For immediate release

Business of Design Week 2026 Summit Opens: Global Leaders Convene to Shape the Future of Design

Design Luminaries and Business Leaders Gather in Hong Kong for Cross-Disciplinary Dialogue to Drive Transformation



Hong Kong, 18 November 2026 — Business of Design Week (BODW) 2026, Asia's premier annual event dedicated to design, innovation, and brands organised by the Hong Kong Design Centre (HKDC), and supported by the Cultural and Creative Industries Development Agency (CCIDA) under the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region as the Lead Sponsor, officially opened today at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre. Co-organised by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC), this year's Summit proudly presents Switzerland as the Partner Country for the first time. Gathering over 60 leading creative and business leaders from Switzerland and across the globe, the Summit centres around the theme **'Design in Dialogue: Connect + Transform'** for a three-day

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intensive dialogue. It deeply explores how cross-cultural exchange and dialogue spark fresh perspectives, and how design can translate visionary concepts into actionable initiatives that propel commercial and societal progress for lasting impact.

Drawing inspiration from Switzerland's remarkable achievements in innovation and precision craftsmanship, the Summit highlights that design extends beyond aesthetics to serve as a vital catalyst for cross-disciplinary collaboration in addressing complex global challenges. 2026 also marks the 10th anniversary of the innovative strategic partnership between China and Switzerland, adding deeper significance to this bilateral collaboration. By bringing together international and local resources, the Summit fosters profound dialogue between global and local creative design communities, reinforcing Hong Kong's unique role as an East-meets-West hub for cultural exchanges, a 'Super Connector', and a 'Super Value-Adder'.

The BODW 2026 Summit opening ceremony was officiated by **Miss Rosanna Law, JP, Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region**; **Mr Daniel Freihofer, Consul General of Switzerland in Hong Kong and Macao**; **Mr Steve Leung, BBS, Chairman of the Hong Kong Design Centre**; **Ms Anna Cheung, Associate Executive Director of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council**; and **Miss Drew Lai**, **Commissioner for Cultural and Creative Industries**.

Officiating at the ceremony, **Miss Rosanna Law** said, 'This year, we are honoured to have Switzerland as our partner country. Drawing on Switzerland's rich heritage and renowned expertise in craftsmanship, precision, sustainable architecture and technological innovation, more than 40 forward-looking sessions will be delivered over the next three days. These sessions will seek to inspire participants with innovative and transformative ideas for addressing complex challenges and building a better future for all. BODW is a powerful testament to Hong Kong's unique strength in connecting people from around the world for cross-cultural exchange and business collaboration. The Government is committed to supporting this platform to drive the development of the design and creative industries and to further reaffirm Hong Kong's position as an East-meets-West Centre for International Cultural Exchange.'

Mr Daniel Freihofer pointed to the many common strengths shared by Switzerland and Hong Kong, including an international outlook, entrepreneurial spirit, commitment to quality and innovation, and a shared recognition of bridging cultures and markets. 'I am

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pleased that Switzerland is contributing to this year's (BODW) programme through an outstanding delegation of speakers from business, academia, architecture, culture and gastronomy. Together, they reflect the diversity of contemporary Switzerland and demonstrate how design increasingly connects sectors that were once considered separate. The most important ideas emerge when people with different experiences, perspectives and expertise come together, listen to one another and challenge established ways of thinking. That is precisely what BODW represents. My hope is that the conversations that begin here this week will spark new partnerships, new solutions and new opportunities, not only between Switzerland and Hong Kong, but across the international community.'

In his welcoming remarks, **Mr Steve Leung, Chairman of the Hong Kong Design Centre** said, 'This year is especially meaningful as we celebrate the excellence of "Swiss Made", renowned for its elegance, precision engineering and functional beauty, while exploring new opportunities for East–West collaboration and cross-disciplinary innovation. Many Swiss creative leaders joining this year's Summit share longstanding ties with Hong Kong, the Chinese Mainland and across Asia, reflecting the power of cultural exchange to inspire fresh ideas and meaningful transformation. Through initiatives like BODW, HKDC will continue to leverage Hong Kong's unique role as a "Super Connector", fostering global dialogue, creative partnerships and innovation on the world stage.'

