



Press release

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New exhibition on the Democratic Design principles behind product development at IKEA

Can something be sustainable if the many people can't afford it, and can a beautiful product without function still be great design? Not according to the principles of Democratic Design, the philosophy behind product development at IKEA – the topic of a new exhibition opening at IKEA Museum in Älmhult, Sweden on 29 April.

“Democratic Design is the foundation of all IKEA products. It is the IKEA way of designing products that offer good function, form and quality, while also securing sustainability and low prices. We want visitors to understand that the product development process is influenced by a several of demands to create a true ‘IKEA product’,” says Anna Sandberg Falk, curator at IKEA Museum.

The new exhibition takes visitors on an interactive journey through the different dimensions of what IKEA calls Democratic Design. They have the opportunity to elaborate and explore various design challenges in life at home, and to find out how product development on the factory floor can make a difference.

The youngest visitors can let their imaginations flow with the treasure hunt SAGOSKATT, and anyone who is curious can see behind the scenes of IKEA product development.

The design process for IKEA products always begins with a broad, in-depth understanding of how people around the world live – and how activities around the home create needs for home furnishing products.

IKEA meets these needs with products that are priced so low that as many people as possible can afford them. Creating low prices relies on the clever use of materials and resources, more efficient production methods, and using cost consciousness to reduce costs throughout the entire value chain.

The intention has been to approach quite a deep and complex subject – design and the product development process at IKEA – in a straightforward, easily accessible way, and to create a destination where people of all ages can come together to experience, participate, learn and have fun.

“We hope that the exhibition will provide a deeper understanding of the design process at IKEA, and also spark conversations and provoke thoughts around design in

IKEA Museum opened in 2016 and features the exhibition The Story of IKEA – Past, Present & Future. IKEA Museum is located in the original building of the first IKEA store, which opened in 1958 in Älmhult, Sweden. IKEA Museum features a main exhibition divided into four sections: Our Roots, Democratic Design, IKEA Through the Ages and The Many Sides of Ingvar Kamprad. The museum also includes several temporary exhibitions, as well as a restaurant and a shop.



Museum

general. What is great design today? Could design be great if only a few people had access to it? Maybe, but it's not very inclusive, and a sustainable world will only be a reality when the many people can afford it," says Mats Nilsson, curator of the exhibition.

The Democratic Design exhibition opens on 29 April and will be part of the main permanent exhibition at IKEA Museum in Älmhult, Sweden.

For interviews and further questions, please contact:

Range & Supply Press Office

Mobile: +46 (0)732 32 13 00

Email: pressoffice.rangesupply@inter.ikea.com

Web: IKEAmuseum.com

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