

## Women in Design – Cumulus Working Group // workshop in Rovaniemi June 2019

Chair: Rachel Troye

This new Cumulus working group: “Women in Design” will be a platform for exchange, inspiration and mentorship. To discuss challenges, share experiences and start building a global network of women in design to support and promote each other.

This is an opportune time to create an arena for women in design across the world. We believe there is a potential for supporting and empowering women in design to have the courage to take on visible, important positions within their society to help design fulfil its potential and gain the full impact and make a real difference.

The majority of design students tend to be female, however the design business is still to a large degree dominated by men. We believe there is an untapped potential in the many female design students that are educated that needs to be nurtured. Women have different approaches, mind-sets and different ways of working in their contribution to creating and designing preferable ways of living: futures that will lead to collective well-being and sustainable growth.

Accessing and sharing knowledge on the challenges many women face can contribute to building assertiveness across cultures. Strategies and methods for coping, dealing with challenges and for developing confidence and empowerment can be shared and further developed together.

In the first workshop at the Cumulus conference in November 2018, in Wuxi, the participants were asked to co-created what this CWG could be in the future. Based on this input and many conversations with women in design, and more, the second workshop aims to do three things (from the personal sharing level, to interventions and actions to a systemic solution).

- **Share inspiring stories.** Some potential role models will share their personal stories. Other stories will be shared in smaller groups with discussions during the workshop. Cumulus is very well positioned to make this valuable across cultures, history and continents.
- **Mentors** – How can we make this actionable? What do the different member institutions do today? How do they mentor women on their career paths? What should they do? Could each member institution inspire some women to make themselves available to the Cumulus community on the Cumulus web-site (Institution web site)?
- **Build a shared resource and network.** Create a repository or SOME, linkedIn or other, where “everybody”/all members of Cumulus Women in Design can contribute, access and share information, tips, resources like articles, research papers, tools etc. What kind of a platform/ format would be suitable? Suggestions will be discussed in the WS and brought forward and implemented for Women in Design.

For Cumulus to fulfil its mission; to share best practice and strengthen the position of design across the world, this working group is an important contribution in order to engage and transform our diverse design society, as well as for design education to fulfil its mandate. This answers to SDG 5 and more, and contributes to a more inclusive and democratic society as well as potentially altering the possible career paths for women.