

**Thematic focus in September,
October and November**

**Design in Dialogue –
in Politics and Society**

Design can make political processes easier to understand and more accessible – for example through user-friendly public services, new forms of citizen participation or international collaboration. The aim is not to produce ready-made solutions, but to use design as a method for addressing social inequality, rethinking remembrance and actively shaping democratic processes.

Our September highlights

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

WDC-Pavillon in Darmstadt

The *WDC Pavilion* travels to its final stop in Darmstadt, where it opens its doors at the Carree. With a varied programme, it becomes a meeting place in the public realm: a place where people can strike up conversations, try out new things and experience design as a force for social change.

Im Carree, Darmstadt
02.09.–20.09.
by: WDC 2026

Wie geht Kulturpalast? Rückblick – Praxis – Vision

The Höchst Bolongaro Palace will open in 2027 as the new palace of culture for western Frankfurt. A year before the opening, the Historical Museum Frankfurt will host a symposium exploring the design, use and significance of the palace as a democratic cultural venue.

Historical Museum Frankfurt & Bolongaropalast
17.09.–18.09.
by: Historical Museum Frankfurt



Impressions from the soft opening of the WDC Pavilion
© Ben Kuhlmann

September 2026

Trad is a trap. Für eine neue Frankfurter Stadtteilküche

#Intervention / Initiative

What if food were as integral to the city as libraries or theatres? Over several weeks, people come together at the Riederwald neighbourhood kitchen to chop, cook, eat and discuss.

Square in front of Philippuskirche, Frankfurt until 05.09., every Thu–Sat: communal cooking from 10:00, food for everyone from 13:00 05.09., 13:00 Closing event and concert

17.09.–04.10. Neighbourhood kitchen at Mousonturm with Kitchen Debates by: andpartnersincrime

Frankfurt RheinMain auf dem Weg in die Moderne

#Education / Mediation

How has modernism shaped our region – and what can we learn from it for the future?

The project explores these questions through video interviews, dialogues and accounts by contemporary witnesses. All contributions can be accessed via QR codes in public spaces and are linked to a website containing background information.

throughout the RheinMain region

from September

by: KulturRegion Frankfurt RheinMain gGmbH

Schader-Festival 2026

#Design Discourse #Politics

What can democracy look like today and tomorrow? How can we help shape it, set it in motion and bring it to life? These are the central questions of the second

Schader Festival. Together with WDC 2026, the festival brings together people from the social sciences and professional practice, opening up a space for new perspectives on democracy.
Goethestraße 2, Darmstadt
04.09., 11:00–20:00
by: Schader-Stiftung

Riviera Festival 2026
#Festival #Public Space & Urban Development
Whether in a club or studio, on a meadow, on the water or on an open-air stage, the *Riviera Festival* for pop and club culture unites Offenbach's independent music venues in a shared festival.
Hafen 26, Hafenallee (new development sites at HafenCampus)
04.09.–06.09.
by: City of Offenbach am Main, Office of Cultural Management

Riso statt Räumung – Künstlerische Kampfansage gegen Gentrifizierung
#Exhibition
In a collection of risograph prints, the artists present different perspectives on displacement and transformation in urban spaces. A zine will be published to accompany the exhibition.
Offenbach
04.09.–13.09.
by: riso paradiso OFFM (untot e. V.)

Lampionfest am Bornheimer Hang
#Festival #Participation
The neighbourhood festival marking the centenary of New Frankfurt continues in the largest housing estate created as part of this pioneering urban development programme. Drawing on the lantern festivals of the New Frankfurt era, the estate will be illuminated with numerous lanterns. The programme includes a wide range of stage performances, neighbourhood stalls and guided tours of the area.
Bornheimer Hang, Frankfurt
05.09.
by: City of Frankfurt, Deutsches Architekturmuseum (DAM) and Urban Media Project

Stiftung Buchkunst: 60 Jahre Schöne Bücher
#Design Discourse #Exhibition
The anniversary provides an opportunity to celebrate the importance of book art and highlight its continued relevance. The exhibition explores the aesthetic

and technical significance of the book and the development of book design over the past 60 years.
Museum Angewandte Kunst, Frankfurt
05.09.–01.11.
by: Stiftung Buchkunst

Connections for Friendship
#Exhibition #Culture
The project creates public spaces for dialogue, art and new perspectives. The anniversary exhibition with Franklin at Badehaus Bad Soden connects the values and cultures of the two twin towns through a creative, multimedia and immersive presentation celebrating democracy and friendship.
Königsteiner Str. 86, Bad Soden am Taunus
05.09.–25.10.
► Opening: 05.09., 11:00
by: Internationaler Kultur- und Sportaustausch Bad Soden (IKUS), TS. e. V.

