

ICDK Shanghai sponsors KEA-BJUT Design Workshop

In late September, five students from KEA, Copenhagen School of Design and Technology and 15 students from Beijing University of Technology (BJUT) participated in a design workshop at BJUT campus. Sponsored by the Innovation Centre Denmark (ICDK), the four-day workshop was also an event alongside the Guest City Copenhagen exhibition during 2018 Beijing Design Week.

Play, Learn, and Sustainability

The workshop was titled "Play, Learn, and Sustainability". It aimed to explore the urban space in Beijing and create innovative and sustainable product concepts for children's playgrounds adapted to the local cultural and natural environment.



Collaboration and Exchange

The keywords 'play' and 'learn' provide a unique perspective that highlighted the differences in how parents expect children to gain knowledge and skills through physical activities. The workshop also succeeded in exchanging different understandings of how children should learn in a fun way.

"The workshop was cool, educational and a huge experience. A huge experience of how different we are raised, are taught and especially how you act around others, when your cultural background and language are different." – Maren Hansen, student at KEA



During the workshop, students from BJUT demonstrated how they incorporate the latest engineering and design software for conceptualizing ideas, especially in modelling and rendering. Meanwhile, the Danes contributed their considerations in building sustainable products, which is one of the central values in the modern Danish society.

Outcomes and future possibilities for students

Participating in both the workshop and in the Beijing Design Week had several positive outcomes. Firstly, it introduced Danish students to the culture in a country that is an important export country for Denmark. There is a big chance that many of the students during their working career will work on projects in China or work with Chinese partners, and therefore, even a short introduction like the workshop is a valuable learning experience. Secondly, participating in both the workshop and Beijing Design Week created future professional opportunities for the students.

"China is an important country for Denmark in terms of export, therefore going to China for a collaboration like this creates many future opportunities for their career. The students not only gain more international experience, but also meet people from various companies." - Christian Lystager, Lecturer, KEA

Therefore, Christian, who has been working and teaching within Product development at KEA for over 10 years, also believes that the trip to Beijing was a milestone in the development of the education program Product Development and Integrative Technology.



In addition to the financial support, ICDK Shanghai also introduced several guests to the workshop. For instance, the first day's workshop was opened by Rok Zgalin Kobe, designer at the LEGO Group. Rok designs models of globally famous buildings and landmarks for the LEGO Architecture product line. On the final day of the workshop, Mads Møller from Archiland and Jesper Nielsen from Royal Danish Embassy participated in the workshop as judges, together with Professor Han from BJUT, and Cong Liu and Christian Lystager from KEA. They gave comments and valuable suggestions to each student group.



KEA at Beijing Design Week: A dome and a robot in a gas tank

Beijing Design Week is an annual event, where creativity and innovation within design is celebrated. KEA was invited to participate by the Copenhagen Municipality and build a booth inside a huge decommissioned gas tank in the Art District 751 in Beijing, which was the main scene of Copenhagen's contribution. The gas tank was made to resemble Copenhagen, which along with the exhibition with Danish companies called "Living in Giving" was the guest city of this year's design week.

KEA decided to make the booth a student led project. The Danish students were divided into two groups, where one group of 5-6 students was based in the Gas Tank building.

Apart from displaying the students' individual projects in their 40 m² stand in the Gas Tank, the KEA students had also constructed a 3-meter tall dome, which could play films in a 360-degree version. The dome offered visitors an immersive experience with short films that occupies the viewer's entire vision.

Additionally, the students displayed their Danish mascot, which was a telepresence robot going around the aisles of the KEA library back home in Denmark, but was controlled by the guests at the fair in Beijing.

The students also had the possibilities to meet and network with some of the largest, Danish companies in the Gas Tank.

Workshop in China?

If you are working at a Danish or a Chinese university and are interesting in making collaborations across nations and cultures, please do not hesitate to contact Martin Bech, Innovation attaché at ICDK, Shanghai.