

UNESCO Creative Cities of Design Asahikawa Design Declaration 2024

We live in challenging times, inundated by complex problems, such as global warming, with no simple solutions. Many of these problems are products of humanity's pursuit of prosperity. Design, which has continually spurred the creation of things that afford us convenience, is partly responsible for these issues. Therefore, we believe that design should also play a role in solving these problems. In the future, an essential function of design will be to promote harmony between nature and society. To do this, we must start by understanding that nature has much to teach us about designing a society that values flexibility and diversity over speed and power. We believe that the power of design can be used to create a sustainable, bright, and happy future.

1. The purpose of design is to enhance happiness.

We reaffirm that design is beneficial and contributes to happiness. Design has to evolve with the times. In order to keep up with the demands of a society where goods are in short supply, and in an age of abnormal weather conditions and rapidly-developing artificial intelligence, a completely new approach is required. By maximizing design's capacity to discover and solve problems, we aim to build a world that can bring happiness to everyone.

2. Achieve harmony between nature and society with the power of design.

Our existence as part of an ecosystem precedes our existence as social beings. It is essential to awaken our five senses, take heed of nature's words, and find ways to coexist with diverse ecosystems. Nature is the source of our activities. Without exception, all cities are built on the blessings of nature. Therefore, we will strive to capitalize on the power of design to achieve a favorable harmony between nature and society.

3. Design serves as a catalyst that bridges societal elements.

We will harness the transformative potential of design as a catalyst to strengthen the organic relationships between politics, government, education, culture, and industry. Design can generate creative value by bridging societal elements. Design can reconcile diverse matters and express their essence in ways that are easy to understand. We will use this power of connection to create a sustainable and joyful society like no other before.

4. Raise the design literacy of citizens.

We will focus our efforts on raising the design literacy of all citizens. At the same time, this will also strengthen the bonds between citizens living in a city of design. In particular, we will encourage the younger generation, the leaders of the future, to deepen their understanding of design through all types of educational opportunities. We also strive to strengthen the network between design cities by learning about the diverse cultures that exist in each city of design.

5. Take responsibility for a sustainable future.

As cities of design, we have a responsibility towards the future. Each city faces its own set of challenges. Thus, varied and diverse solutions are required to address them. It is also essential to pass down the unique cultures that have been cultivated over time. We seek to understand each design city's goals, strengthen our network, and support each city in realizing its goals.