

CHAPTER THREE: THE “DESIGN SINGAPORE” INITIATIVE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the role and importance of design as part of the Creative Economy to enhance Singapore’s continued competitiveness. It sets out the vision and desired outcomes of the “Design Singapore” Initiative, as well as the strategic thrusts and draft recommendations of the taskforce.

DESIGN – THE NEW COMPETITIVE EDGE

Why Design Today?

With growing access to better technology, industries are increasingly competing at equal price and functionality. The new competitive advantage lies in the ability to carve out new markets and create new markets through the fusion of business, technology and arts. Design, which functions to bring about such convergence, has emerged as the key differentiation strategy for businesses¹.

"At Sony, we assume all products of our competitors will have basically the same technology, price, performance, and features. Design is the only thing that differentiates one product from another in the marketplace."

Norio Ohga, Chairman and CEO, Sony

Design is the creative harmonic between culture and industry, technology and consumers, and engineering and art.

Dick Powell, Director, Seymour Powell

The change in world demographics, such as greying populations, and trends brought about by new convergent technologies and the needs for sustainable development have also issued new challenges. These demand greater design sensitivities and solutions, from the tools and appliances we use to the spaces we live in.

What is Design?

Design can be understood as material and conceptual innovation, realised through the integration of arts, culture, business and technology, and experienced as beauty, value and meaning. It is therefore a misconception that design is just about look and feel and image makeover. Design embraces not only aesthetics but also market research, usability, safety,

Design Forms & Industries

2D Planes: Graphics, Illustration, Advertising, Signage, Multimedia, Communications

3D Objects: Fashion, Crafts, Jewelry, Ceramics, Equipment, Devices, Appliances, Machinery

3D Space: Architecture, Interiors, Lighting, Landscape

4D Movement: Transport & mobility, Distribution Systems, people movers, virtual simulations

xD Futures: Convergent Technologies, New Paradigms, New Media

¹ Samsung’s use of bold designs to transform itself has resulted in its world market capitalisation of US\$48 billion in 2001. It was also singled out as the fastest growing brand in *BusinessWeek*’s latest survey with *Interbrand*. Samsung is ranked 34th in brand value globally in the survey on the world’s most valuable brands, having gained as much as 30% increase in its brand value over the past year. (*Business Week*, August 5 2002) Research on UK companies has revealed that for every extra 1% turnover spent on design and product development, a company’s profit and turnover will be increased by 3-4% over five years (“Contribution of Design to the UK Economy”, Andrew Summers: London Business School, June 1997). When Fitch, an international design consultancy, tracked the share prices of its publicly-listed and quoted clients over a five year period, it found that the funds grew by 350% as compared to the market average of 90%. (“Competitive Advantage Through Design”, Design Council UK 2001)

ergonomics, environmental sustainability, new technologies, logistics and consumer experience. In today's "weightless economy", design as manufactured product has evolved into design as intellectual property and cultural capital, embedded along the entire economic value chain.

What is the National Significance of Design?

For these reasons, design is critical not only to businesses, but is also high on the national agenda for many countries. Governments around the world have recognised the importance of design to national competitiveness in the following ways:

- (a) Driving the innovation process and hence industry competitiveness;
- (b) Contributing to the level of creativity, cultural buzz and attractiveness of a place for global talent; and
- (c) Strengthening the marketing and unique "branding" of a country, including its products and services, to the world.

Countries such as Finland, Ireland, Spain, Denmark, UK and South Korea have therefore developed national design policies and championed design excellence as a key driver of national competitiveness. The accordance of such national significance to design is also because the promotion of design, as a result of design's multi-disciplinary and integrative function, cuts across many areas of national concern and planning, such as urban development, enterprise and trade development, education and capability development, culture, heritage and tourism.

DESIGN 2005! (FINLAND)

The Design 2005! programme sets the objectives for the public sector in the development of Finland's "design system", which is to enhance competitiveness through the development of education, training and research in the design field and the integration of design into the development of the national innovation system. It also seeks to develop a national design culture of international renown to strengthen the national identity and cultural image of Finland. Design policies are jointly crafted by the Finnish Ministry for Trade & Industry, the National Fund for Research & Development, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Culture.

DESIGN IRELAND

Enterprise Ireland, a national economic development organisation, launched Design Ireland to "brand" Irish design and promote the value of design in all aspects of the Irish economy. It has embarked on trade missions to pursue new international partnerships in design.

