**The Conran Foundation funds the Chief Curator post at the Design Museum**

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[PRESS IMAGES](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/8e6s8j4nau3o3b7chi1bx/h?rlkey=artfvvev19cwnr9dfqvf9b5p3&dl=0)

The Design Museum is delighted to announce that The Conran Foundation will fund its Chief Curator position, which will now be named the Conran Foundation Chief Curator. Curator and design historian Johanna Agerman Ross is taking on this role, following the announcement of her appointment as Design Museum Chief Curator earlier this year.

The Conran Foundation’s support for the Chief Curator role will enable the museum to continue to achieve its ambitions to deliver a world-class and critically acclaimed exhibition programme.

Sir Terence Conran was central to the formation of the Design Museum, and The Conran Foundation continues to support the museum’s ambitions.

As The Conran Foundation Chief Curator, Johanna will lead the Design Museum’s exhibitions programme and its curatorial team, to deliver thought-provoking and agenda-setting exhibitions and inspire audiences all over the globe.

Johanna joined the Design Museum in September from the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, where she has worked as its curator of 20th-century and contemporary furniture and product design, delivering exhibitions such as the permanent gallery Design 1900-Now and the touring exhibition Plastic: Remaking Our World.

**Sebastian Conran, Chair of the Conran Foundation,** said: “The Conran Foundation was established by Terence Conran to advocate a greater understanding of the power of design with the founding of Boilerhouse Project at the V&A in 1982 and then the Design Museum in 1989. The Design Museum continues to demonstrate the potential of outstanding design at the forefront of social, technological and environmental changes that face humanity. We are delighted to further support this with the sponsorship of the first Conran Chief Curator at the Design Museum – Johanna seems ideal for this important role. This reinforces our joint ambition to promote the positive impact of design with the broadest possible audience.”

**Johanna Agerman Ross, The Conran Chief Curator,** said: “I’m delighted to be joining the Design Museum as the new Conran Foundation Chief Curator. It is now forty years since Sir Terence Conran laid the museum’s foundations as the Boilerhouse Project in the basement of the V&A and since then the Design Museum has been leading contemporary design discourse in London and internationally. It’s wonderful to see that the Conran Foundation continues to support the innovative curatorial practice of the museum and I’m looking forward to carrying on the legacy of examining design in all its forms and building on the exciting programme of exhibitions and events.”

**Tim Marlow, the Design Museum Director and CEO,** said “Johanna Agerman Ross is hugely respected across the cultural and design sectors. She is a writer, teacher, magazine founder, consultant, and curator. Her experience ranges from museums and academia to publishing and journalism, wide-ranging but rooted in the understanding, exploration and mediation of design. We would like to thank the Conran Foundation for their generosity in sponsoring our Chief Curator position, and their ongoing support for the Design Museum’s work.”

**-Ends-**

**Notes to Editors**

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**About the Conran Foundation:**

The Conran Foundation is a charity, whose principal activity is advancing the education of the public in the study of industrial and manufacturing art and design in its historical, social, artistic, industrial and commercial contexts. It was established & funded in 1980 by *Sir Terence Conran*. In addition to founding and continuing to sponsor the Design Museum, the Foundation's first initiative was launched in 1982 with the seminal *Boilerhouse Project*. This was a newly built gallery that started life in an unused space in the basement of the *Victoria and Albert Museum*. This new gallery was intended as a resource for students, designers and the public to stimulate design awareness & discussion. It had many lively, original and acclaimed exhibitions covering the spectrum of design including *Kenneth Grange, Issey Miyake, Dieter Rams retrospectives, Sony Design, Coca Cola — a global brand*, Youth Culture and the design development of the then new *Ford Sierra*.

**About Johanna Agerman Ross:**
Johanna Agerman Ross is the newly appointed Conran Foundation Chief Curator at the Design Museum in London where she oversees the museum’s exhibition programme. She was previously curator of twentieth century and contemporary furniture and product design at the Victoria & Albert Museum. During her seven years at the museum, she curated the new permanent gallery Design 1900-Now and launched the new initiative Make Good: Rethinking Material Futures, supported by John Makepeace OBE, looking at the use of renewable and sustainable materials in design and architecture. She also co-curated the touring exhibition *Plastic: Remaking Our World* with colleagues at Vitra Design Museum, V&A Dundee and maat Lisbon. Johanna is originally from Sweden but came to London to study at London College of Fashion and the Royal College of Art. She founded the international design journal Disegno in 2011, which she edited for five years. She is still Disegno’s director.

**About the Design Museum:**

The Design Museum is the world’s leading museum devoted to contemporary architecture and design. Its work encompasses all elements of design, including fashion, product and graphic design. Since it opened its doors in 1989 the museum has displayed everything from an AK-47 to high heels designed by Christian Louboutin. It has staged over 100 exhibitions, welcomed over seven million visitors and showcased the work of some of the world’s most celebrated designers and architects including Issey Miyake, Paul Smith, Zaha Hadid, Jonathan Ive, Frank Gehry, Eileen Gray, Dieter Rams, Margaret Calvert and Yinka Ilori.

On 24 November 2016, the Design Museum relocated to Kensington, west London. John Pawson converted the interior of a 1960s modernist building to create a new home for the Design Museum giving it three times more space in which to show a wider range of exhibitions and significantly extend its learning programme. Since opening in Kensington in 2016, the Design Museum has hosted major exhibitions including *Stanley Kubrick: The Exhibition*, *Moving to Mars*, *Amy: Beyond the Stage*, *Sneakers Unboxed: Studio to Street*, *Electronic: From Kraftwerk to The Chemical Brothers*, *Charlotte Perriand: The Modern Life*, *Football: Designing the Beautiful Game*, *Waste Age: What can design do?, Ai Weiwei: Making Sense,* and *The Offbeat Sari.*

In 2021, the Design Museum launched Future Observatory, a national programme for design research supporting the UK’s response to the climate crisis. The three-year programme is coordinated by the Design Museum in partnership with the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), which is part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

 

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