

IncrediblEurope Summit in Vienna

On June 29, the Viennese boutique consultancy Brainswork convened the first Incredible Summit “IncrediblEurope – The Power of Innovation and Creativity for the Future of Europe” in Vienna. The aim of the event was to use the diversity of approaches, ideas and fields of work of the speakers and participants, encourage shared lateral thinking and create visions for Europe’s sustainable development. Participants from 23 countries attended the first IncredibleEurope summit, which inspired all of them to unanimously join the future of the initiative.

One of the key points on the program for the participants was to try and think of concrete steps Europe needs to undertake to lead global innovation and creativity by 2049. Out of the 905 ideas generated within minutes in the exercise, the following were the key issues outlined by the participants:

- Europe's traditional culture is a major asset and inspiration for every field - from business to politics!
- European houses should be as affordable as cars, trains as fast as planes.
- Europe needs brand new transportation: electric cars and better public transport.
- Politics: stop struggling for today's interests and start solving tomorrow's challenges.
- Green is the new black. And pink the new white. (And the World isn't just green and pink.)
- Europe must push for quality. Not speed.
- Less hierarchic thinking for more innovative doing - the trainee manages the company for a day.
- Europe needs European role models recognizable in and beyond the continent. And Europe needs European networks driving for change.
- New education - which strongly appreciates and embraces difference and diversity, learning from other Europeans and learning from our children.
- Believe in ourselves - and in our shared, European identity. Fear can ruin any idea: optimism is a key element of leadership.

Provocation, Inspiration and Encouragement

“What the state of the world economy today demands from us, is counter-cyclic action and a clear positioning for Europe”, explained initiator Selma Prodanovic of Brainswork. Precisely that was the motivation for the IncredibleEurope initiative, which kicked off at the Incredible Summit on June 29.

The first impulse at the event was provided by 80-year old design legend and professor Luigi Colani, having come specially from China to give critical remarks about Europe but, at the same time, “to encourage young people”, as he repeated on stage. European “doubtmakers” only think of short-term successes – and this is deadly. “They kill guys like me in Germany”, said Colani in his provoking manner: “We are too dangerous, because we kick the industry’s ass.” Yet Luigi Colani wouldn’t mind coming back to Europe: “Which is why you all have to support this courageous young lady”, referring to Selma Prodanovic, “and this initiative. And which is what I will do. You have a powerful friend in me.”

The day's speakers inspired with a variety of exciting, innovative ideas from all parts of Europe. The Slovene violin virtuoso, Miha Pogacnik, presented an unusual, musical rendering of European dialogue, cutting a dash in the hall. The Austrian architect and astronautics specialist Barbara Imhof fascinated with a Moon-Mars-Rover. Hungarian architect Áron Losonczy, who serves as an Ambassador for the European Year of Creativity and Innovation, spoke about his light transmitting concrete. Mariana Ferrari from Spain presented an interactive exercise to collect ideas for Europe 2049. The participants followed the invitation by Erwin Werdenigg (Edelwiser) to employ collaborative design and design three unique "Made at IncredibleEurope" pairs of skis. Other outstanding presentations and a series of high-level panel discussions provided inspiration, motivating the summit participants to believe in their ideas and implement them.

"Make A Difference" Award

The award ceremony for Brainswork's "Make A Difference" awards was the culmination of the successful meeting, celebrating the work of those individuals who use their unique talents, creativity or ideas to make a positive difference for others in this world. The laureates for 2009 were Ilse Dippmann, who initiated the Austrian Women's Run which has since become the largest women's running event in Central Europe; Suhas Gopinath from India, who became the world's youngest CEO at age 14 and now supports other young people as an internationally successful IT entrepreneur; the 24-year old Bosnian Muhamed Mesic, who uses his skills in 56 foreign languages to promote human rights and reconciliation throughout the world; as well as the legendary professor Luigi Colani. They all have overcome a variety of obstacles without losing faith in their vision. Their special, individual way has – alongside their tenacity and endurance – motivated other human beings.

The awards were initiated by the passionate networker and Brainswork-CEO Selma Prodanovic and the US star designer Mirko Ilic. "I am convinced that everyone can make a positive difference", says Prodanovic, "but also, that there are certain individuals that can use their extraordinary ability not just for deeper change in their communities and in society, but also motivate and encourage people to make a difference and improve something". Mirko Ilic added an appeal for supporting others, just as designer Milton Glaser ("I Love New York") had supported him.

About Brainswork

Founded by marketing and networking expert Selma Prodanovic in Vienna in 2005, Brainswork is one of the leading boutique consultancies in the world, which employs the capacity to transfer knowledge from wide and diverse fields of experience, connect them and create entirely new and innovative results with the goal to foster sustainable business development, known as brainsworking. Brainswork has served clients spread from Brazil to Ukraine and ranging from local authorities and youth magazines to major national banks.

For photos and downloads: <http://www.incredibleurope.com/downloads.html>

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