THE GLASGOW COLLECTION (SCOTLAND)

The Glasgow Collection was created as part of the city's efforts to promote Glasgow as a centre of design. Each year, the Glasgow Collection will fund the design of at least 15 exciting and innovative new products, with the aim of taking a number of prototypes to production and working with local manufacturers to create products that help local businesses become more competitive.

HONG KONG DESIGN CENTRE

To further promote and galvanise the design industry in Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Government, in particular the Technology and Innovation Commission, supported the setting up of the Hong Kong Design Centre in the Heritage Building as the home to the new Hong Kong Federation of Designers.

SOUTH KOREA'S DESIGN POLICY

The First Five-Year-Plan for Industrial Design promotion (1993-1997) resulted in a rapid expansion in the number of design firms in Korea.

However, the challenge arising from the Financial Crisis was for fundamental innovation in Korea's design strategy, to promote design quality and not quantity.

The Second Five-Year-Plan was therefore launched to inspire design creativity and improve the quality of Korean design, including efforts to

- Raise public awareness
- Establish infrastructure such as the Korean Design Centre
- Enhance Design Education, including professional training
- Encourage industries to employ innovative designs, esp. SMEs
- Host international events and promote the Korean brand

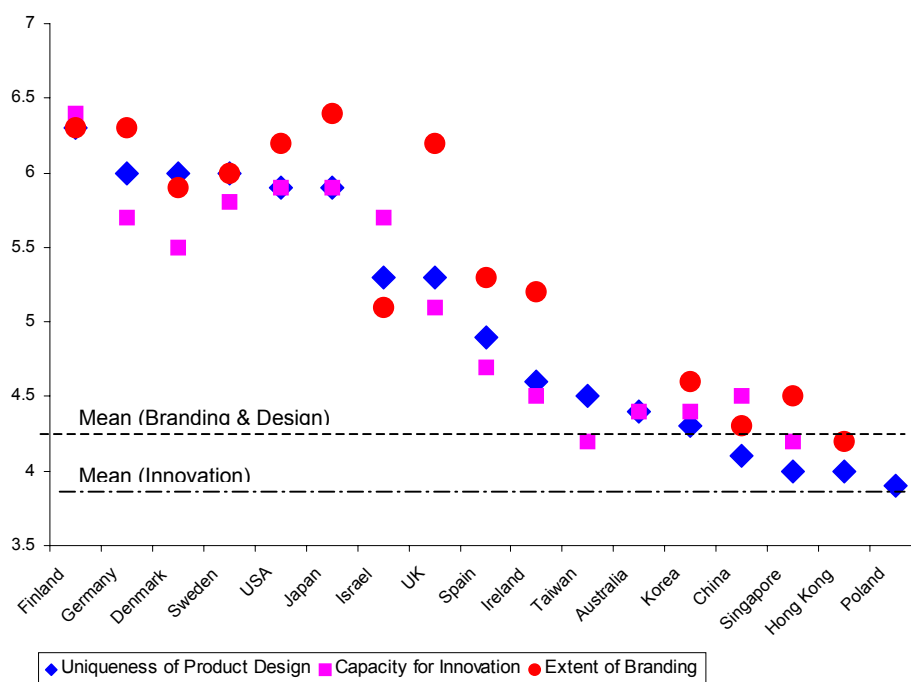
By elevating design to the top of its national agenda, South Korea has experienced an economic and cultural revival in recent years. Korea's design initiative is a deeply integrated one – it is fused with Korea's hosting of the 2002 World Cup, the transformation of brands such as Samsung and the phenomenal growth of Korea's cultural industries.

STATE OF DESIGN IN SINGAPORE TODAY

Design & Singapore's Competitiveness

According to the Global Competitiveness Report 2001-02, Singapore is only slightly above the mean for "Extent of Branding" and "Capacity for Innovation", and below the mean for "Uniqueness of Product Design." We are ranked 23rd, 26th and 34th respectively. As compared to other categories in the Report, these design-related categories indicate an area of our competitive disadvantage and weakness. Our closest competitors are the economies of Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, China and Ireland. The chart below provides the ranking and scores of selected countries (details are at **Annex 3.2**).

