space for new uses beyond consumer culture. The transformation of the former SportScheck store in Wiesbaden focuses on the pressing question of democratic participation. A circularly designed, public and inspiring place is emerging which, thanks to its central location on the Langgasse shopping street, is open to everyone – regardless of background, education or age. A wide range of WDC projects take place here, alongside on-going exchange and dialogue about them.

former SportScheck, Langgasse 5–9, Wiesbaden,
02.05. Opening event
by: Sabine Philipp with Stiftung Stadtmuseum
Wiesbaden, Sandra Düsterhus with POINT.
Architektur, Jörg Waldschütz with Hochschule
RheinMain

DemokratieKioske

The *DemokratieKioske* transform kiosks and public spaces across the RheinMain region into places for exchange, creativity and participation. Around 120 cultural events create low-threshold formats such as dialogue sessions, workshops and performances – aimed at young people and adults alike.

Public highlight dates:
07.05., 18:00 The Jodel Experience
NOX Wasserhäuschen, Frankfurt Sachsenhausen
06.06., 15:00 ABER Sicher! Inclusive dance workshop
with Reclaming Dance
Gusti Kulturkiosk, Frankfurt Gallus
17.06., 18:00 Temporary Constructs
Am Kirchberg, Frankfurt Sossenheim

Locations: Frankfurt (Gallus, Sachsenhausen, Atzelberg, Sossenheim / Höchst), Wiesbaden, Offenbach, Hanau, Darmstadt, Oberursel, Bad Vilbel, Hofheim, Feldberg; February – September 2026
by: Democracy Kiosks project team

Mai 2026

WDC Campus:

Dialogue Workshops

#Science & Research

The WDC Campus is a central future-oriented project of WDC 2026, comprising around 150 projects addressing topics such as work, education, health and mobility. From April onwards, the Dialogue Workshops take place every Wednesday evening, offering a platform for exchange, reflection and joint learning through lectures, panels, workshops, excursions and activities centred on questions of design. Up-to-date information on events – some scheduled at short notice – and on the summer exhibition can be found at wdc2026.org.

WDC-Hub / Museum Angewandte Kunst, Frankfurt, from 22.04. by: WDC 2026

1. Superblock in Hessen

#Mobility #Intervention / Action

Since 2022, the Superblock initiative in Wiesbaden's Rheingauviertel has been running an experiment: sections of streets are temporarily transformed into vibrant spaces for encounter, free from through traffic. In 2026, pop-up activities will once again take place in public streets. On Superblock Day, streets become places of meeting, culture and neighbourhood life – including a shared *uff der Gass breakfast*. **Wiesbaden Rheingauviertel, 01.05. – 31.10.**

by: Initiative Superblock im Wiesbadener Rheingauviertel

WDC-Hub

#Participation #Public Space & Urban Development #Exhibition #Intervention / Action

The WDC Hub at the Museum Angewandte Kunst, Frankfurt is open throughout 2026 during the museum's opening hours. It serves as a meeting point for exchange, workshops, discussions and collaborative work throughout the programme year. Every Tuesday from 16:30 to 18:00, the WDC team hosts an open WDC consultation hour. Every Thursday from 16:30 onwards, WDC Yoga is offered for all levels – free of charge and with no obligation to consume.

Excerpt from the Hub programme:

Sobremesa

A pop-up exhibition on Spanish design featuring a selection of ten Spanish designers and studios, highlighting the balance between industry, craftsmanship and innovation. A project originating from World Design Capital Valencia 2022. **17.05., 14:00**

LOOMCYCLE

The loom by raumlaborberlin travels through Frankfurt's neighbourhoods, stopping at various locations where people can weave together. On Sunday, 17 May from 14:00, the project concludes with a community picnic on and around the woven carpet.

