



Dear WDO members,

We are collectively honored to recommend Ms. Anne ASENSIO as President-Elect candidate for the upcoming Executive Board elections in London (2025-27 term).

Our world is experiencing multiple disorders (geopolitics, economic, social, cultural and environmental) that lead to further disruptions in our lives across borders.

We, designers, cannot remain confined in our certainties, away from the challenges of the world. These challenges are complex and critical to every citizen's future well-being and security: developing and implementing answers requires the brightest minds in design.

Additionally, as practitioners, we face acute challenges: the new workforce paradigm, reskilling and upskilling strategies, AI, biotech, robotics, and automation. Rethinking and shaping the future of our discipline is becoming an imperative.

In the current global context, our mission as WDO members is essential. We are committed to proactively and effectively serve WDO's vision to design a better world with our means and talents.

For the last 6 years, Ms. Anne Asensio, both as Member of the Board and Regional Advisor, has actively connected with the global Design community, in all its cultural and economic diversity, as a relentless ambassador for WDO's strategy, actions and community, for Design impact.

With her highly recognized experience as an industrial designer, as a design leader in large multinational companies, and key contributor to a diverse range of design bodies, institutions, design schools, research labs, executive boards and consulting practices all around the world, we believe that Anne Asensio has the necessary qualities for the position of President-Elect of the WDO.

With her human qualities and robust ethical values, "standing on the shoulders of giants" attitude, we are confident that Anne Asensio will provide leadership at the crossroads of Design and humanized technologies, building the most relevant WDO initiatives, yielding positive impact for design worldwide, citizens and society.

By giving your support to Ms Anne Asensio, we believe that you will enable the emergence of an enhanced and plural design approach and that our future will be built collectively.

July 2025



Mr. Emmanuel THOUAN
President



Mr. Jean-Paul BATH
CEO



Ms. Anna BERNAGOZZI
Design Theory Professor,
Curator, Editor



Mr. Christian GUELLERIN
Executive Director



Ms. Inès KHOUDJA
Head of Design



Mr. Eric CHENAL
Director



Mr. Maurille LARIVIERE
Co-founder, CEO & COO



Ms. Frédérique PAIN
Director



Mr. Clément BATAILLE
Director



Ms. Caroline NAPHEGYI
Director of Studies



Mr. Gilles ROUGON
Design & Innovation Senior Catalyst,
WDO Executive Treasurer (2017-19)
WDO Regional Advisor

The Museum of Modern Art

July 11, 2025

Dear WDO Members,

Design is the most important creative discipline in the world, and thanks to advocates like Anne Asensio, the world might finally get the message! I have hardly ever witnessed such relentless dedication to bringing the design mindset to all who should know, from executives to policymakers and politicians.

My name is Paola Antonelli and I am the Senior Curator in the Department of Architecture and Design as well as the founding Director of Research and Development at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA). Due to my global prominence and vast experience within the field, I am qualified to evaluate professionals in my field, among them Ms. Asensio, who is widely regarded as an acclaimed leader in design innovation.

Anne has tremendous field experience, having been a hands-on designer for decades. She has led large and diverse teams, and helped them achieve the synthesis of goals and means that is at the essence of our discipline. She has tackled goals concrete--actual products--and less tangible--strategies, infrastructures, policies.

I cannot think of anybody better to lead an organization that is tasked with making sure designers are included in the high-level programs and actions that endeavor to make the world a better place for all--all humans, all species, and all ecosystems.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Paola Antonelli". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Paola Antonelli
Senior Curator, Architecture & Design
Director, Research & Development
The Museum of Modern Art

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LETTER OF SUPPORT ANNE ASENSIO – PRESIDENT-ELECT, WDO

I had the honour of first meeting Anne Asensio in France during my term on the Board of ICSID / WDO and was instantly struck by her intellect, energy and dedication to advocating for the transformative power of design to help shape our world for the better.

I believe Anne has the right qualities as a person, and experience as a designer that will make her an impactful future President of the World Design Organization.