Chart 1: WEF Competitiveness Report 2001-02



Design Industry

In a 2001 study on the economic impact of product and visual communication design activities in Singapore (1999-2000)², the output of the design cluster in Singapore amounted to \$3.9 billion in direct contribution to GDP, an additional \$3 billion in indirect contribution, and \$2.7 billion in value added which is a total 1.9% of GDP. The cluster, comprising more than 3500 establishments (see **Table 1a**), directly employed some 25,000 individuals. Significantly, the economic spin-offs from design were much higher than that for other industries (see **Table 1b**). Design is therefore one of the best ways to enhance and create new value in any industry.

² The Study was commissioned by IE Singapore and conducted by the NUS CBRD (Centre for Business Research and Development). The Design cluster surveyed included software and multi-media, advertising, art and graphic design services, and industrial design activities.

Table 1a³

Design Industry	Establishments
Architectural Services	382
Advertising Services	686
Industrial Design Services	83
Interior Design Activities	1665
Art & Graphic Design Services	1089
Fashion Designing Services	53
IT & Web Design & Consultancy Services	699
Total	3657

Table 1b

Industry	Output Multiplier
Product & Visual Design	1.76
Arts & Culture	1.66
Computers	1.47
Exhibition	1.44
Banking Services	1.4
Petrochemical Refining	1.35

Government's Role in Developing Design

The Economic Development Board (EDB) and International Enterprise Singapore (IE Singapore) have been the government agencies looking after the design industry and the design capabilities of companies in Singapore. EDB oversees the development of industrial design companies in Singapore, including the attraction of international design companies to locate in Singapore, while IE Singapore is currently promoting and developing design as a strategic business capability for Singapore-based companies for internationalisation. IE Singapore's efforts encompass the development of new products and product adaptation capabilities for international markets as well as branding⁴. Together with its strategic partners, IE Singapore also organises the Singapore Design Awards, the Young Designers Award, and the International Design Forum.

Design Education

Design is taught as part of the "Design & Technology" course — a compulsory subject at lower Secondary and optional at upper Secondary levels. The 4 Polytechnics and Specialised Art Schools (LASALLE-SIA College of the Arts and Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts [NAFA]) provide diploma level education in the various design disciplines. Some 1500 and 800 students are registered for design-related diploma courses at the Polytechnics and Art Schools in 2001 respectively⁵.

³ Source: Registry of Companies; and Department of Statistics 2001

⁴ Between 1991 and 1995, the Design Centre was managed by the then TDB. Besides organising trade missions to promote Singapore design and organising the International Design Forum, the Centre also served as an exhibition space for international and local designs. IE Singapore's current design and brand capability developmental thrusts include the following:

- (a) Cultivation of design and brand talents and related institutions
- (b) Enhance companies design and brand capabilities via strategic consultancy, benchmarking and research initiatives
- (c) Develop awareness through forums and customised programmes
- (d) Create international networking and profiling opportunities
- (e) Identify, profile and assist good Singapore designs and brands willing and able to go global

⁵ Besides courses in product, fashion, environment and graphic design, other design-related courses include film and media studies in the Polytechnics, and visual arts at the Art Schools.

LASALLE-SIA and NAFA also collaborate with foreign universities to offer design-related degree courses.

Design modules are offered in the engineering courses offered at Nanyang Technological University (NTU) and National University of Singapore (NUS), including a Masters in Design Technology at the Design Technology Institute (with the Eindhoven Institute of Technology) in the NUS Faculty of Engineering. There is also the School of Design and Environment in NUS, which offers the only degrees in Architecture (BAArch hons and MArch) and Industrial Design (BAID hons) in Singapore. The first batch of 24 graduates in Industrial Design will graduate in June 2003.

STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Singapore's relatively small but sophisticated market and consumer base, our existing strengths in infocomm integration and other technology-intensive industries, as well as our unique position as a English-speaking gateway to Asia underlie the opportunities for design in Singapore.

▪ **A Leading Design and Experience Island:**

From urban planning to the design of public services such as our libraries and hospitals, and attractions such as the Night Safari, successful design marrying efficiency with beauty, technology with consumer sensitivity, has been employed to enhance total user experience and human potential.

▪ **A Global Design & Innovation Testbed for Pilots and Trials:**

This would include market research and the re-design of global products and services, leveraging on our multicultural population, and access to the Asian market; and the 'hothousing' of new design ideas, leveraging on our technological expertise and industrial and research infrastructure. Such a positioning would, in the long term, contribute to building our design expertise and reputation as a design hub in Asia

▪ **"New Asia" branding as a Unique and Exportable Style:**

The New Asia branding would leverage on Singapore's unique position as both a gateway to the various cultures of Asia and a contemporary cosmopolitan city, as the basis for design identity and values. This is particularly in the areas of lifestyle products and services, such as food and beverage, hospitality, entertainment and retail services sectors.