Until May

Museum Angewandte Kunst, Frankfurt

Outdoor-Wohnzimmer (Offenbach)

© Vlada Shcholkina



**Outdoor-Wohnzimmer
für die Innenstadt Offenbach**
#Public Space & Urban
Development #Sustainability &
Climate #Intervention / Action

With a sandpit, parasols and plenty of plants, the outdoor living room invites people to linger. Whether for meeting up, conversations, story times, games or smaller readings and concerts – it is a space of possibilities. On 09 May SCAPE° celebrates its first anniversary. To mark the occasion, the project invites everyone interested to fill the still-empty planters with edible and insect-friendly plants, creating a flourishing urban landscape. **SCAPE°, Offenbach am Main, year-round**
09.05., 14:00 – 18:00 Birthday celebration
von: SCAPE° – Wetter. Klima. Mensch.

WDC-Pavillon in Kelkheim, Offenbach und Wiesbaden
#Participation #Public Space & Urban Development
#Education / Mediation
The WDC Pavilion becomes a temporary meeting point in public space. Its flexible design enables a tailored programme at each location, reflecting the diversity of the region and actively involving the local community. During the week, the focus is on workshops with schools and collaborative projects with associations, cultural and educational institutions. At weekends, the pavilion transforms into an open gathering place with community workshops, performances, music and more.
Kelkheim, 06.05. – 17.05.
Offenbach, 27.05. – 14.06.
Wiesbaden, 24.06. – 12.07.
by: WDC 2026

Den Tod gestalten: Tabuthema Tod? – Film Screening with Discussion
#Health #Education
#Film (screening)
Death, as an inevitable part of human existence, can also be viewed through the lens of design: which spaces, rituals and forms offer us comfort? How do we shape farewell, mourning and remembrance in ways that reflect our cultural and individual needs? Death is not only a subject for undertakers and churches – it concerns us all.
Screening of the documentary
Der Tod ist ein Arschloch

followed by a discussion, **Haus am Dom, 11.05., 19:30 – 21:30**
by: Frankfurter Domkreis Kirche und Wissenschaft

TEXT MATTERS. MATTERS OF TEXT 2026

#Culture #Education #Festival
In its third season, the festival places the book at the centre as a space in its own right. On 09 May, TOKONOMA in Frankfurt becomes a meeting point for literature and club culture. Between stage talks and DJ sets, the opening event **Neue Ästhetik des Widerstands** opens up spaces for language and artistic intervention.
TOKONOMA, 09.05., 20:00
by: Frankfurt Book Fair, PRÄPOSITION, TOKONOMA

Kitchen on the Run
#Participation #Inclusion
#Intervention / Action
The kitchen container of Kitchen on the Run celebrates its 10th anniversary on Gustavsburgstraße in Frankfurt's Gallus district. For eight weeks, the container will be based in Frankfurt – in cooperation with the Caritas Quartiersmanagement Gallus as part of the Frankfurt programme **Active Neighbourhood**. Together with residents, local initiatives and associations, the project curates a diverse weekly programme that activates public space, creates encounters and strengthens community life.
Gustavsburgstraße, Frankfurt-Gallus, May – June
10.05., from 12:30
Opening: Open picnic with WDC 2026
at the container
by: Über den Tellerrand Frankfurt e. V.

Positions on Freedom. Gestaltung und ihre Grenzen – the thing Fellowship 2026
#Industry #Design Discourse
#Exhibition
In cooperation with **USM Haller Möbel**, three commissioned designers develop works on the theme of freedom, reinterpreting an industrial modular system as a point of departure. A group exhibition – featuring submissions from an open call alongside objects from the collection of the **Museum Angewandte Kunst** – presents works that reflect on design and freedom from a transdisciplinary perspective. A reader accompanying the

exhibition offers in-depth theoretical insights into the topic.

