Technology Has Leveled the Playing Field - KIDP Declares the Era of 'K-Design' at IFA 2026 through Design Korea Pavilion

As AI becomes ubiquitous in consumer hardware, KIDP President Yoon Joo Kang plans to take the flagship "Design Korea" exhibition overseas starting next year.



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BERLIN, GERMANY, September 13, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- At IFA 2026 in Berlin, the Korea Institute of Design Promotion (KIDP) issued a strategic declaration: as artificial intelligence (AI) flattens the technical divide across consumer electronics, industrial and user-experience design has re-emerged as the definitive axis of global market competition.

Speaking at the Messe Berlin exhibition grounds, KIDP President Yoon Joo Kang emphasized that while big tech drove the past decade with raw performance specifications, the universal adoption of AI is turning technology into standard baseline infrastructure.

"Consumers don't need to know AI coding; what matters is how AI enhances human happiness," said President Kang. "AI does not kill design—it accelerates the era of design. Without design acting as the bridge between humanity and technology, innovation remains confined to abstract capability without

real-world impact."

Korean Designers Behind Global Tech Giants

The shift toward a design-centric market is already reflected in commercial demand. Through the Design Trade Mission program—spearheaded by the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy (MOTIE) and KIDP—South Korean industrial design consultancies have secured premium contracts with major international conglomerates, including Chinese consumer electronics leaders Xiaomi and Haier.

Four specialized design consultancies—BDCI, Second White, intenxiv, and ABOVE—represented this service-export initiative at IFA 2026, pitching directly to European enterprises and startups during the B2B networking showcase “Korean Design Meets Berlin: Built for Real Life.”

Design Korea to Expand Internationally Next Year

To solidify global recognition of Korean design intellectual property, President Kang announced that KIDP will bring its premier annual domestic exhibition, Design Korea, to the global stage starting next year.



Front desk of the Design Korea Pavilion



An attendee asks questions to the EFLOW's representative in the Pavilion

The initiative will tour key international markets utilizing an integrated model that unites products, manufacturing enterprises, and design agencies through trade shows, independent showcases, and roadshows. Following IFA 2026, the delegation will transition its outreach to Maison & Objet in Paris and the Canton Fair in Guangzhou, backed by post-exhibition legal, export, and contract-negotiation support.

President Kang also called for a unified national branding strategy across government agencies:

"In an era of technological parity where external presentation defines national identity, presenting fragmented pavilion facades dilutes our collective impact. Establishing an integrated control tower to project a singular K-design image is an urgent priority."



Commemorative group photo of representatives from the Design Korea Pavilion

Human-Centered Utility at the IFA NEXT Pavilion

The philosophy of prioritizing human utility over raw technical specifications was showcased across the 170.5-square-meter Design Korea Pavilion in Hall 25 (IFA NEXT). Developed via the Design-Driven Manufacturing Innovation Program, 13 manufacturing enterprises presented lifestyle-driven applications of advanced technology:

* DH Global: A 150-liter compact kimchi refrigerator engineered for single-person households and boutique hospitality spaces.
* FRT Robotics: The Step-Up Neo unpowered, ergonomic soft exogear, designed to alleviate lumbar strain in industrial worksites without motors or batteries.
* EFLOW: The HyDee portable hydrogen fuel cell generator, delivering zero-emission power on demand.
* U2 System: The Purisoo Plus, an all-in-one portable water purification bottle.

Additional exhibitors included EKLEER (standalone AI smart display), Motoway (Ceracam heavy machinery AI safety camera), DARAM (KAISAR healthcare device), Hexa Innoheal (Ember Q pain-relief device), EMSONIC (Lumio Bluetooth speaker), Bokuk Electronics (rapid-heating dishwasher-safe humidifier), SM (salon nail dust collector), PTG Company (Bartooler modular beverage dispenser), and Yeomyeong Lighting (smart LED streetlights).

"Our goal is to ensure domestic enterprises earn international recognition not merely for being 'Made in Korea,' but for the premium value of being 'Designed in Korea,'" concluded Kang.

About KIDP

The Korea Institute of Design Promotion (KIDP) is a government-affiliated agency under the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy (MOTIE). Founded to advance national industrial competitiveness, KIDP supports design research, global service exports, design-driven manufacturing innovation, and the incubation of specialized design talent.

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