The Summit's overarching theme was established through an opening keynote address by **Wim Walschap**, CEO and Senior Partner of Herzog & de Meuron. As the leader of the globally renowned Swiss architecture studio, Walschap explored landmark projects such as the National Stadium in Beijing and Hong Kong's M+, sharing the firm's core philosophy of designing *'Spaces as Public Places'* to serve as catalysts for change and exchange. Highlighting their latest regional developments—including the HKJC Conghua Racecourse Grandstand and The Hyundai Gwangju—the address reflected on how active dialogue shapes their pursuit of public value, connecting communities and leaving a lasting imprint on the urban landscape. Following his speech, a dynamic lineup of programmes featuring keynote speeches, fireside chats, and panel discussions commenced.

The three-day BODW 2026 Summit features a distinct theme for each day. Day 1 focuses on '**Evolutionary Urbanism & Placemaking'** with the morning session centring on the Summit's first key topic pillar, **'Reimagining Spaces'** to explore the architectural dialogue between heritage and the future while building with environmental and human

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consciousness. A lineup of prominent speakers includes **Prof Yung Ho Chang, Dean of the Faculty of Architecture at the University of Hong Kong**, former Pritzker Architecture Prize Jury member, and former Head of the Architecture Department at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT); **Dong Gong, Founder and Design Principal of Vector Architects**, who has been recognised by the Marcus Prize for Architecture and the RIBA International Award for Excellence; **Enzo Enea, Landscape Architect at Enea Landscape Architecture,** who collaborated with Foster + Partners on Hong Kong's new mixed-use development project Central Crossing; and **Emily Yan, Director, Studio Hong Kong (Asia Region) of Snøhetta**, who has contributed to numerous landmark projects include AIRSIDE, a multi-purpose commercial space in Kai Tak, and the Shanghai Grand Opera House, which grandly opened last month. Together, they analysed the symbiosis between architecture and human ecology, exploring how design transforms physical sites into meaningful, vibrant, and sustainable living environments.

The afternoon session focuses on another key topic pillar '**Regenerative Culture & Curation'**. Moving beyond the built environment into the realm of cultural identity, this session investigates how technology and curation redefine our shared environments, while exploring how digital innovation and the arts are reconstructing our cultural narratives and translating global insights into impactful initiatives that drive societal transformation. Featured speakers include **Annabelle Schneider, Experience Designer and Artist**, who recently exhibited her immersive multisensory sanctuary 'BREATHE WITH ME' at the Peak Galleria; **Dr Daisy Yiyou Wang, Deputy Director and Chief Curator of the Hong Kong Palace Museum**, an award-winning curator who leads the HKPM's ambitious exhibition programme and curatorial research; and **KyungEn Kim, Director of House of Shinsegae Heritage Project and Jaju**, blending Korean traditional culture and heritage in modern retail spaces.

The discussion themes for the second and third days of the Summit will be '**Strategic Design & Reinvention'** and '**Symbiotic Futures'** respectively, featuring four key topic pillars: '**Brand Transformation'**, '**The New Luxury & Artisanal Innovation'**, '**Designing for Longevity & Vitality'**, and '**Future-Ready Transmedia & Education'**. The sessions will feature insights from **Thilo Brunner, Chief Design Officer of On**, who contributed to the development of cutting-edge technologies such as the CloudTec cushioning system and LightSpray spray-on upper; **Chef Grégoire Michaud, Founder of Bakehouse**, who has led pastry kitchens at multiple Michelin-starred restaurants; **Aurel Aebi, Co-founder of atelier oï**, whose team was awarded the Swiss Grand Award for Design 2026; **Morgan Maillard, Style & Heritage Expert at Vacheron Constantin**, who specialises in intricate

watchmaking mechanics; **Dr Anna Marešová, Product Designer**, whose award-winning portfolio spans intimate products to public transport systems; **Dr Lydia Leung, CEO & Co-founder of Belun Technology Company Limited**, who leads the research and development of medical-grade wearable real-time monitoring devices for blood oxygen saturation and pulse rate; **Prof Jeffrey Shaw**, pioneer of new media art and **Director of the Visualization Research Centre at Hong Kong Baptist University**; and **Toby Ng**, acclaimed Hong Kong-born international graphic designer and **Creative Director of Toby Ng Design**.