Museum Angewandte Kunst, Frankfurt, 13.05. – 28.06.
by: the thing Magazine

Design for Democracy.
Was Gestaltung bewirken kann!
#Public Space & Urban Development #Sustainability & Climate #Design Discourse #Exhibition
The exhibition presents current design examples from the Frankfurt RheinMain region and connects them with international projects and figures. It offers new perspectives on the relationship between design and democracy and, as an interactive platform for exchange, invites everyone to engage through information, discussion and experiential formats.
Museum Angewandte Kunst, Frankfurt, 22.05. – 28.06.
21.05., 19:00 Opening

Learn & Burn | Lab for Female Networking / DDC
#Inclusion #Work #Education #Conference
The Women of DDC are committed to increasing the participation and impact of women* in all processes and decision-making contexts within the design sector and its fields of influence. 2026, representatives of international women's networks are invited to learn from one another, develop ideas and initiate change.
Evangelische Akademie Frankfurt, 22.05.
by: Women of DDC

Hooked on a Book
#Beteiligung #Kultur #Performance / Tanz / Theater
Two people meet and open a book. They begin to leaf through it. The book poses questions and encourages exchange and conversation – about life and the world at large and in detail, about differences and common ground, about being alone and being together.
Literaturhaus Ville Clementina Wiesbaden, 09.05. + 30.05., 19:00 – 22:00
Jugendkulturtreff e-werk Bad Homburg, 22.05., 20:30 + 22:30
SCAPE° Offenbach, 28.05. + 13.06., 15:00 – 19:00
by: Rimini Protokoll, initiated by Kulturfonds Frankfurt RheinMain

Vom Häuserkampf ins Stadthaus – Was bringen Hausbesetzungen?
#Participation #Public Space & Urban Development
#Talk / Discussion

For decades, Frankfurt has had an active squatter scene that has taken up the cause for political activism, alternative ways of living and social engagement. Justifiably so?
Through keynote speeches and a panel discussion, we aim to explore the political, cultural and historical significance of squatting, engage in dialogue with activists, and examine the legitimacy of this form of protest with both its supporters and critics. One of many events organised by the Frankfurt Adult Education Centre as part of the WDC year.
Stadthaus Frankfurt, 30.05., 14:00 – 18:00
by: Volkshochschule Frankfurt am Main

Main-Light
#Sustainability & Climate #Industry #Workshop
Main-Light is an autonomous, climate-neutral lighting solution for public space. It uses innovative solar films, an insect-friendly light spectrum and simple installation without the need for power lines. In this way, resources are conserved and previously dark areas are illuminated. Shaded places to linger are created along the River Main – spaces to pause, breathe and reflect together on the energy transition and positive visions for the future. The pilot project will be realised in Frankfurt in 2026.
Weseler Werft, Frankfurt 07.05. – 30.10.
07.05., 18:00 Opening
by: Tobias Trübenbacher & Andreas Lang

#Subthemes in the
May focus

**Thematic focus
in June**



Future Cycles – Design, Crafts, and Industry

Design and creative practice play a central role in industry and the economy. Rather than constantly producing new goods, the focus is shifting towards responsible consumption, reuse and recycling. Concepts such as cradle-to-cradle and emerging circular economy processes demonstrate how design can combine ecological responsibility with economic success.

In June, *Open – Design Week Frankfurt RheinMain* makes visible how design is driving a resource-efficient and future-proof economy.

Our June highlights

A selection of particularly recommended events related to the WDC thematic focus in June can be explored here. Many more events are available at wdc2026.org.

Open – Design Week Frankfurt RheinMain World Design Experience 2026

In June, *Open – Design Week Frankfurt RheinMain* demonstrates how design is becoming a key driver of a resource-efficient and future-proof economy. *Open* will transform the entire Frankfurt RheinMain region into a hub for design in 2026. Agencies, studios, universities and companies take centre stage, highlighting the economic relevance of design for a shared and sustainable future.

