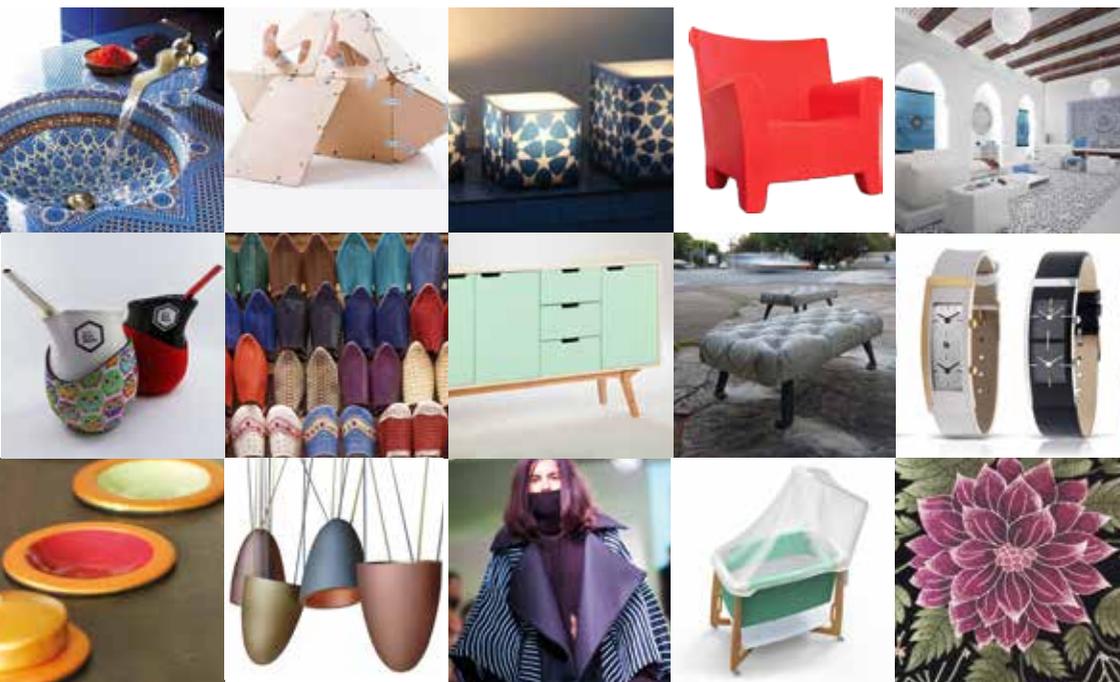


Unlocking Countries' Design Potential

WIPO Pilot Project on Intellectual Property and Design Management for Business Development



Design can make a critical difference to business success. WIPO's pilot project brings together business, governments and experts in developing countries to promote design-led strategies supported by the use of intellectual property.

Design adds value

Successful companies have shown the economic benefit of good design. Innovative and attractive products stand out in the marketplace, increasing demand and revenue.

For the most successful companies, design is more than just the look and feel of individual products. It is a core part of their strategy and processes – their business is geared toward developing and marketing new designs.

But climbing the design ladder is not easy

While more companies are now seeking to integrate design into their business thinking, it requires a cultural shift for businesses to engage fully with the economy of design.

Entrepreneurs need the confidence to invest in design and the acumen to identify and pursue market opportunities. And crucially, they need to be able to protect and exploit their intellectual property (IP) rights in designs.

These needs are particularly apparent in many developing and least developed countries (LDCs), where – with the right support – design-intensive enterprises have the potential to become engines of economic and social development.

THE DESIGN LADDER

The Design Ladder is a tool for rating a company's use of design. The Design Ladder was developed by the Danish Design Centre in 2001 to illustrate that companies' use of design may take on a variety of forms. The Design Ladder consists of four steps.

STEP 1 NON-DESIGN

Design is an invisible part of, e.g., product development, and the task is not handled by trained designers. The solution is driven by the involved participants' ideas about good function and aesthetic. The users' perspective plays little or no role in the process.

STEP 2 DESIGN AS FORM-GIVING

Design is viewed exclusively as the final form-giving stage, whether in relation to product development or graphic design. Many designers use the term 'styling' about this process. The task may be carried out by professional designers but is typically handled by people with other professional backgrounds.

STEP 3 DESIGN AS PROCESS

Design is not a result but an approach that is integrated at an early stage in the development process. The solution is driven by the problem and the users and requires the involvement of a wide variety of skills and capacities, for example process technicians, materials technicians, marketing experts and administrative staff.

STEP 4 DESIGN AS STRATEGY

The designer works with the company's owners/management to rethink the business concept completely or in part. Here, the key focus is on the design process in relation to the company's business visions and its desired business areas and future role in the value chain.

