

Impact case study (REF3b)

Institution: Wales Institute for Research in Art & Design (Cardiff Met, USW and UWTSD)
Unit of Assessment: 34
Title of case study: The Influence of WIRAD’s Design Policy Unit on the Design Innovation Policies of Wales, the UK and the European Union
1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)

The Design Policy Group has directly influenced the design innovation policies of the UK and EU Governments since 2008. We will evidence a clear link between the unit’s research and the EU’s 2010 ‘Innovation Union’ policy and 2013 Action Plan, demonstrate that they provided important underpinnings for the Welsh Government’s 2013 ‘Innovation Strategy for Wales’ and that the group directly engaged in the UK’s Design and Innovation Policy debate through invited membership of a House of Lord’s Select Committee.

[Throughout this template, references to underpinning research are numbered **1-6**; sources to corroborate are numbered **7-15**]

2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)
--

The Design Policy Group is a forerunner in the development of research to support design policy-making [4, 5]. The roots of their research lie in the Welsh Design Advisory Service (WDAS) contract held from 1994 – 2009 by members of what is now the Design Policy Group. The WDAS service focussed on helping Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs) exploit design for business benefit. Their extensive interactions with companies over those 15 years gave members **Raulik** (Research Officer), **Cawood** (Director of WDAS) and **Larsen** (Senior Research Officer) an understanding of the barriers to SMEs adopting design practice and an interest in how those might be removed. They realised that while design is a key factor in stimulating innovation, good design *policy* was critical to creating conditions conducive to supporting it. Further investigation led to a recognition that although design promotion had been undertaken by regional and national governments for decades, there was little academic research into the efficacy, or the reasons behind successes or failure, of a variety of international policy approaches.

In 2004 the group pioneered research comparing national systems of design support. They studied policies advocating the benefits of design and the mechanisms for assisting its adoption [1, 2]. Membership of the group grew to include **Whicher** (SEE Programme Manager, 2009-present) and **Walters** (Director of Research/Reader in Product Design 2010-present).

In 2005, a seven European partner consortium, Sharing Experience Europe (SEE), was formed. The consortium was led by the Design Policy Group and funded by a €1m INTERREG grant [3]. SEE researched the history of design promotion and analysed the different strategies deployed across Europe and how those related to the different stages of economic development within regions. A second INTERREG Grant of €1.5m in 2008 empowered an expanded team across 11 European nations. Together, they sought to define design policy, ask how it could be deployed to enhance European competitiveness and how governments might develop, implement and evaluate those policies effectively. The project’s outputs highlighted the potential impact of effective design innovation policies and made a series of recommendations on ways to align them to the differing

Impact case study (REF3b)

needs of a range of European regions. SEE Bulletins (edited by Raulik and Cawood 2005-2011 and Whicher and Cawood 2011-present) have been used to maximise the dissemination of findings with proven effect (see 4.).

A third phase of European Commission funding was won in 2012 in the form of a €1.1m Competitiveness & Innovation Programme (CIP) grant. As with the first two grants, Welsh Government indicated the value they place on the Design Policy Group's work by providing match funding.

The present Design Policy Group is an evolved entity: **Larsen** retired in 2009 and **Raulik** (now Raulik-Murphy) left shortly after the completion of her PhD in 2011. Following Cawood's promotion to PDR Director in 2013, leadership of the group was awarded to **Whicher**, with **Walters** and **Cawood** supporting. In the third phase of its research the Design Policy Group is focussing on the development of an academic framework for benchmarking the design policies of SEE's 11 partner nations. They will create a bank of research-based evidence providing a robust rationale for policy intervention in support of design [6].

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

The underpinning research for this impact case study has been published in international journals (1, 5) and in the proceedings of double blind peer reviewed international conferences (2, 4, 6). Further, the research has attracted competitive research funding including, but not limited to (3) totalling **€5.9m**.

1. Raulik, G., Cawood, G. and Larsen, P. (2008a) National Design Strategies and Country Competitive Economic Advantage. The Design Journal 11(2), pp.119 – 136
<http://dx.doi.org/10.2752/175630608X329217>
2. Raulik, G., Cawood, G. and Larsen, P. (2008b). A comparative analysis of strategies for design in Finland and Brazil. In (Ed.) Undisciplined 2008! Design Research Society Conference. Sheffield UK: Sheffield Hallam University. <http://shura.shu.ac.uk/452/1/fulltext.pdf>
3. European Regional Development Fund, INTERREG IIIC, SEE Design, March 2005 - December 2007; INTERREG IVC, Sharing Experience Europe - policy innovation design, 1st Oct 2008 - 30th Jun 2011 http://www.interreg4c.eu/uploads/media/pdf/SEEdesign_4W0149N.pdf;
http://www.interreg4c.eu/fileadmin/User_Upload/PDFs/L4_SEE_factsheet.pdf
4. Raulik-Murphy, G. & Cawood, G. (2010) Historical review of the paradigm shift in design policies. Proceedings of the cumulous Shanghai Conference 2010. Young Creators for Better City and Better Life. Shanghai, China: Cumulous Association.
http://www.cumulusassociation.org/images/stories/Working_papers/Cumulus_Proceedings_Shanghai.pdf
5. Whicher A., Raulik-Murphy G., and Cawood G., 2011 Evaluating Design: Understanding the Return on Investment, Design Management Review, Volume 22, Number 2, Spring 2011, pp.44-52. http://www.dmi.org/dmi/html/publications/journal/fullabstract_d.jsp?itemID=11222RAU44