Anne brings a wealth of experience as a global design leader in large corporates across various industries and design disciplines including digital design, computation and systems design, virtual design, collaborative and social design, circular design, sustainability and regenerative design – all critical areas that will bring enormous value to the WDO leadership.

For the years ahead, as our planet, societies and economies face the many complex and interconnected challenges – the WDO leadership will require the right stamina, charisma and governance to ensure we remain relevant as a global design body.

As the Vice-President of Design Experience at Dassault Systemes as well as serving two consecutive terms on the Executive Board of WDO, Anne has a solid track record of leading and inspiring teams and creating and implementing transformative design strategies. Her mission is to enable businesses, industry and consumers to shift to a more sustainable and Circular Economy, by reducing waste, optimising resources, and enhancing customer value – an area I passionately believe WDO should be strategically focussed on now, and most certainly in the years ahead.

Anne will bring her experience as the Circular Design Leader at Ellen MacArthur Foundation to the WDO and work with partners, global organisations, policymakers, and educators to promote and implement Circular Design Principles and Practices across various sectors and domains.

I wish Anne all the best in her candidacy to run for this very important leadership role – for designers, for businesses and for the future of WDO.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'B' and 'G' intertwined.

Dr. Brandon Gien
CEO, Good Design Australia
Executive Director, Australian Design Council
Senator, World Design Organization

Recommending Anne Asensio

I have known Anne Asensio since 2010 and have followed her career with great interest and admiration. She not only holds a senior position as VP of Design with Dassault Systèmes but commands the support and respect of the head of the company. I know because I have experienced her interactions with Bernard Charlès.

More importantly, she is a long-time supporter of WDO and understands the history and role of the organization. Her work on developing sustainability as a core foundation of Dassault Systèmes as well as her own work puts her at the forefront of designers across the world. It is not a coincidence that Dassault Systèmes was an Associate Sponsor of the “Waste Age” exhibit at the London Design Museum, where the huge pendant that hung in the opening hall was created by Mamou-Mani Architects and the Dassault Systèmes Design Studio. The pendant, Aurora, *“signals the end of the take-make-waste era” according to its designers and uses PLA plastics and wood pulp to show how a new building material might be conceived.* (the statement in italics is from the Design Week UK review of the show). I credit Anne as one of the driving forces for the creation of that dramatic exhibit.

As she says in her position statement:

The future will be about empowering designers in their transformative projects with meaningful resources, creation of a center of excellence and accessible knowledge for the WDO design community— thus fulfilling the UN Sustainable Development Goals promise.

WDO is an important organization. It is not yet well known enough, even within the design community. Designers need to develop design methods that respect the environment, using new materials, new means of manufacturing, and designing for repair, upgrading, and enhancements. The new technological changes, especially generative models from AI, promise to cause radical changes in the jobs of designers. WDO needs someone who can help make these transitions.

Anne has been a highly skilled designer at numerous companies, a senior executive at one of the world’s largest companies, and a strong board member at WDO. As the world faces many major transformations today, Anne is well equipped to lead WDO, the design profession, and the world in dealing with the complexity of the transition to the circular economy and the resulting changes in design practice and business models, as well as to the changes in the design practices themselves as AI becomes more and more ingrained into design tools.

The wide breadth and depth of her experience makes her uniquely qualified for leadership.

Sincerely,



Don Norman

Sir Misha Black Medal for Design Education
Honorary Fellow Design Research Society
Member IDSA
Honorary Doctorates:

University of Padua, Delft University of Technology, University of San Marino

■ July 16, 2025

Subject: Endorsement of Anne Asensio for WDO President-Elect

Dear Members of the World Design Organization,

It is with great enthusiasm that I endorse Anne Asensio's candidacy for President-Elect of the World Design Organization. As the Chairperson of the Transportation Design Program at the College for Creative Studies I have devoted much of my career to advancing innovation in design education and practice. Over many years, I've had the distinct privilege of working with Anne through a number of meaningful collaborations between CCS and Dassault Systèmes.