To further enhance exchange and drive cross-disciplinary collaboration, the Summit features curated 'Meet-The-Speaker' sessions. Following its successful debut as a sub-track programme at the 2025 Summit, the **bodw Future Lab** returns this year. Riding on the success of the three pre-summit sessions, the event will host three more forward-looking, interactive dialogue sessions to inspire participants with actionable, innovative solutions. Debuted this afternoon, the first bodw Future Lab Summit session, titled **'The Future Design of Empathetic Spaces'**, was led by **Tiffany Lau, Founder & Principal of A P A R T Companies** as moderator, alongside **Annabelle Schneider; Garett Hwang, Director of UNS; Jacky Chan, Head of Play Environment Development at Playright Children's Play Association;** and **Manuel Herz, Founder of Manuel Herz Architects** as speakers. The session guided participants to explore how to design spaces that are deeply human, inclusive, and ready for the future. The remaining two bodw Future Lab Summit sessions will focus on **'Future Thinking: Navigating the Big Shifts Reshaping Our World'** and **'"East-meets-West" Approach to Longevity'** respectively.

The three-day Summit will be livestreamed on bodw+ and social media platforms, enabling global audiences to participate fully in this annual creative extravaganza. In addition, local audiences can tune in to HOY 76 (English Channel) from 17 to 19 December (Thursday to Saturday) between 8:30pm and 10:30pm for special programme, and HOY 77 (Cantonese Channel) on 2 and 9 January (Saturday) from 7:00pm to 8:00pm for highlight programmes, to revisit the insightful sharing of speakers and event highlights from BODW 2026 Summit.

Beyond the Summit, Business of Design Week (BODW) 2026 also resonates with a series of concurrent design programmes that foster a vibrant creative atmosphere across the city. Key highlights include DESIGN@HKG, DFA Awards 2026 Presentation Ceremony, DX design hub Anniversary Event, 2026 Leadership Forum on Translational Knowledge organised by The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, DesignInspire and the Business of IP

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Asia Forum organised by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, and the deTour 2026 organised by PMQ. This diverse lineup of initiatives fosters dynamic exchange and collaboration within the creative community.

Follow official social media platforms for the latest BODW updates: Facebook (bodw+), Instagram (@bodwplus), X (@bodwplus), LinkedIn (bodw+), and YouTube (bodw+).

Image Caption

	The Business of Design Week (BODW) 2026 Summit, themed 'Design in Dialogue: Connect + Transform', commenced with an opening ceremony today (18 November) at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre. The event was officiated by **Miss Rosanna Law, JP**, Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region; **Mr Steve Leung, BBS**, Chairman of Hong Kong Design Centre; **Ms Anna Cheung**, Associate Executive Director of Hong Kong Trade Development Council; **Mr Daniel Freihofer**, Consul General of Switzerland in Hong Kong and Macao; and **Miss Drew Lai**, Commissioner for Cultural and Creative Industries.
	**Wim Walschap**, CEO and Senior Partner of Herzog & de Meuron, delivering the opening keynote address.

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	**Enzo Enea**, Landscape Architect of Enea Landscape Architecture, demonstrating how landscape architecture can reconnect people, architecture and the natural world to restore biodiversity, enrich urban life and shape a more resilient future.
	**Dong Gong,** Founder & Design Principal of Vector Architects, exploring how building alters and integrates with its environment, marrying tradition with modernism.
	**Manuel Herz**, Founder of Manuel Herz Architects, delivering a keynote address at the Summit.
	**Emily Yan**, Director, Studio Hong Kong (Asia Region) of Snøhetta, exploring how spaces can transcend their immediate program to become platforms for encounter, participation, and shared stewardship, creating lasting cultural, social, and environmental value that continues to evolve over time.