"The Philips Innovation Campus (in Singapore) will serve as a hotbed for creativity and technological progress Philips and Singapore are in perfect innovation tandem and the campus will ultimately provide a platform for innovative minds to meet, against an intelligent ambience."

Cor Boonstra, former President and CEO, Royal Philips Electronics

PHILIPS

"In Banyan Tree in particular, we consider design — not only architectural but in every aspect of the guest experience — to be a very important factor in our competitive edge and it provides much of the value added in the business proposition."

Ho Kwon Ping, Chairman & CEO, Wah Chang Group



"NLB did put a lot of effort into design of our physical libraries...when we first renovated the National Library at Stamford Road. From its beginnings there and for every library thereafter, we prototyped and experimented with lifestyle concepts and ensured that we tried our best to optimise convenience, accessibility, affordability and usefulness. The designs of each library tried to reflect these concepts as much as possible."

Christopher Chia, CEO, National Library Board

GAPS & CHALLENGES

Challenge 1: From Basic Bottomline to *Design Excellence & Innovation*

In focusing on short-term bottomline gains, companies often fail to consider design strategies and to leverage design excellence as a means of producing unique and globally competitive products and services. There is also the misconception that design is only about aesthetics or packaging. The challenge is therefore to bring about a fundamental change towards valuing design excellence as a sustainable and strategic advantage for organisations.

Challenge 2: From Importing Design to *Nurturing Local Design Capabilities*

In the last 30 years of our economic and urban development, design consumption and import have outstripped the supply and export of the local design cluster. Although the design industry cut across a spectrum of activities from industrial, environment and multimedia design to visual communications, there has been no concerted effort to measure, study and coordinate the development of this cluster in a more holistic fashion. And while the components of a design system (such as design education, design companies, designers, innovation centres, design awards and conferences, and various grants and assistance schemes) are in place, efforts to develop resources for this sector are fragmented. The challenge is to synergise and build up local resources and capabilities, to nurture and raise the standards of the design cluster to be able to meet the competitive needs in Singapore and globally.

Challenge 3: From Manufactured to *Designed in Singapore*

While design activities are estimated to contribute a total of 1.9% of GDP in 2000, the true value of design in Singapore is still not fully realised and captured. This is especially as parts or final finished products are often not Singapore products or marketed and branded as designed in Singapore. The challenge is not only to anchor more design activities (design projects, enterprises and expertise) in Singapore, but more importantly, to capture the full value of products and services designed in Singapore.

Challenge 4: From Technical to *Multidisciplinary Design Education*

The potential of design education and its significance as a creative thinking and innovation tool is not fully tapped in Singapore. Design has been mainly approached as part of a technical education. Current gaps in a professional art and design education at university level would also need to be addressed. The challenge is to move towards a more holistic multidisciplinary design education to develop design professionals who can position design more strategically as an integration of the aesthetic, business, technological and sociological concerns. At the same time, to embed design in the teaching and learning of other disciplines and capabilities, such as in business and engineering schools.

Challenge 5: From Low to *High Design Awareness*

There is currently a low awareness of good design – its role, significance and qualities – or of the design industry and profession. The challenge is to raise the current level of public awareness on the use and impact of effective design in all aspects of life, through the fostering of a more pervasive design culture.

THE “DESIGN SINGAPORE” INITIATIVE

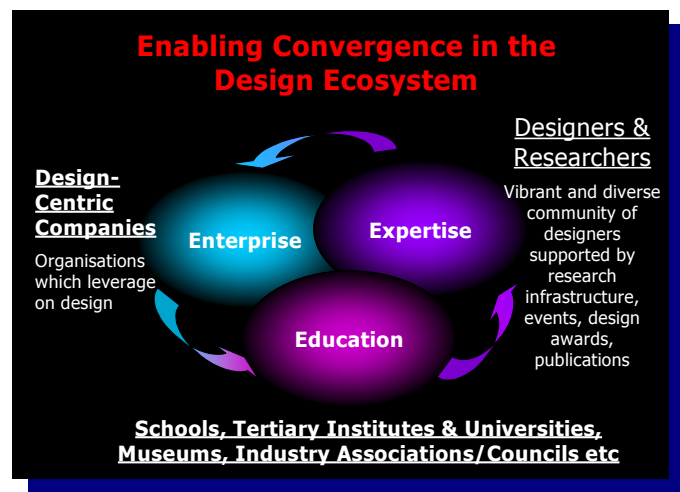
While design has been promoted as part of Singapore’s industrial and trade landscape, predominantly as a business capability and tool, the need is to inspire a more fundamental change in the promotion and development of a pervasive design culture in Singapore. This change is premised on the new positioning of design as the creative integration of art, culture, business and technology, able to drive innovation and national competitiveness.