Anne is a visionary leader whose influence extends across the global design landscape. Her dedication to the design community and her deep understanding of cultural, economic, and technological diversity are evident in everything she does. Her expertise in virtual design, circular systems, and socially driven innovation demonstrates her continued readiness to lead WDO into the future.

Having served on the WDO board for several years, Anne brings both institutional knowledge and a fresh, forward-looking perspective. She listens deeply, thinks strategically, and acts with purpose—qualities that are essential for guiding WDO's mission on the world stage.

I wholeheartedly support Anne Asensio for President-Elect. Her leadership will be an asset to the WDO and to the global design community.

Sincerely,

Paul Snyder

Paul and Helen Farago Chairperson
Transportation Design Department
College for Creative Studies

July 14, 2025

Dear WDO colleagues,

As Chair of the department of Design at The Ohio State University, it is my honor and pleasure to endorse and recommend Mrs. Anne Asensio as President-Elect candidate for the upcoming Executive Board elections in London in September 2025. Anne and I go back to 2006 when we both were working in the state of Michigan in the United States: I was Director of the front end of Herman Miller's R&D department, and Anne was Executive Design Director at General Motors. Since then, we both chose different paths and work horizons, yet managed to stay in contact: we co-presented a lab in Paris, wrote a scientific proposal sat on a virtual round table on design management; two years ago, I have invited Anne to be the Butter Goeller Design Affair guest designer of the year at Ohio State Design: she led a very successful two-day design charette with hundred students and gave a lecture to wide audience of students, department alumni, and community of local designers.

Anne's tenure at Dassault 3DS since 2008 is the living demonstration of a very talented designer and leader who is not shy of taking high road when it comes to demonstrating the powerful impact of design at the highest levels of an organization. Anne Asensio counts among the very few prominent and influential designers worldwide who have the ear of leadership, and who offer vision and tangible inputs in complex and sophisticated decision-making processes.

In that regard, she is in my view the best option for our next WDO president: she brings international experience as an industrial designer; world renown reputation as a design leader focused on the circular economy; solid corporate and non-for-profit boards knowledge; vision on the role of digital data driven strategies; and offers access to a large network of practitioners, scholars, and executives.

But more importantly, Anne is a wonderful person. Her demonstrated impact at the crossroad of human centered design, inclusive and sustainable design practices and transformational design strategies to make the world a better place, show how much she genuinely cares about the future of design, and the planet.

I support Anne wholeheartedly in this endeavor and I invite anyone caring about the future of industrial design and our planet, to do the same.

Sincerely,



Dr. Fabienne Münch, Professor and Chair
Department of Design



UMEÅ INSTITUTE OF DESIGN

UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

To all the WDO members,

I am writing to express my unwavering support for Anne Asensio's candidacy for the presidency of the World Design Organization (WDO). I have had the privilege of collaborating with Anne for over two decades, and her contributions to design education, as well as her visionary work in shaping the future of industrial design as both a profession and a core research field, have been instrumental in the successful development of our institution.

Anne Asensio possesses the integrity and an extensive wealth of experience that are vital attributes for such leadership role. I am confident that she embodies all the necessary qualities required to effectively guide the WDO's board through the critical processes faced by the organization.

Should you require any further information or have inquiries regarding my experience collaborating with Anne, please do not hesitate to reach out. Anne Asensio is undoubtedly an exceptional candidate for the presidency of the WDO, and I wholeheartedly endorse her candidacy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Demian Horst'.