	**Enzo Enea**, **Emily Yan** and **Manuel Herz** engaging in an in-depth panel discussion moderated by **Tiffany Lau**, Founder & Principal of A P A R T Companies.
	**Prof Yung Ho Chang,** Dean of the Faculty of Architecture at the University of Hong Kong, grounded in the question "'Where is Architecture?' to reframe spatial practice into a cross-disciplinary design agenda.
	As part of BODW 2026 themed 'Design in Dialogue: Connect + Transform', **Meet-the-Speakers** sessions create a space for deeper exchange beyond the Summit stage.

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Media Kit

Event Photos: Media Kit

Speaker Bio: BODW 2026 Speaker

BODW Programmes: https://2026.bodw.com/en/programme

About Business of Design Week (BODW) (https://2026.bodw.com/en)

Business of Design Week (BODW), Asia's premier annual event on design, innovation and brands since 2002, is organised by Hong Kong Design Centre and gathers some of the world's foremost design masters, brand leaders and entrepreneurs from Hong Kong as well as overseas, driving discourse on the value of design and innovation to inspire global audiences and explore new business opportunities.

About Hong Kong Design Centre (HKDC) (https://www.hkdesigncentre.org/en/)

Hong Kong Design Centre is a strategic partner of the HKSAR Government in leveraging the city's East-meets-West advantage to create value from design.

The major programmes include Business of Design Week, bodw Future Lab, DFA Awards, Fashion Asia Hong Kong and DESIGN@HKG. Since 2024, we have also been operating the DX design hub in Sham Shui Po, dedicated to fostering emerging design talents and facilitating collaborations and exchanges in the design industry, as well as providing visitors an immersive experience through innovative exhibitions, fashion showcases and cultural events.

To achieve our goals, we:

- Cultivate a culture of design
- Bridge stakeholders to opportunities that unleash the power of design
- Promote excellence in various design disciplines

About the Consulate General of Switzerland in Hong Kong (https://www.eda.admin.ch/hongkong)

The Consulate General of Switzerland in Hong Kong is the official representation of Switzerland in the Hong Kong and Macao Special Administrative Regions. It promotes

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Switzerland's interests and strengthens bilateral relations across economic, cultural, educational and scientific fields.

The Consulate General fosters exchanges between Switzerland and the region, supports Swiss nationals and businesses, and engages with local partners through initiatives that highlight Swiss innovation, creativity and values. Its work is guided by Switzerland's foreign policy objectives, including the promotion of economic prosperity, sustainable development, human rights and peaceful dialogue.

About DesignInspire (https://designinspire.hktdc.com/en)

DesignInspire, organised by Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC), is a Business-to-All exchange and inspiring platform that gathers global design and creative elites, trend-setting brands, associations and institutes. Through a series of interactive exhibits, design masterpieces, award-winning projects and creative workshops, participants will explore the limitless potential of design and promote top-tier creativity. As a unique B2A platform for Hong Kong's creative industry, DesignInspire aims to establish a gateway for connecting Hong Kong with the international design community, fostering interaction and collaboration.

About Cultural and Creative Industries Development Agency (CCIDAHK) (https://www.ccidahk.gov.hk)

The Cultural and Creative Industries Development Agency (CCIDA), formerly known as Create Hong Kong (CreateHK) since 2009, was established in June 2024. CCIDA is a dedicated office under the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR Government) to provide one-stop services and support to the cultural and creative sectors with a mission to foster a conducive environment in Hong Kong to facilitate development of the arts, culture and creative sectors as industries. CCIDA's strategic foci are nurturing talent and facilitating start-ups, exploring markets, promoting cross-sectoral and multi-disciplinary collaboration, promoting industrialisation of the arts, culture and creative sectors under the industry-oriented principle, and fostering a creative atmosphere in the community, thereby reinforcing Hong Kong as Asia's creative capital and our positioning as the East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange.

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