Crossing Culture Quiosque / Datscha Radio Ffm: Radyo Parfüm
#Audio / Podcast #Culture
As part of *Crossing Culture Quiosque*, the nomadic radio project Datscha Radio stops at the Parfümerie Frankfurt off-space. Radyo Parfüm invites local residents, passers-by and visitors to join us in making radio: what does your neighbourhood sound like?
Parfümerie Frankfurt
06.09., 16:00–19:00
by: FRANKFURTER SPORT UND KUNST KASINO, Koordinierungsbüro BHV

Raum für neue Wege – Kirche Weiterdenken
#Workshop
Herz-Jesu Church in Kelsterbach opens its doors as an example of the challenge facing many church buildings today: the question of their future role and use in society. A cultural series, a two-day summer workshop and a participatory art installation offer a new way of experiencing the church interior and provide plenty of space for new paths.
Bergstrasse 11, Kelsterbach
► 12.09. Opening with Minister Kaweh Mansoori
by: Hessian Ministry of Economic Affairs, City of Kelsterbach, ProjektStadt | Integrierte Stadtentwicklung, Herz Jesu Parish, Hesse State Initiative for Baukultur

WERKZEUGE DES ANSTIFTENS – Gestaltung als Haltung

#Exhibition #Culture

On Friedensplatz, this modular exhibition demonstrates how the role of the city photographer and other participatory formats enable people to help shape their surroundings. Weekly activities invite visitors to experiment and bring to life the idea of design as a collective endeavour.

**Friedensplatz, Darmstadt
12.09.–09.10.**

► **Opening: 12.09., 14:00**

**by: Werkbundakademie
Darmstadt mit der Schader-
Stiftung**

Wasserhäuschen und die Stadt

#Design Discourse #Exhibition

An exhibition centred on the small buildings, the stories told at the bar and the neighbourhood meeting places – to look at, take part in and join in the conversation. The event forms part of the Wasserhäusje Day, which takes place throughout Frankfurt. Come along and put together your own colourful bag of goodies!

**Wasserhäuschen
Ernst-May-Platz, Frankfurt
12.09., 12:00–18:00**

**by: Engelmann Gerules
Riechardt GbR**

In Memoriam

#Offer #Talk / Discussion

With the *In Memoriam* event, the Domkreis für Kirche und Wissenschaft invites bereaved people, mourners and those saying goodbye to a special day at St Michael's Church of Mourning. As part of a free walk-in service, visitors can get a small commemorative tattoo.

**Fachzentrum Trauerseelsorge
St. Michael, Butzbacher Str. 45,
Frankfurt**

12.09., 10:30

by: Begräbniskirche St. Michael

Shifting Objects – Shifting Values

#Design Discourse #Exhibition

The exhibition series began at 3daysofdesign in Copenhagen. Following its focus on collaborative processes, it now presents the results of transnational teams, showcasing innovative designs for a democratic and sustainable future.

**Museum Angewandte Kunst,
Frankfurt**

20.09.–10.10.

**by: STUDIO JONATHAN
RADETZ**

Tanzfestival Rhein-Main 2026 – Moving Democracy

#Performance / Dance / Theater

This year, the festival explores how democracy can be experienced as a living, embodied practice. One of the central figures in the programme is the Brazilian choreographer Lia Rodrigues, whose work combines artistic power with social responsibility.

**Darmstadt, Frankfurt, Offen-
bach und Wiesbaden**

29.09.–15.11.

**by: Künstler*innenhaus Mou-
sonturm Frankfurt & Hessisches
Staatsballett**

Kiosk of Solidarity X

Bahnhofsviertel

#Intervention / Initiative

The mobile kiosk creates space for discussion about drug use, homelessness and social exclusion. Through activities in the Bahnhofsviertel and Taunusanlage, the project works with local residents, addiction support services and people with lived experience to develop new approaches to decentralised assistance and support structures.

**Frankfurter Bahnhofsviertel
24.09. + 25.09., Harm-reduction
drug support activity**

**26.09., Kiosk x Hotline – street
work for sex workers affected
by addiction**

► **Further information about
location and times is available
on the website**

by: Moritz Ahlert and Felix Egle

Parade der Beete – das Netzwerk entsteht

#Public Space & Urban Development

In a parade, Diesterweg's mobile planters make their way to their new locations in the neighbourhood. Diesterweg families in Offenbach build, design and plant mobile planters that create inviting places to spend time in their districts and neighbourhoods.

Anyone wishing to observe the workshops can contact
dws@buergerstiftung-offenbach.de.

**Hermann-Steinhäuser-
Straße 43-47, Offenbach**

► **Workshops: 19.09. + 26.09.**

► **Parade: 27.09., 11:00**

**by: Bürgerstiftung Offenbach,
Janina Albrecht**

#Subthemes in the
September 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

Kiosk of Solidarity
© Monika Keiler



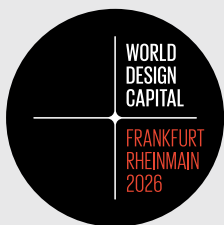
World
Frankfurt

Design
RheinMain

Capital
2026

Programme

WDC 2026
in September/Okttober/
November



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”.