Frankfurt, Wiesbaden, Darmstadt, Offenbach,
Hanau and the wider region, 05.06. – 14.06.
by: WDC 2026

A Step Ahead – Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt at 125 / Welterbefest

Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a significant ensemble of early modernism, celebrates in 2026 with the exhibition *A Step Ahead – Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt at 125*, marking the 125th anniversary of the first exhibition in 1901. The exhibition brings together historical and visionary design, presents innovative materials and technologies, and inspires visitors to shape a better, more equitable future.

Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt, 07.06.2026 – 31.01.2027
06.06. Opening



Open – Design Week Frankfurt RheinMain
© Ben Kuhlmann

Circular Citizens of Wiesbaden

The project encourages citizens to use items for longer. This reduces waste, channels products into second-hand shops, repair cafés and exchange boxes, and makes circular services easy to find via a digital platform and a city map. In this way, a visible ecosystem is created that supports local economic sectors.

Heimathafen Wiesbaden, 18.06. Repair workshop
by: Circular-Experience.org
c/o Studio Peter Post × Petra Esveld eGbR

June 2026

Multispezies Members Club (MMC)

#Work #Sustainability & Climate #Exhibition

The exhibition at the Museum Giersch of Goethe University Frankfurt brings together artistic and scientific perspectives on AI, ecology and socio-political developments, inviting visitors to actively and sustainably shape our physical and digital environments. It explores how humans, animals, plants and machines can coexist as equal members of an inclusive club.

Museum Giersch, Frankfurt
28.03. – 06.09.

What is it made of? – Zutaten für Gesundes Bauen

#Crafts #Consumption #Building & Living #Exhibition

Healthy, sustainable and environmentally compatible building materials free from petrochemical components are a key factor. Bio-based materials influence the quality of our environment, open up new design and aesthetic possibilities, and enable the transfer of long-established techniques into the present. The exhibition brings this topic out of specialist circles and into the public realm – “served up deliciously on the table”.

Heimathafen Wiesbaden
05.06. – 26.06.

by: Leila Behjat (Healthy Materials Lab EU) & Silke Rimmel (raumgesichte)

Entfestigung – Entfestival im Turm der Wasserburg Florstadt

#Crafts #Building & Living #Intervention / Action

This project questions fortified structures through the lens of art and design. A young team develops transdisciplinary perspectives on heritage conservation with a focus on future ways of utilisation. The current aim is to activate and make visible the tower ruin of Wasserburg Florstadt as a community space that fosters democratic engagement, through the participatory preservation of its deteriorating roof.

Tower of Wasserburg
Staden-Florstadt
06.06. Opening with artistic contributions, discourse and communal meal

13.09. Entfestival as part of the European Heritage Days
by: Agency &

KulturErben – Staatliche Zeichenakademie Hanau

#Crafts #Culture #Workshop

In June, special exhibitions, interactive workshops, hands-on sessions and talks demonstrate how ethically sourced materials, sustainable techniques and timeless design are applied in craft practices. With *KulturErben*, Staatliche Zeichenakademie Hanau creates an open space for engaging creatively with cultural heritage – understood not only as something to preserve, but as something to be continually reinterpreted, shaped and shared.
Staatliche Zeichenakademie Hanau, 08.06. – 26.06.

SHEROES.

Comic Art from Africa

#Crafts #Culture #Education

The exhibition offers insight into the diverse comic scene across Africa, placing female protagonists and perspectives at its centre. It is accompanied by an extensive programme of events, including:

05.06., 19:00 Youth performance project *Close-Ups* with Junges Schauspiel Frankfurt

11.06., 18:00 Kemetic yoga in the exhibition with yoga teacher Tasha Quaynor

13.06., 14:00 – 17:00 Writing workshop
Weltkulturenmuseum

BGBA Hanau

#Public Space & Urban Development #Community #Education / Mediation

Between 19 and 26 June, the Brüder Grimm University of Cooperative Education (BGBA) in Hanau presents four projects addressing the future of urban coexistence: *Hanau3Places*, *Nachhaltige Nachbarschaft*, *Mobile Gärten* and *Wahl-Lokal*. The students' work demonstrates how design can be used as a tool to actively shape quality of life, community and social dialogue in Hanau.

