

## **The World Wide Things Collection 2.0**

Design Cities exhibition proposal

“Textile Landscapes” Covilhã Design Triennial, spring 2025

*The World Wide Things Collection* exhibition project was first developed by Anne Thomas (Montréal), Pierre Laramée (Montréal) and Eberhard Schrempf (Graz) in 2017 to collect and exhibit notable designs from the UNESCO Creative Cities Network. Its curators aimed to connect great designers, products, manufacturers and distributors, while developing a marketplace for carefully selected products designed, and manufactured, at UNESCO Cities of Design.

First launched within Design Month Graz 2018, *The World Wide Things Collection* has been presented in different formats such as exhibitions, shops, conferences, meetings and conventions. Its first exhibition in 2018 showed about 50 products from three UNESCO Cities of Design; the second, which was also part of Design Month Graz 2019, presented a selection of 120 products out of 150 items from seven UNESCO Cities of Design: Puebla, Istanbul, Mexico City, Detroit, Saint-Étienne, Singapore and Graz.

Since its inception, this exhibition has not only presented a wide range of products to several audiences but also made a connection between designers, manufacturers, retailers and visitors/consumers, as the items on show can be bought, potentially worldwide, through online shops. This connection is evident in the format adopted since 2019 for the collection as an online exhibition within the Cities of Design network website, <https://www.designcities.net/wwtc/>

For the first edition of the Covilhã Design Triennial we invite all Cities of Design to take part in a new version of the *World Wide Things Collection*, aligned with the Triennial’s approach to bioregional design and situated knowledge. We call on City of Design representatives to submit products, services or projects that reflect a preoccupation with the social and environmental sustainability of their region, a care for the originality, complexity and integrity of both its natural territory and populations, as well as an acknowledgment of the role history, ancestry and tradition play in the design of innovative artefacts that adequately reflect contemporary uses and concerns. We favour artefacts that result from collective, interdisciplinary design processes, especially those developed collaboratively between researchers and creative professionals. These may be commercial products or services by public entities or private firms, as well as experimental initiatives that aim less at problem-solving than at agenda-setting.

Proposals submitted for *World Wide Things Collection 2.0* will be discussed and selected in articulation with the Covilhã Design Triennial's curatorial team, as to best define each project's alignment with the Triennial's curatorial statement, presentation requirements and logistical details.