Our October and November highlights

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

AfkV – Amt für künstlerische Vermessung Höchst

The AfkV investigates the interface between Industriepark Höchst and the surrounding district. What relationships exist at the urban and social levels? Beginning in September, the artists' residency embarks on a process of exploration and creates opportunities for exchange between the neighbourhood and industry.

B25, Brüningstraße 25, Frankfurt
from September
by: Raum für kulturelle Fragen e. V. & social.form

Stories and Hopes of the Arrivals to Rhine-Main Archipelago

How do migration, memories and hopes shape ideas of home? The project makes visible the stories and experiences of people who have come to Germany since the 1990s from post-Eastern European and post-Soviet regions.

WDC-Hub, Museum Angewandte Kunst, Frankfurt
09.10.–11.10.
by: de_coloniallanguage, Ani Menua, Marina Solntseva, Denis Esakov

► 10.10., 10:00–18:00
Claiming Spaces. Permission (not) needed.
Open reading room, community format and panel,
curated by X3 Kollektiv

► 11.10.
After Solidarity
Participatory performance for adults by Grace Euna Kim in collaboration with de_coloniallanguage



Vermessung Heynold (2021)
©socialform

October 2026

Christian Dell

#Design Theory #Exhibition

From exquisitely handcrafted one-off pieces in silver to mass-produced lamps that have attained cult status: in the metalwork classes at the Bauhaus in Weimar and the Frankfurt School of Art, this pioneering designer conceived, created and championed good design for everyone. until 15.11.

Marktplatz, Wiesbaden

by: sam – Stadtmuseum am Markt Wiesbaden

Halle für Alle!

#Education / Mediation

#Workshop

This playful assembly format examines areas of social tension. The audience does not simply watch, but actively participates in decisions, takes a position, votes and enters into conversation. The Willy-Brandt-Halle in Mühlheim becomes a hall for everyone.

Willy-Brandt-Halle, Mühlheim am Main

01.10.

by: Turbo Pascal, initiated by Kulturfonds Frankfurt Rhein-Main

Democracy – THE ARTS CORNER Perspektiven

#Exhibition

#Intervention / Initiative

The artists reflect on the results of their activities over the preceding months and collect the terms and concepts relating to democracy that have emerged from them. These form the basis of the graphic facade project being created at BBK Frankfurt.

Hanauer Landstraße 89, Frankfurt

03.10.–04.10.

by: Berufsverband Bildender Künstler Frankfurt e. V.

Alternative Bookfair Fahrgasse 2026

#Festival #Publikation / Produkt

With a focus on art and design, *Alternative Bookfair 2026* brings together independent publishers and designers. Alongside the world's largest book fair, there is a need for a space that allows new ideas to emerge, helping Frankfurt remain an attractive location for people who make books and their audiences in the future.

Fahrgasse 87, Frankfurt

07.10.–11.11.

by: Dash Press

Playground 2.0

#Intervention / Initiative

For three weeks, *Playground 2.0* transforms a former fast-food restaurant into a cultural and

community space. In the heart of the city centre, it creates a space for exchange, ideas and accessible culture.

Former McDonalds, Ernst-Ludwig-Straße 26, Darmstadt
09.10.–31.10.
by: prima e. V.

**Welche Welt woll(t)en wir?
Vom Nutzen, Designwissen zu
bewahren**

#Design Theory #Conference

This interdisciplinary symposium examines the preservation of specialist knowledge. It focuses on design collections in archives, archival practice, cultures of remembrance and design criticism – and their significance for coexistence in society.

**Förderkreis BraunSammlung
e. V., Westerbachstraße 23c,
Kronberg im Taunus**
16.10.–17.10.

by: Gesellschaft für
Designgeschichte e. V.

**Verbundene Welten: Wie Netzwerke
Forschung, Gesellschaft
und Demokratie prägen**

#Design Discourse #Conference

Digital, social, scientific and political networks permeate almost every area of social life. They structure the production of knowledge, influence the formation of public opinion, transform democratic processes and create new forms of power, participation and exclusion. The congress seeks to provide an interdisciplinary platform for exchange on network research.

Goethestraße 2, Darmstadt
22.10.–23.10., je 10:00–17:00
by: Schader-Stiftung

Mein gesundes Wiesbaden

#Conference #Workshop

Health concerns us all. It determines our wellbeing, our quality of life and social cohesion in our city. The project makes prevention visible, tangible and open to collective participation – directly within local communities.

