DESIGN EVENTS

VID 2023: forward-thinking projects and talks on innovation and sustainability

Venice Innovation Design was a treasure trove of insights into innovation and sustainability, leaving participants inspired and enlightened

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VID 2023 has successfully concluded at its customary location, the captivating Island of San Servolo. The event has been an annual gathering for four years now, consistently delivering top-notch content. With esteemed guests gracing the stage and innovative startups exhibiting their ideas, the event exuded a resolute commitment to fostering innovation and sustainability, two vital pillars within the design world.

During the engaging discussions led by renowned speakers, a thought-provoking observation emerged: the term “sustainability” has suffered from overuse and dilution of meaning. It is no longer sufficient to merely label something as sustainable; rather, the focus should be on delving into the core aspects of this multifaceted concept.

This gave rise to conversations on deep sustainability, circular economy, and the active engagement of all stakeholders across diverse sectors.

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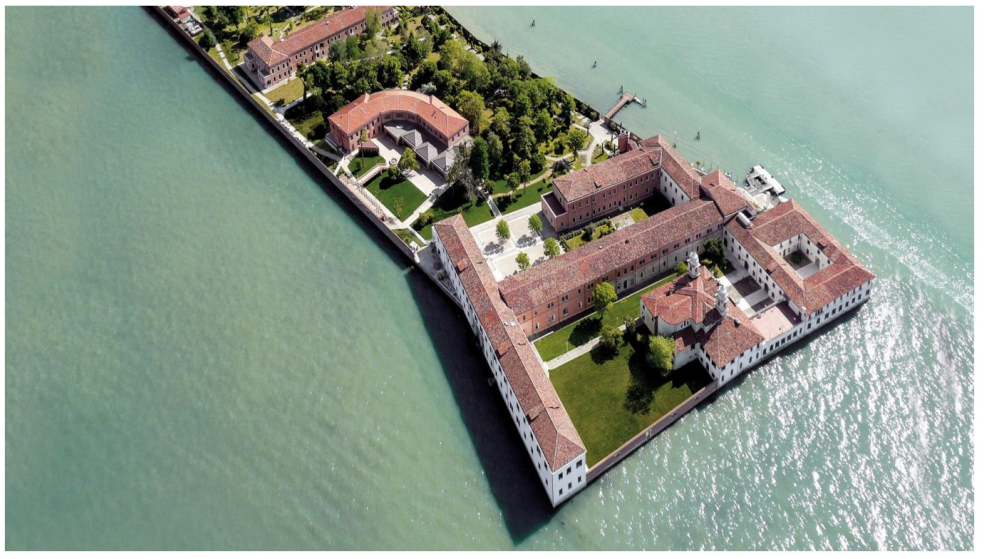

VID 2023, San Servolo island (Venice)

In a truly enlightening keynote address, architect Mario Cucinella (special guest of this edition) proposed an alternative definition of sustainability: “creative empathy.” He highlighted that nature has already provided us with a wealth of solutions, and as innovators, our role is to observe, understand, and replicate the mechanisms found in natural systems.

This entails translating these principles into structures, both large and small, that harmonize with the natural and social environment.

Tecla by Mario Cucinella Architects and 3D-printing specialists WASP (more 3d-printed houses here)

Further valuable insights were shared by Professor Calderini, a distinguished expert in Social Innovation at the School of Management of the Politecnico. His thought-provoking remarks questioned the role of technology and the tendency for innovation to become self-referential, prioritizing performance without considering the broader impacts on the environment and society.

Once again, the importance of expressing empathy and understanding towards aspects that are often overlooked in the innovation process was emphasized.

To summarize, VID 2023 delivered three key messages:

1. Genuine innovation must consider the interests of all stakeholders, going beyond the primary users, to prevent generating imbalances where benefits accrue in one area at the expense of significant disadvantages in others.
2. The term “sustainability” has lost its effectiveness through overuse. While it may serve marketing purposes, it falls short of fulfilling its primary mission, failing to exert the necessary pressure on companies and economic actors to implement substantial and effective structural changes. This underscores the need for holistic, cross-sectoral approaches.
3. Nature provides us with an abundant wellspring of knowledge. By stepping outside the confines of our “laboratory” mindset, we can move beyond personal perspectives and egos. The environment, in particular, holds numerous solutions to the current sustainability challenges we face.

Rehub Glass, winner of ‘EDIT Napoli’ special prize at VID 2023

Addressing these issues necessitates collective effort, involving multiple stakeholders. Above all, it requires keen powers of observation and active listening, embracing the concept of creative empathy.

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In line with this ethos, VID 2023 showcased a diverse range of entities that presented truly captivating innovation projects, further exemplifying the event's commitment to driving positive change.

Among the remarkable companies participating, a distinguished jury consisting of Giulio Cappellini (President), Domitilla Dardi, Antonella Galli, Sheng-Hung Lee, and Patrick Abbattista had the privilege of selecting two exceptional winners who were honored with the prestigious VID Award 2023 and the special prize linked to EDIT Napoli.

The first deserving winner is Rehub, an innovative company that has revolutionized the manipulation of glass, particularly tackling the challenge of so-called "non-recyclable" glass waste. At present, Murano alone produces approximately 1,000 tons of non-recyclable glass waste annually, while the issue extends globally, with Europe generating a staggering 8 million tonnes of such waste each year.

Rehub Glass, winner of 'EDIT Napoli' special prize at VID 2023

Recognizing the magnitude of this problem, Rehub has embarked on a mission to find solutions. With their pioneering technologies, currently pending patent approval, they are committed to establishing a complementary recycling chain that can efficiently process the glass waste that falls outside the requirements of existing recycling methods.

Impressively, Rehub's innovation has caught the attention of Domitilla Dardi, who has personally selected them to showcase their groundbreaking work at the forthcoming edition of EDIT Napoli—an esteemed partner of VID 2023 — where she serves as a co-founder.

Diasen, award winner VID 2023

Equally deserving of recognition is Diasen, the recipient of the VID Award 2023. This remarkable company operates in the realm of green chemistry for the construction industry.

With its establishment dating back to 2000, Diasen specializes in producing bio-mortars and natural cork-based paints specifically tailored to enhance residential comfort by addressing complex needs such as thermal insulation, soundproofing, and moisture regulation.

Diasen, award winner at VID 2023

Notably, since 2017, Diasen has proudly held B Corp status, demonstrating its unwavering commitment to the principles of the circular economy and sustainability, encompassing both environmental and social dimensions.

These exceptional companies exemplify the spirit of innovation and conscious design that VID promotes, and their achievements serve as inspiration for the industry as a whole.

Our congratulations, however, extend to all the participants in the award who showcased projects of remarkable innovation: Ecopro, Egoundesign, Monoferments, No Smoking The Future, One to One, Rosso24, and T°Red Bikes.

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