

Press Release

The Bureau of European Design Associations appoints Michael Thomson as its first consultant Managing Director

17 April 2019

The Bureau of European Design Associations (BEDA) is delighted to announce that it has commissioned Michael Thomson of Design Connect, London, as its first consultant Managing Director with effect from 1st May 2019.



Originally from Northern Ireland and trained in design in Belfast and Germany, Michael established his design strategy and facilitation business Design Connect in London in 1995.

Since then, he has worked internationally across the private and public sectors with leading design consultancies and global brands. He brings with him a vast wealth of insight and experience in the design industries, partnering with design consultancies on strategic projects ranging from brand and identity to wayfinding. As a design policy expert, he has engaged in strategy projects in the field of design policy and design promotion at the national and European level.

Michael is no stranger to BEDA. As a Board Member (00-05), Vice President (05-07) and BEDA President (07-09), he helped to drive the ten year lobbying process which resulted in the integration of design into the European Commission's innovation strategy in 2010.

As consultant Managing Director, in collaboration with the BEDA Board, members and wider stakeholders, Michael will drive BEDA's work forward in making the case for design in Europe and influencing and shaping the Commission's agenda for design as a strategic tool for economic and societal development.

Bart Ahsmann, President of BEDA says:

"Michael's track record, international experience and up-to-date knowledge of design practice and policy at the European level will be of huge benefit to BEDA as we move into our second fifty years and continue to champion design across Europe."

Michael Thomson adds:

"I am excited and privileged to have been commissioned by BEDA as its first consultant Managing Director tasked to support it's important work as Europe's only representative body for design at the European level."

For further information

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About BEDA

BEDA's vision is for design to be embraced across Europe as a driver of sustainable growth and prosperity.

Celebrating its 50th anniversary, BEDA's 50 members from 25 member states comprise design promotion centres and professional and trade associations for designers and design businesses practicing in design disciplines ranging from industrial, product and service design to digital design and branding.

BEDA is a not-for-profit association funded principally through its membership subscription. It is governed by its members via the General Assembly which elects a Board of Directors every two years. It also elects a President and Vice President every two years and, in 2019, has contracted its first consultant Managing Director.

www.beda.org