Our vision is therefore for Singapore to be *“A global cultural and business hub for the design of products, content and services, where design consciousness and creativity permeates all aspects of work, home and recreation”*.

This vision is encapsulated in four outcomes. One is for Singapore to be a **leading centre for contemporary design in Asia**. We aim to attract regional and international design talents to work from Singapore, nurture innovative design firms, as well as to be both a leading provider of design education and the launchpad for creative and innovative designs into Asia. The second is to evolve a **distinctive Singapore design and brand identity**. We aim for Singapore products and services to be imbued with a unique design identity in the global market, and for the “designed-in-Singapore” reputation to be a valuable branding, synonymous with high quality, integrity, creativity and excellence. The third outcome is for design excellence to be a **competitive advantage for local enterprises**. The fourth outcome is a **pervasive design culture**: We aim to raise the general level of design awareness and discourse, where effective design is understood and integrated into in all aspects of business, leisure and recreation, public service and education in Singapore.

A National Collaborative Strategy

The “Design Singapore” Initiative is the first national collaborative strategy to spearhead the promotion of design and tap on our business, artistic, cultural and technological resources and capabilities. It will seek to bring about convergence amongst the different players in the design ecosystem: enterprise (industry users and designers), expertise and education

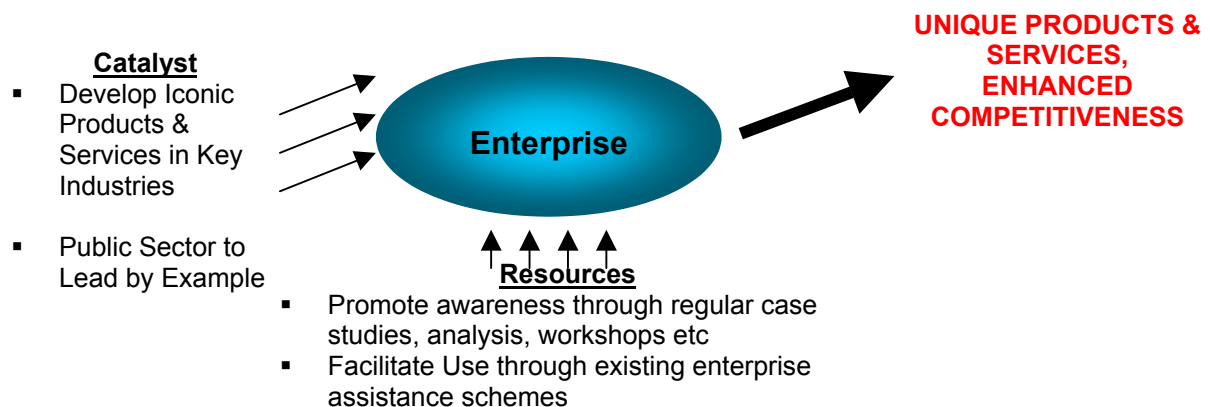


A multi-agency taskforce was set up to put in place a collaborative framework to promote and develop design excellence in Singapore. It will complete its study in **October 2002** in close consultation with international experts and industry players⁶. A summary of its preliminary strategies is tabulated in **Annex 3.2**.

⁶ In its deliberations the taskforce has since embarked on a Study Mission to Europe and Hong Kong. The countries visited include Hong Kong, Spain (Barcelona), Italy (Milan), Germany (Stuttgart, Essen, Frankfurt), Denmark (Copenhagen), Finland (Helsinki) and the UK (London). It has received inputs from an International Advisory Panel and has also consulted local industry players, educational institutions as well as international experts. (**Annex 1.4**)

Strategy 1: Integrate DESIGN IN ENTERPRISE

This first strategy recognises industry as a key driver of design, hence the need for industry to be equipped to leverage on design excellence, to embed design in their businesses and to get design into boardroom agendas.



