

AUSTRALIAN DESIGN COUNCIL

REVIVED NATIONAL AWARD PART OF PUSH TO EMBED DESIGN IN BUSINESS DECISIONS



20 SEPTEMBER 2024 (Embargoed until 5pm AEST)

SYDNEY: A national award with a history dating back to the 1950s has been revived as part of the Australian Design Council's push to embed design at the centre of national business decisions, delivering wide-ranging benefits to business and the community.

The Australian Design Council comprises industry champions who aspire to help embed design-led innovation as a national priority for Australia. Council members include the Inaugural Patron, Peter Freedman AM, Catherine Livingstone AC, Andrew Liveris AO, David Thodey AO, Ros Moriarty, Dr Stephanie Fahey, Professor Roy

Green, Simonne Bailey, Edwina McCann, Giam Swiegers, Dr Sam Bucolo, and Dr Brandon Gien.

The **Design Impact Award** recognises an organisation that demonstrates the ability to be truly transformative, with design at its core, that will deliver long-term growth, national prosperity and cultural enrichment for Australia.

Australian Design Council's Peter Freedman AM said the award is one pillar of the Council's strategy to enable the tangible benefits of embedding good design principles in our economy, society, environment, and culture.

"Design is an iterative process for creative problem solving, involving the conception and development of a plan for a new or significantly improved product, service or system," Mr Freedman said.

"Good design can improve people's lives, reducing costs, cutting waste, improving health outcomes and increasing sustainability.

"Those benefits also accrue to business, with design-led innovation leading to increased productivity and profitability and creating employment.

"We have re-established the Australian Design Council to ensure we better leverage Australia's world-class design sector to improve how businesses operate, driving innovation and efficiency.

"Without a dedicated focus on design, I would never have been able to build my company on the world stage. Design has been the cornerstone of our identity, driving innovation and connection in every aspect of our journey."

The Australian Design Council's Dr Sam Bucolo said, "The Design Impact Award has been revived to build awareness of how good design positively impacts a business, sector or, as in the case of our inaugural winner, an entire region.

"We are delighted to present the inaugural Australian Design Council's Design Impact Award to the Bega Circular Valley, a project with the potential to transform the entire Bega Valley, changing how the region's economy functions.

"Everything must be redesigned to make this transition to a Circular Economy work. All the businesses and associated entities involved must rethink how they do things with sustainability at the forefront of their decision-making.

“The Bega Circular Valley could provide a blueprint other regions can follow and help reduce our reliance on single-use items, delivering tangible benefits for society.

“With good design at its core, it’s an ideal winner of the Australian Design Council’s inaugural Design Impact Award.”

Led by Bega Group Executive Chairman Barry Irvin AM, the ‘Bega Circular Valley 2030’ program is a transformational, high-impact regional development initiative with the pioneering vision to establish the Bega Valley as the most circular regional economy by 2030. Built on comprehensive collaboration, it will serve as a demonstration of a place-based, whole-of-economy transition from which other regions and businesses can learn. Such a transition will improve the resilience of regional communities.

The Bega Circular Valley 2030 program aims to create Australia’s most Circular Regional Economy in Bega Valley Shire. It implements projects across various sectors facilitated by a community cooperative. The program seeks to build a resilient, sustainable economy while addressing environmental and social challenges. It aims to stimulate growth and inspire other regions by fostering diverse stakeholder participation.

Mr Irvin said receiving the Design Impact Award was a great honour.

“While many people consider design an important element of buildings, cars, clothing, and other tangible items, very few realise that good design can also apply to processes or, indeed, the development of a Circular Economy,” Mr Irvin said.

“This award is an endorsement of our design-led approach and will only spur us to work harder to ensure the Bega Circular Valley delivers on its promise.

“While we are still in the early phases of bringing this project to fruition, we are incredibly proud of our work in enabling projects that will support the delivery of circularity and stimulate a regional circular marketplace and a vibrant economy.

“Circularity as a concept is well-known in northern Europe; however, it’s a new concept for many Australians but one that we feel many more people should know about and be part of.

“Our vision is a pristine valley, home to a regionally based economy. It is an innovation hub with diversified industry activities, a mixed farming program that supports biodiversity and deals with climate change through carbon neutrality and zero waste in landfill. It is admired by residents and visitors.

“We imagine a place that attracts tourists, students, entrepreneurs and investors to experience and participate in this uniquely circular valley.”

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For more information:

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About the Australian Design Council: The Australian Design Council is a not-for-profit industry body established to advocate for a design-led future for Australia and to champion the role and importance of design to address complex social, economic and environmental challenges. Australia has a world-class design sector that is not being leveraged to its full capacity. While some businesses use design as a competitive advantage, many still don't understand how to embed it as a strategic tool to grow and prosper. The re-establishment of the Australian Design Council is a unique opportunity to engage the Australian design sector at a business, industry, and policy level to help grow more internationally competitive Australian businesses and help Australia become a design-led nation.