Whicher A., Cawood G., and Walters A.T., 2012. Research and Practice in Design and Innovation Policy in Europe, DMI International Research Conference, Boston, MA, USA, 8-9 August 2012
<https://repository.cardiffmet.ac.uk/dspace/bitstream/10369/3529/1/Design%20Innovation%20Policy.pdf>

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

The research of the Design Policy Group has directly influenced the design innovation policies of the Welsh Government and the European Commission. The group have also influenced the UK's policy discussions through expert input to parliamentary debate.

Influence on the European Commission: In 2010, the European Commission included design as one of ten priorities for stimulating innovation. This was the first time design had achieved such a high priority, and this is important since the policy guides how the Commission distributes funds. The reasons for design's inclusion can be directly traced to the Design Policy Group's *SEE Platform* (see 2. above). The policy in question, *Innovation Union* is a ten year economic development plan for Europe. The EC Policy makers responsible for it directly referenced Raulik & Cawood's *SEE* bulletins as evidence underpinning the 2009 European Commission staff working document from which the *Innovation Union* policy was formed [7, 8]. As part of *Innovation Union's* implementation plan the European Commission also drafted an *Action Plan for Design-driven Innovation in Europe*. The Design Policy Group's research also provided the evidence base for this document, and *SEE* is also directly referenced in it. [9]. A Policy Officer at the European Commission for the Director General Enterprise and Industry, Innovation Policy for Growth, stated:

“Research generated by PDR (the centre where the Design Policy Group is situated) through the *SEE Platform* has proved a valuable resource in preparing the Commission's policy work on design-driven innovation including the two staff working documents on design in 2009 and 2013 which have directly influenced the EC Innovation Policies” [10].

Influence on Welsh Government: The Welsh Government debates and policy have been directly shaped by the Design Policy Group's activities. In 2010, an Assembly Member referenced their *Design for Innovation in Wales Manifesto* [11] during a debate on innovation policy development in Wales, including the role of design. The resulting vote gave unanimous, cross-party support for design becoming a key Welsh priority for the first time. That came to fruition with the publication of the Welsh Government's *The Innovation Strategy for Wales, 2013* [12, 13].

Influence on the UK parliament: In recognition of the Design Policy Group's influence on Welsh and EU Policy, Cawood was invited to engage in a debate on the effectiveness of the EU's Research and Innovation proposals and on design and innovation policy development. In 2013 he did so by joining the Associate Parliamentary Design & Innovation Group which provides a forum for open debate between Parliament and the UK's design and innovation communities [14]. 2013 also saw Cawood's invitation to and participation with the House of Lords Select Committee on the European Union as an Expert Witness on Design's role in innovation policy [15].

In summary, WIRAD's Design Policy Group's research into design policy efficacy has resulted in a series of impacts at national and international levels. They can evidence a sustained and substantial influence on the policies of the Welsh Government and the European Commission and have also provided expert input to the UK parliament's debate on design's role in innovation policy.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

7. Commission of the European Communities, 2009, Commission staff working document: Design as a driver of user-centred innovation, Brussels, pp.19, 24, 40, 44, 51, 52, 55, 69. http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/files/design_swd_sec501_en.pdf

Impact case study (REF3b)

8. European Commission, 2010, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, The Council, The European Economic and Social Committee and The Committee of the Regions: Europe 2020 Flagship Initiative Innovation Union, Brussels, pp.3, http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/pdf/innovation-union-communication_en.pdf
9. European Commission, 2013, Commission staff working document: Implementing an action plan for design-driven innovation, Brussels, http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/files/design/design-swd-2013-380_en.pdf
10. Statement from the Policy Officer of the European Commission, DG Enterprise and Industry, Innovation Policy for Growth
11. National Assembly for Wales, 2010 The Record of Proceedings 05.10.10 <http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-third-assembly/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=198289&ds=10/2010>
12. Welsh Government, 2013, Innovation Wales, <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/det/publications/130714innwalesen.pdf>
13. Welsh Government, 2012, Innovation Wales – Call for Evidence Responses, pp.130, <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/det/consultation/121113innovationresponses.pdf>
14. Statement from the Head of Group, Manufacturing, Design and Innovation, Policy Connect
15. House of Lords, 2013, Select Committee on the European Union, Internal Market, Infrastructure and Employment Sub-Committee, Effectiveness of EU research and innovation proposals, Oral and written evidence, <http://www.parliament.uk/documents/lords-committees/eu-sub-com-b/Innovation/EUSUBBWRITTENEV.pdf>