**24.10., each workshop starting
at 09:00**

- ▶ Healthy eating for children (Volksbildungswerk Klarenthal)
- ▶ Exercise for older people (Nachbarschaftshaus Wiesbaden)
- ▶ Loneliness among older people (Quartier Eigenheim / Komponistenviertel)

by: Institut für Universal
Design (IUD)

**Service Design Global
Conference 2026**

#Politics #Design Discourse

#Design Theory

This renowned conference brings together outstanding service design projects, leading talents, innovators and industry stakeholders.

RheinMain Congress Center
28.10.–30.10.

by: Service Design Network
gGmbH

Mobilitätsstationen & Radschnellwege für die Region Frankfurt RheinMain

#Exhibition

#Climate & Sustainability

The aim is to create attractive mobility options for everyone – particularly in rural areas – and to reduce car use. Good design ensures user-friendly concepts that offer a high-quality public environment, a strong visual identity and better orientation. This applies equally to mobility hubs, cycling infrastructure and cycle superhighways.

**Frankfurterstraße 151D
(1st floor), Dreieich**

**30.10.–31.10., 10:00–16:00 on
both days**

by: andré stocker design and
Regionalverband Frankfurt
RheinMain

**Die transformative Kraft des
Designs**

#Design Theory #Conference

The conference focuses on the role of industrial design, product design and UX design as drivers of social transformation. Its aim is to highlight design as a field for shaping sustainability, innovation and democratic values, and to develop future perspectives for education and professional practice.

**Circle Cube, Hafenallee 61,
Offenbach**

30.10.–31.10.

by: Verband Deutscher Industrie
Designer e. V.

**#Subthemes in the
October focus**

November 2026

Design Policy Days

What can design contribute to democracy?
The *Design Policy Days* examine this question in the context of public-sector reform, political dissent and institutional democratic practice. The conferences take place in Wiesbaden, Offenbach and Frankfurt, concluding with the Design Assembly at St Paul's Church in Frankfurt.

11.11. The State Needs Design
Heimathafen Wiesbaden

12.11. When Form Becomes Attitude
HfG Offenbach

13.11. Democracy Needs Design
Goethe-Universität Frankfurt

14.11. Design Assembly & Convocation Ceremony
Paulskirche Frankfurt

by: WDC 2026



THREADS OF LIFE Corina Gertz & Hannah Maria Schmutterer

#Culture #Education

The exhibition focuses on textile practices, cultural identity and questions of visibility. Photographer Corina Gertz portrays women in traditional clothing, but always from behind. Their faces remain hidden, while the clothing itself becomes a symbol of history, craftsmanship, origins and social belonging.

Kunstforum der TU Darmstadt, Hochschulstraße 1
01.11.–13.12.

by: Kunstforum der TU Darmstadt

Großer Konvent 2026 – Wie Demokratien leben

#Politics #Conference

On 06 November, the Schader-Stiftung invites selected partners to its Main Convention for the 14th time. The keynote address will be given by Naita Hishoono, a Namibian democracy activist, political sociologist and Executive Director of the Namibia Institute of Democracy (NID).

Goethestraße 2, Darmstadt

06.11., 10:30–18:00

by: Schader-Stiftung

Freitagsakademie

#Education / Mediation

#Workshop

From November 2026, the *Freitagsakademie* invites people aged 16 and over to work creatively together in Atelier Goldstein's new premises. Every Friday, the studio is open to anyone who would like to engage in creative work under the guidance of the Goldstein artists.

Schneckenhofstraße 20b, Frankfurt

from 06.11.

by: Atelier Goldstein

Stimmen der Vielfalt – Kulturen im Dialog

#Design Discourse

Design meets diversity: in a series of workshops, a diverse group selected objects from the collection and worked with artists to develop their own artistic interpretations. The exhibition presents the creative process and brings lived participation in intercultural dialogue to life.

Frankfurter Str. 86, Offenbach
08.11.26–10.01.27

by: German Leather Museum

Audiowalk Hörmal Demokratie Wiesbaden

#Audio / Podcast #Education

The Frankfurt RhineMain region has a rich democratic history. To keep this history and its sites alive and make them accessible to a broad audience, the project is developing accessible audio walks that guide users to significant locations in the history of democracy and explain their importance.

► **Listen here:**

www.hoermal-demokratie.de
at 10 locations across the city, including the Hessian State Parliament and the City Parliament from July

by: cicero Agentur & Verlag

#Subthemes in the November focus

Autumn conference programme
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World
Frankfurt

Design
RheinMain

Capital
2026

Let's design Frankfurt RheinMain together

WORLD
DESIGN
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FRANKFURT
RHEINMAIN
2026

Frankfurt RheinMain is
World Design Capital 2026.

Find out more and
join us: wdc2026.org

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Contact

Communications
press@wdc2026.org
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hello@wdc2026.org

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Frankfurt RheinMain

Based on the
guiding theme of

Design for Democracy.
Atmospheres for
a better life

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