Recommendation 1.1: Identify and Develop Iconic Singapore Products and Services

As evidenced by the products and services of countries such as Germany (e.g. Braun, BMW) and Japan (e.g. SONY), and also smaller industrial nations like Sweden (e.g. IKEA) and Finland (e.g. Nokia), a distinctive design identity and its qualities are often synonymous with the branding of a country, and vice versa⁷. It is a mutually reinforcing process. It is proposed that we identify and develop potential iconic “killer applications” that would help establish the standard for design excellence in Singapore, and to jumpstart the design initiative in industries. This could begin with industries where Singapore already has existing strengths and a unique proposition. Examples of potential industries include the hospitality and entertainment industry, where the design of consumer experience is critical, or infocomms, healthcare and medical products, where design would be sensitive to ergonomics, lifestyle, styling and new technologies (see **Annex 3.3**).

Recommendation 1.2: Promote Design in the Public Sector

To catalyse the development of effective design in Singapore and to nurture local design expertise, it is proposed that public sector agencies lead by example in supporting the use of effective design in its public buildings, amenities, services and spaces. This is the case in many countries, where the design of train/subway stations, bus stops, street furniture, parks and public buildings provide important

⁷ In the case of UK, the UK Design Council has set out to identify and promote innovative products and services created in Britain for the new Millennium, to showcase the competitiveness of British industry. The case studies and exhibition on these UK Millennium products have since travelled worldwide. Such initiatives are also common to other countries, such as Finland and Denmark.

opportunities to raise the standard of public service, develop both local design expertise and demand, and help profile a local design identity.

Recommendation 1.3: Raise Business Awareness of Design Excellence

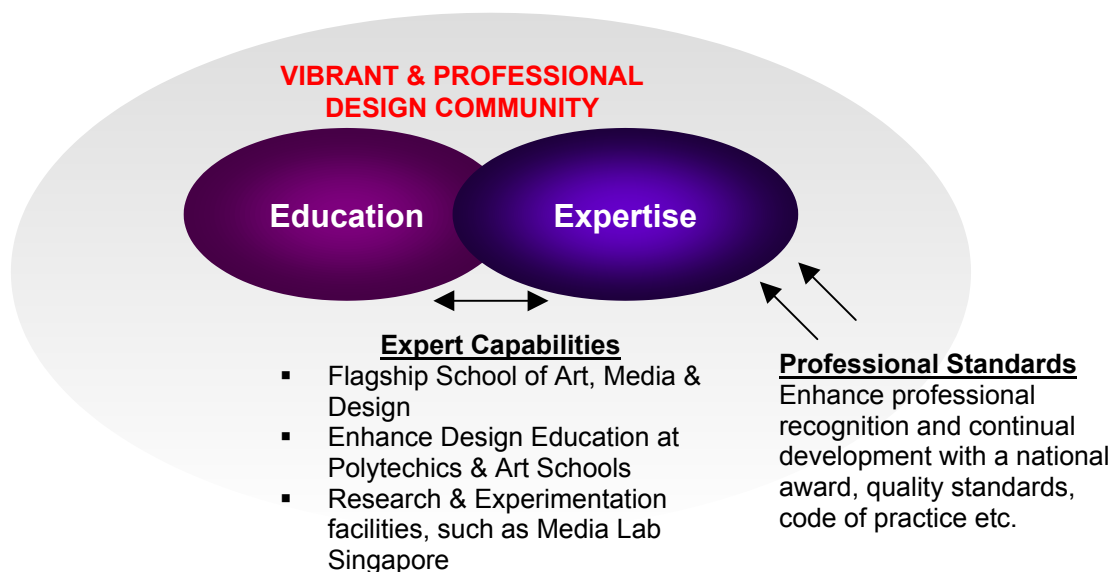
Many companies, particularly SMEs, are not aware of the use and advantages of effective design. There is currently also no concerted effort to promote design to enterprises. It is proposed that there be a dedicated programme to develop regular case studies, surveys, global benchmarking, and other statistical analysis or tools as resources to promote design to companies.

