Every year World Design Day (WDD) is celebrated on 27 April—the anniversary of the founding of the Council. We are excited to announce this year’s WDD theme: Start Young, a project to introduce design concepts to kids through educational workshops.

This year, ico-D, collaborated with We are Rap. to present WDD2017: Start Young, a workshop created for World Design Day 2017. The workshop will be given around the world, crossing times zones and uniting kids from all walks of life. The WDD workshops will celebrate the transformative power of kids and design across regions and cultures. The project is part of a global collaboration to promote early design education in partnership with Open Design Cape Town (South Africa), Casa Wabi (Mexico), Triennale Design Museum (Italy) and Seoul Design Foundation (South Korea), organisations who will lead the WDD 2017: Start Young workshops in their respective countries.

About WDD2017: Start Young

Kids are a blank slate. They are at an age when their view of the world and its possibilities are limitless. As the first generation of ‘pure’ digital natives, today’s kids already feel personally responsible for their own futures: they want to be able to choose and create work that makes a difference in the world. And they will do it in their own, unique way.

But how do we prepare young kids to navigate this turbulent world, so they can become sensitive, intellectual, imaginative and practical leaders for tomorrow?

Having a designing mindset means being tuned into the invisible things that matter to people and their relationships to each other and the world.

ico-D, the International Council of Design, sees the great potential for design to improve the world around us. We know that design changes—for the better—how we live and thrive in everyday environments like schools, parks, workplaces and
hospitals. The profession of design and its ethics requires designers to consider context, culture, diversity and specificity before even starting to design, and this has become an essential way of thinking and being in the complex world we live in today.

What if design was taught to children the same way math is: everyday, and on equal footing with science, history and languages?

Nearly everywhere in the world, math is considered one of the essential subjects necessary for developing a well-rounded, young mind. The logic is, though many of us won’t become mathematicians, we inherently know math is useful, as it shapes and enlarges our brains in a particular, irrefutable way. In some countries, design is already considered to be an essential subject in elementary school curriculum. The same logic stands: by teaching design to children, they may not become designers, but they will know how to think and be like them. It’s about cultivating and nurturing a designing-mindset. And it’s best to start young.

Every year leading up to World Design Day, we ask ourselves: How can we best impact how people think about design. This year, we came up with the answer: Kids! …And starting their design awareness and education young!

Design is transformative and knowing that the kids of today will be the leaders of tomorrow, early awareness of design as a field of professional practice and of elemental design methodology, is key.
Whether they choose to become designers, or to apply design methodology in their approach to everyday problems, the designing mindset will be an invaluable asset for whatever future they choose.

How can you participate?
ico-D invites you to participate to the celebration by hosting your own workshop on April 27th to introduce design to a whole new generation.

The activity should be a primer on design with some exercises to initiate the participants into a basic form of design methodology. It should be a hands-on workshop to push the children participating to explore their creative potential freely and trust their capacity to solve problems and test their solutions.

The desired outcome is to inspire and empower children to adopt innovative ways of thinking and to enhance their creative confidence.

There are many ways to celebrate! —here are some kickstart ideas:

— go public on design: organise local workshops or presentations about Design with children!
— take us on a tour: organise a walk with local children (if weather permits) touring your city and surroundings in search of local Design examples like Architecture, Landscape, Posters or other!
— design together: bring Kids to discuss various design disciplines to frame and solve local design problems. Send us the documentation!
— open your studio: share your Design knowledge!

Example of a schedule
— Introduction to design and discussion (30 min)
— Problem-Solving Warm up (20 min)
— Break
— Design Module (activity), Groups of 3 children (140 min)
Safety first!
— Ensure to have the children parents contact information and emergency contact.
— If you will serve snacks, ensure to ask if any of the participants have allergies or alimentary restrictions.
— Ensure to have enough volunteers to keep an eye on the children.
— Have a first aid kit handy!

All design disciplines and forms of expression are welcome.

Share by sending us via the the documentation of what you see or what you do: videos, photos, drawings, maps
Document your process by expressing the Design in Action! statement by sharing examples of great design in your community!

Share your WDD Workshop news with ico-D
Share news about your workshop on the WDD Facebook group page using the hashtags: #WDD17startyoung.

For more details:
Visit the WDD Events page: http://www.ico-d.org/projects/world-design-day
Contact the Secretariat at secretariat@ico-D.org
WDD Facebook group: http://bit.ly/1jqeWkr

(The creator of this year’s visuals is Marc Kandalaft)