Demian Horst
Head of Institute

Paris, 14 juillet 2024

Objet : Lettre de Soutien Anne Asensio, WDO

Anne Asensio a toutes les qualités qui correspondent à la présidence de la World Organisation du Design. J'ai eu la chance d'écrire avec Anne Asensio des articles qui témoignent de son engagement profond à penser et faire du design visant l'amélioration des conditions de vie pour chaque humain et vivant. Résolument humaniste et dans la perspective du « prendre soin », Anne Asensio rêve d'un monde meilleur, plus équitable, plus respectueux, plus créatif, tenant compte de l'importance des sens humains et du sens projeté sur les formes désignées. Inscrite dans des collectifs divers, elle navigue aussi bien dans les arts, que dans la philosophie, que dans les sciences et l'ingénierie. Elle a une capacité d'écoute et de compréhension rare faisant qu'elle a pu développer une perception avant-gardiste du futur, toujours alerte aux signaux du monde en train de se vivre.

Critique dans sa démarche, elle pense le design industriel dans ce qui lui reste encore à accomplir et qui doit être ancré dans un usage au service des collectifs humains et autre qu'humain. Consciente des enjeux de notre époque, son expérience multiculturelle lui permettra de porter le design industriel dans une éthique et une inclusivité certaine. Son savoir-faire, son savoir-être, son savoir réflexif sont fédérateurs et le regard que pose Anne Asensio sur le monde et sur autrui n'est jamais inscrit dans une verticalité surplombante. Designer de terrain, elle met ses compétences au service d'une visée plus grande qu'elle, l'amélioration du monde, telle qu'elle l'imagine, avec les autres et dans des contextes situés.

Anne Asensio par la position qu'elle occupe au sein d'une des plus grandes industries technologiques, connaît non seulement le fonctionnement de l'industrie et ses enjeux, mais pense l'industrie dans sa visée politique et sociale. Elle peut porter une voix au sein des organisations industrielles de telle sorte à ce que le Design puisse acquérir la place à laquelle il devrait être : celle de pouvoir régénérer les idées et les services, la fonction et l'imaginaire de l'industrie dont les enjeux n'ont jamais été aussi fort qu'à notre époque.

Je soutiens largement sa candidature pour la présidence de la WDO, car je sais tout le bénéfice opérationnel et discursif qu'elle peut apporter dans le monde du Design Industriel.

Cordialement,

E. A.


Edwige Armand
Maitre de Conférences en Art Numérique
Présidente de Passerelle Art-Science-Technologie
Membre de la Transversale des Réseaux Arts Sciences



Dear Members of the World Design Organization,

I am writing to enthusiastically endorse Anne Asensio for the position of President of the World Design Organization.



Anne Asensio is an **idea person**. She is a visionary designer with boundless, impressive, and impactful ideas. Her extensive experience in various design disciplines, including automotive, industrial, and digital design, demonstrates her versatility and adaptability in addressing the ever-evolving challenges in the design world.

Anne Asensio is an **action person**. She makes excellent ideas come to life by understanding context, focusing on the correct problems, simplifying complexity, and thinking strategically about obstacles and opportunities. Her rich track record is a testament to her ability to make complicated things happen.

Anne Asensio is a **people's person**. She is a great collaborator and a connector who brings people together. No one is immune to her enthusiasm, good humor, optimism, and boundless energy, reflected in the twinkle of her eyes. Anne creates a ripple effect by inspiring a vibrant, multi-generational, diverse, and global network of people.

Anne Asensio is a **global citizen**. Anne's international perspective and global experience will benefit the World Design Organization. Her work has taken her to various corners of the world, giving her a deep understanding of the cultural and regional nuances that shape design practices. This perspective will be invaluable in guiding the organization's efforts to promote design excellence on a global scale.

Last but not least, Anne Asensio is a **nice person**. She is honest, loyal and humble. She has an unwavering moral compass in life and at work. She is loving towards her family, friends, peers and colleagues. She reminds me of Alan Mulally, another legendary leader and CEO of Boeing and The Ford Motor Company, who said, It is nice to be important but more important to be nice.

I have the utmost confidence that Anne will bring innovative ideas, strategic vision, and a collaborative spirit to the role, ensuring the continued growth and success of the World Design Organization.

Sincerely,

Ayse Birsell
Designer, Founder, Author
Birsell + Seck LL