Recommendation 1.4: Facilitate Use of Design by Businesses

There are currently many incentive and assistance schemes targeted at helping companies to redevelop their business processes, engage in R&D, internationalise, develop their manpower capabilities and so on. These include EDB's Start-up Enterprise Development Scheme (SEEDS), Research Incentive Scheme, and the Talent & Attachment Programme (TAP). IE Singapore also currently offers a grant of up to 50% of the company's cost in engaging a design consultant. Instead of proliferating the number of assistance schemes for businesses, it is recommended that we review the existing schemes with a view to encouraging the use of design.

Strategy 2: Develop a Vibrant & Professional DESIGN COMMUNITY

It is critical to nurture a vibrant design community in Singapore as the backbone of Singapore's design ecosystem, to raise the standard of design and provide the necessary expertise for both a sustainable growth of the design industry and a reputation for design excellence.



Recommendation 2.1: Establish a Flagship University Programme in Art, Design and Media

A flagship art, design and media programme at university level would help raise a new generation of creative designers with a strong intellectual foundation in the arts and humanities, and skills to integrate technology and business in design. The programme would offer degree courses in fine arts, design and multimedia, and work synergistically with the industry in research projects. In addition, the new School of Art, Design and Media should target a diverse and global intake, to create both a vibrant environment as well as anchor young regional and international talents to Singapore. The School would also contribute to design education in schools as well as to continuing professional development (CPD) for designers.

Recommendation 2.2: Enhance Design Education in Secondary Schools, Polytechnics & Arts Schools

Our polytechnics have been offering diploma programmes in design for the industry in the areas of fashion, media, product, graphic and interior design. It is critical that they continue to develop their teaching programme. It is recommended that a more detailed review of the existing design programme be made to enhance the diversity of options for students while enabling polytechnics to excel in specific areas. This would be with a view to deepen the level of industry collaboration, raise the standard of the design programme, and allow a more efficient distribution of resources, including professional talents. At the schools level, resources need to be better directed to strengthen the Design and Technology programme in selected schools to raise the profile of design earlier in the education process.

Recommendation 2.3: Establish Design Testbeds

To build up Singapore's capabilities in the area of research and hothousing of design concepts, it is recommended that a network of leading design entities be established to create design incubation centres and testbeds. For this purpose, we recommend the establishment of a Media Lab in Singapore to engage in multi-disciplinary media research and development sponsored by the industry. This could be integrated into the School of Art, Media and Design at the university.

Recommendation 2.4: Enhance Professional Standing of Designers

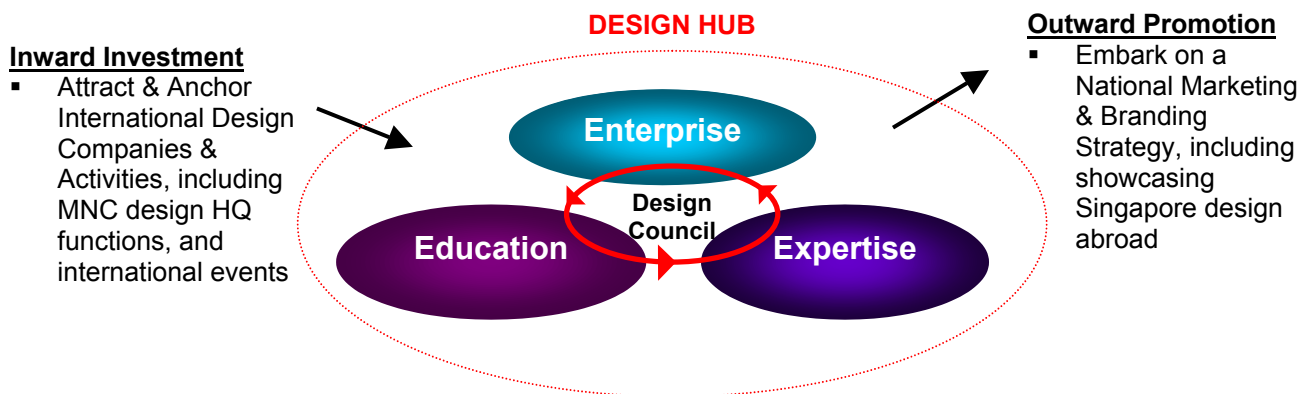
To raise the profile of the design profession, attract young talents to the industry and build up Singapore's design capabilities and standards, it would be critical to raise the professional standing of designers in Singapore. This would include enhancing the professional recognition by developing and implementing quality and performance standards for the industry, as well as professional codes of practice and conduct, in collaboration with industry and professional associations⁸. This would also include developing a continuing professional development programme for designers. At the same time, a new or existing award should be set as the highest national award for design excellence, and be formalised to an international standard.

