

Media Information

In 2012, the German Federal Ministry for the Environment and the German Federal Environmental Agency will for the first time reward designers with the Federal Ecodesign Award.

BMW Group subsidiary DesignworksUSA is to support the project advisory board.

Munich/Berlin. 16.2.2012. With the Federal Ecodesign Award being presented for the first time in 2012, the Federal Ministry for the Environment and the Federal Environmental Agency are aiming to support projects that strengthen the idea of product and service sustainability and to firmly establish them in public awareness. DesignworksUSA, a subsidiary of the BMW Group with studios in the USA, Europe and Asia, is supporting this initiative as a consulting member of the project advisory board. It is an integral part of the self-image of the internationally operating design studio, which focuses predominantly on the areas of design consultancy, to regard and promote design as a holistic process. The aim of this national prize is to make know-how on the environmental aspects of products and services accessible to a broad public, to provide better orientation and encourage companies to incorporate ecological design as a design principle into the day-to-day working environment.

Federal Ecodesign Award and the project advisory board

The Federal Ecodesign Award is an accolade for outstanding design and ecological quality and aspires to contribute towards the propagation of the idea and methods of ecological design and the promotion of ecological innovations. The competition is divided into the categories "Product", "Concept" and "Young Talent" and is addressed to designers and businesses of all sizes and from all sectors.

The project advisory board is responsible for the technical support and supervision of the concept for the competition procedure. The board also includes DesignworksUSA. Anne Farken, senior consultant for sustainability at DesignworksUSA, will incorporate her know-how gained from experience with the internationally operating design studio whilst participating in projects for mobility design in the most diverse sectors (ranging from road and rail transport to aviation) and from her everyday consultancy work with globally operating companies. Furthermore, the project advisory board is supported, inter alia, by the Alliance of German Designers (AGD), the German Society for Design Theory and Research (DGTF), the German Design Council, the Bauhaus Foundation Dessau, the ecosign Academy for Design, the Fraunhofer Institute for Environment, Safety and Energy Technology and the German Trade Association (HDE). The International Design Centre Berlin (IDZ) has been commissioned with the conception and implementation of the Federal Ecodesign award.

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Visions for a new awareness

Adrian van Hooydonk, head of BMW Group Design, which also includes the subsidiary DesignworksUSA, sees the value of visions in their power to bring about change: "With its support of the Federal Ecodesign Award, DesignworksUSA is underscoring the holistic approach of our Efficient Dynamics concept. However, it is not just about automobiles; it is also directed at a social rethinking in dealing with mobility and products."

Laurenz Schaffer, President of DesignworksUSA, calls the Federal Ecodesign Award a German milestone. "It is an important step on the way to an improved ecological awareness and will further sharpen the German public's critical perspective of sustainable design." Anne Farken outlines the vision of designers: "When children begin to paint houses and factories without chimneys, then society will have taken a giant step forward. And we are taking part in the creation and realisation of this vision."

When designing sustainable products and production processes, designers assume a major responsibility: "Around 80 percent of the environmental effect of a product are determined at an early development stage," Farken comments. This confronts designers with major challenges, whilst at the same time offering them exciting opportunities in terms of product and system innovations. At DesignworksUSA, they are convinced that the key task of sustainability consultants nowadays is mainly the creation of a common ground for understanding and processes, in order to substantiate the currently excessively used term 'sustainability' and to render it relevant for each company. As a design consultant, DesignworksUSA sees its mission above all in the linking of competences to bring together complex, intersectoral know-how, thereby laying the foundations for working together with business enterprises in achieving added value and new opportunities. DesignworksUSA consistently follows this approach with its global team and its focus on a cross-industry exchange of expertise, both within the company as well as with external clients. The studio advises international companies such as Coca Cola, Siemens and HP.

BMW Group DesignworksUSA

DesignworksUSA is a BMW Group subsidiary and a globally operating design studio with the main focus on transportation and product design as well as strategic design consulting.

The studio realises a major part of its projects for international companies operating in the most diverse business sectors outside of the automotive industry. As a result, DesignworksUSA is able to fulfil its task of inspiring and challenging BMW Group design teams through external perspectives and new approaches. The studio's customer portfolio includes companies such as Hewlett Packard, Microsoft, Siemens, Boeing Business Jets, Dassault, Sennheiser, Coca Cola and Neil Pryde. In 2010, DesignworksUSA was awarded the title "Most Innovative Company in Design" by the American trade magazine "FastCompany". www.designworksusa.com



International Design Centre Berlin (IDZ)

The International Design Centre Berlin (IDZ) has been commissioned with the conception and realisation of the Federal Ecodesign Award. The IDZ is an association for the promotion of design and hence committed to the potentials and quality of design. Since being established in 1968, the IDZ has regarded itself as a competence centre and communication platform for industry, society and culture, devoting itself to the discussion on design of the future. With projects, exhibitions and events, the IDZ focuses on various aspects of design, whilst presenting and discussing current issues pertaining to it. Social, ecological and aesthetical aspects form an integral part of the discussion and aim at supporting the work of designers and strengthening consumers' design awareness, both within the industry as well as in politics.
www.idz.de

Application deadline

30. April 2012.

Please see www.bundespreis-ecodesign.de for further information and registration for the competition

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