Brüder Grimm Berufsakademie Hanau, 19.06 – 26.06.

OFF THE WALL

#Public Space & Urban Development #Mobility #Intervention / Action

This participatory project creates a real-world laboratory open

to all – with temporary and interactive actions, structures and workshops along the existing network of paths in Frankfurt's green Wallanlagen parkland and along the embankment of the River Main. Universities from the Frankfurt RheinMain region and beyond are involved, contributing their visions to the design process. Initial ideas – ranging from *ping-pong parks* and *writing stations* to *biodiversity oases* – further develop Frankfurt's Central Park and connect designers with municipal stakeholders and other key players in the city's community.

Wallanlagen parklands & River Main embankment, Frankfurt, 12.06. – 14.06., daily 10:00 – 20:00

by: making frankfurt with regional universities and local stakeholders

Too Hot! Heiße Städte, neue Wege

**#Industry #Economy
#Sustainability & Climate
#Exhibition**

Cities lie at the heart of the climate crisis: although they cover only a small proportion of the Earth's surface, they consume 75 per cent of global energy and account for 80 per cent of world-wide greenhouse gas emissions. At the same time, they are key actors in mitigating the impacts of climate change and developing new solutions. With the exhibition *Too Hot!*, the Deutsches Architekturmuseum (DAM) explores why urban transformation has become one of the central challenges of the future.

DAM – Deutsches Architekturmuseum Frankfurt, 20.06.2026 – 07.02.2027 19.06., 19:00 Opening

BEAT BY BITS – AN OPEN-AIR VERSION OF 16BIT

**#Culture #Public Space & Urban Development
#Performance / Dance / Theatre**

BEAT BY BITS (BBB) is a dance performance staged in public spaces in the heart of Frankfurt. It engages with the social and political meanings of techno and makes them tangible through a combination of sound, colour and movement – accessible to both techno enthusiasts and passers-by alike.

**Frankfurt city centre 12.06., 19:00
by: Paula Rosolen / Haptic Hide**

Common Ground / Saalbaustraße 37

#Public Space & Urban Development #Intervention / Action

At its core is the idea of reclaiming the street as a collective meeting place and making visions of a car-free city tangible. *Common Ground* strengthens local networks, activates neighbours and visitors, and makes the diversity of the neighbourhood visible.

The programme includes participatory formats and contributions from local businesses and cultural initiatives, alongside concerts, DJ sets, snacks and drinks. *Common Ground* is an experiment in fostering togetherness in public space – and a preview of what a car-free city might feel like.

das blumen e. V., Saalbaustr. 37, Darmstadt, 06.06.

Schwarzzeltarchitektur / Zelt als Form zwischen Not und Eskapismus

**#Crafts #Participation
#Talk / Discussion**

In a tent structure made of black Jurten-Kothen tarpaulins, architecture students from Darmstadt, along with architects, designers, scouts and guests, discuss the significance of tents. They serve as shelter for refugees, promise work-life balance and closeness to nature for the affluent, and shape Olympic ensembles. They are mobile, flexible and generally environmentally friendly. The process itself becomes a participatory performance in which a tent is collectively created.

social.form, Darmstadt, 11.06. 19:00 – 21:00

by: Verband Christlicher Pfadfinder*innen Hessen; social.form

#Subthemes in the June focus

→ Notes & Information

Do you have questions about accessibility, language or anything else? We want everyone to feel comfortable at WDC events. If you need information or support, please get in touch:

+49 69 928 82931
programm@wdc2026.org

→ Online calendar

Our online calendar lists all WDC events. You can filter by theme, format, date and location.



wdc2026.org  [@wdc2026](https://www.instagram.com/wdc2026)

A Step Ahead – Mathildenhöhe
Darmstadt at 125
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