⁸ Some industry and professional associations in Singapore include: the Designers' Association Singapore, the Singapore Institute of Architects, the Society of Interior Designers, the Accredited Advertising Agents Association, the Singapore Furniture Industry Council and the Textile and Fashion Federation.

Like the famous Compasso D'Oro, the top design award in Europe, the exhibits can automatically form a new collection of Singapore designs.

Strategy 3: Position Singapore as a Global DESIGN HUB

This strategy seeks to galvanise design-centric enterprises and organisations, design expertise and design educational institutes in Singapore so as to establish Singapore's reputation and position as a design hub.



Recommendation 3.1: Establish a National Design Council

While many components of a design ecosystem are in place in Singapore, there is still a need for a central organisation at the national level to champion the design cluster and synergise the activities and concerns of the various players. It is therefore recommended that a National agency for design be set up with representation at the highest level for industry, the design community, education institutions and the public sector. Such an agency would also allow Singapore to tap into the international design network, and with the other national design councils and organisations⁹. This agency would therefore be positioned to (a) forge links as the one-stop contact for design both locally and internationally; (b) nurture the local design industry; and (c) champion design excellence in Singapore.

Recommendation 3.2: Anchor International Design Companies and Activities in Singapore

To further grow Singapore's design capabilities, over and above nurturing local design expertise, it is proposed that we attract and anchor key international design firms to Singapore, as well as MNCs to locate their design functions and headquarters in Singapore. The latter would also allow us to better capture the full value of design in Singapore. In addition, while we develop a national award and local design events to international standards, it is recommended that we identify and actively seek to anchor at least one major international design award in Singapore, as well as to host international design conferences. This would allow Singapore to feature prominently in the international design network as a design hub.

⁹ Design Councils are well established in countries such as the UK, Spain, Denmark, Finland and Germany, and are partially funded by the government. Hong Kong has recently established a Design Centre to pull together previously fragmented efforts to develop design, and as part of the Government strategy to increase the level of innovation, to develop higher value-added products and services and nurture a creative skills base.

Recommendation 3.3: A National Marketing and Branding Strategy

Singapore has mainly used Expos and World's Fairs to promote its tourism but, unlike many countries, not fully exploited the opportunity to showcase its design efforts and profile its visions and challenges. It is recommended that Singapore's participation at such international platforms be carefully planned to advance the profile and visibility of Singapore's design capabilities and facilitate networking. It is further proposed that the promotion of unique Singapore design, products and services abroad be synergised with a national marketing and branding effort. This would require us to embark on a national branding strategy, with the involvement of the private, people and public sectors, to present a compelling and consistent Singapore story and brand.

Strategy 4: Foster a DESIGN CULTURE & Awareness

Recommendation 4.1: Embed Design in All Levels of Education

As design brings together arts, business and technology, design concepts and processes serve as problem solving tools, but more importantly, help to unleash students' creativity and develop a creative outlook. The taskforce proposes that design concepts and design as a tool be embedded to enhance the teaching of subjects such as art, business, engineering, communications and IT at the schools, polytechnic as well as university levels. This would help raise the level of design awareness and at the same time enhance the teaching in existing curriculum and courses.

Recommendation 4.2: Bring Design Everywhere

To raise public awareness on the significance of design and help foster a design-sensitive culture, it is proposed that a variety of design events and exhibitions be organised.

- (a) Community level: the regular showcasing of design (both Singaporean and international), leveraging on the extensive museum and library network of the National Heritage Board and the National Library Board, as well as in community spaces, schools and shopping malls.
- (b) Specific Groups & Issues: workshops, conferences and exhibitions targeting specific groups or organised around specific themes. This takes the example of the "Design-in-Business Week" or the "Design-in-Education Week" organised by the UK Design Council.
- (c) National Level: It is further proposed that, to register the importance of design for Singapore's continued competitiveness, to designate a "Design Singapore" Year, to coincide also with the national marketing and branding strategy.

Recommendation 4.3: Design in the Mass Media

A key player in the design ecosystem, most clearly seen in countries such as Italy, Japan and USA, is the media – where journalists and various media platforms play a central role in promoting design both locally and globally. It is proposed that an active media programme be pursued to raise the profile of design.