Introducing the WIPO Design Pilot Project

Mainstreaming Development Agenda goals

As part of the WIPO Development Agenda, member states adopted a proposal from the Republic of Korea for a new pilot project to unlock the unrealized design potential in developing countries and LDCs. The project aims to help participating member states increase their innovation success by fostering a design culture.

The pilot project launched in 2014. Two countries, **Argentina** and **Morocco**, were selected for initial participation.

Creating a new trend

The project works on several levels:

Each participating government receives tailor-made support to develop and implement a **National Design Protection Strategy**. This seeks to build the capacity and institutional infrastructure needed to provide integrated IP-related services to design-intensive small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

At the same time, national and international experts work directly with scores of SMEs to help them develop **design-intensive business strategies**. Advice focuses on how best to target local and global markets, and how to secure and leverage valuable IP assets in both local and global markets.

Beyond the concrete support to selected SMEs, the project aims to create a wider ripple effect, spreading **awareness** of the value of protecting and investing in design, throughout the economy.

Working together: A public-private partnership

To implement the pilot project, WIPO is working closely with key stakeholders in the two participating member states:

- **DiseñAr**, the project vehicle in Argentina, is run in collaboration with the National Institute of Industrial Property (INPI)
- **Namadij** in Morocco is conducted in collaboration with the Moroccan Office of Industrial and Commercial Property (OMPIC).

The partnership ethos doesn't end there. Each country has established a **national advisory board** or steering committee that includes members from both the public and private sectors. Government, associations, universities and schools are all represented along with the program's ambassadors.

They all are pursuing a shared goal: Investing in nation-wide innovation through design, and in the strategic use of design rights.

The pilot project also promotes WIPO's commitment to gender equality through a proactive approach to involving women and men at all stages.



Cutting-edge tools

WIPO and the project partners have developed a set of tools specially adapted to the needs of each country and enterprise. National governments can receive advice on everything from recruitment of national experts to program dissemination, and from project visibility to exit strategy.

Underlining these is a “Design Thinking” approach which recognizes that design today is about much more than products. Design Thinking encourages executives in both public and private sectors to adopt a designer’s mindset – to apply a designer’s way of thinking and creating solutions in developing strategies, piloting a program, implementing and evolving it.

The methodology and project toolkit will be made available to all member states who participate in the project to leverage design through the strategic use of IP rights.

The project includes support with the following:

- National Design Protection Strategy
- Sustainable national project scope
- National outreach plan
- National exit strategy
- Recruitment of national experts in design and IP Law
- National awareness-raising program
- National capacity-building program
- Technical assistance to beneficiary companies
- Continuous improvement of WIPO strategic design protection toolkit
- Public-private partnerships
- Program dissemination
- Project visibility at the national, regional and international level.

Expertise / knowledge offered:

- International cooperation project monitoring and evaluation
- WIPO tailor-made tools and methodologies (for new participating member states)
- National and international expertise – *combined design and IP Law expertise*
- Design and *Design Thinking*
- Business development and entrepreneurship
- Support for tackling export markets
- Intangible asset valuation
- Communication and marketing
- Gender mainstreaming
- Good practices – Pilot Project 2014-15
- Change management for sustainability
- Systemic management



42 SMEs in Argentina and 26 in Morocco were selected to participate in the pilot project.

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Rigorous selection, expert oversight

Participating SMEs have been carefully chosen to maximize the likely impact of the pilot project. Out of more than 3,600 companies in the two countries, 68 firms were chosen to benefit from the project in 2015: 42 in Argentina and 26 in Morocco.

The same high standards are reflected in the caliber of experts who support the project.

In Morocco, the National Experts and *Namadij* Ambassadors include:

- Ms. **Myriam Criquet**, Lawyer, Juristes-Conseils Partners, Myriam Partners Morocco
- Mr. **Abid Kabadi**, Managing partner, Juristes-Conseils Partners
- Mr. **Hicham Lahlou**, General Manager, Hicham Lahlou Designer Agency, President Founder of Africa Design Award + Days

In Argentina, the National Experts and *DiseñAr* Ambassadors include:

- Mr. **Sebastián Ackerman**, Director, Ackompany
- Mr. **Jorge Enrique Aiello**, Founding Partner, Estudio Aiello de Marcas y Patentes
- Mr. **Adrián Cohan**, Director, Design Cohan Group
- Mr. **Diego Domma**, Founding Partner, Estudio Domma
- Mr. **Marco Sanguinetti**, Industrial Designer and Professor, University of Buenos Aires, Faculty of Architecture, Design and Urbanism

Following the successful initial pilot phase in both Argentina and Morocco, WIPO welcomes expressions of interest from other developing and least developed countries who would like to participate in the project.

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