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Contact:

Kevin Reader

kevin@designchicago.org



DESIGN MUSEUM OF CHICAGO NAMES DAVID SALKIN AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Design leader, educator, curator and community-builder to guide the museum's next chapter

CHICAGO, Ill., June 8, 2026 — The Design Museum of Chicago (DMOC) today announced the appointment of **David Salkin** as its next Executive Director, ushering in a new era for the museum as it continues its mission to make design accessible, relevant, and impactful for all Chicagoans and visitors.

Salkin, a respected and influential design leader in Chicago, brings more than a decade of expertise as a designer, curator, educator, and entrepreneur in building creative communities through exhibitions, design practice, and public engagement. He succeeds outgoing Executive Director Tanner Woodford, and will lead the museum's efforts in deepening its role as a civic platform where design sparks conversation, inspires action, and connects people across disciplines and neighborhoods.

For the past decade, Salkin has led his Chicago-based West Town studio, *David Salkin Creative*, where his surface-design practice has included textiles, exhibition and installation design, graphic communications, and cultural programming. Through his studio's exhibition programming, Salkin has curated shows featuring artists including Aron Gent, Kitty Rauth, Assaf Evron and Dick Higgins, student work from Cranbrook and SAIC, as well as exhibitions on architect Myron Goldsmith and the 1970s feminist independent press, demonstrating his commitment to making design history and contemporary practice accessible to broad audiences.

"David brings an extraordinary combination of design expertise, cultural curiosity, and community-minded leadership," said Wendy Manning, Board Chair of the Design Museum of Chicago. "We are thrilled to welcome him as Executive Director as his deep understanding of design, coupled with his passion for connecting people through creative experiences, makes him uniquely positioned to lead the museum into our next chapter. David will help drive the museum's role as a catalyst for dialogue, learning, and civic engagement while continuing to elevate Chicago's remarkable design community."

Founded in 2012, the Design Museum of Chicago has become a locally and nationally recognized institution dedicated to demonstrating how design shapes everyday life. Through exhibitions, public programs, educational initiatives, and community partnerships, the museum invites people of all backgrounds to engage with design as a tool for understanding and improving the world around them. Salkin's vision aligns closely with that mission.

"I'm thrilled to showcase our city's extraordinary design legacy alongside the incredible diversity of talent shaping Chicago today," said Salkin. "Chicago is a city of invention, boldness, and resourcefulness, and I'm honored to help tell those stories through the Design Museum. Design touches every part of our lives in the systems and built world around us, and the museum has a unique opportunity to help people see the creativity, intention, and possibility embedded in the world around them."

Salkin sees the museum as a connector across Chicago's many creative disciplines and communities.

"We have an opportunity to serve as a gathering place for Chicago's diverse design ecosystem," he said. "There are so many different kinds of people who identify as designers—architects, graphic designers, product designers, artists, makers, strategists, and problem-solvers. When we bring those communities together around shared goals, we can create meaningful change and help build a stronger, more vibrant city."

A graduate of Tulane University with a Master's Degree in Architecture, Salkin's perspective was shaped during post-Hurricane Katrina rebuilding efforts, where he witnessed firsthand the power of design to strengthen communities and improve lives. That belief continues to inform his approach to leadership, collaboration, and public engagement.

As Executive Director, Salkin will focus on expanding the museum's reach, strengthening partnerships across Chicago's cultural and educational sectors, and creating new opportunities for audiences to engage with design as a force for creativity, equity, innovation, and civic participation.

The Design Museum of Chicago remains free and open to the public, welcoming visitors from across the city and beyond to explore exhibitions and programs that demonstrate how design shapes our communities, experiences, and future. To learn more about the Design Museum of Chicago and its exhibitions and public installations, visit <https://www.designchicago.org>

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About the Design Museum of Chicago:

The Design Museum was founded in 2012 as an entirely volunteer-run organization that planned and executed pop-up exhibitions. In 2014, after two years of successful programming, more than 500 backers supported a Kickstarter campaign to provide funding for the museum to operate year-round. In addition to a permanent exhibition space with rotating exhibitions free to the public year-round, they continue their pop-up approach today with about 20 free and inexpensive outreach programs annually. The DMOC is located at 72 E Randolph Street in the heart of the cultural epicenter of Chicago.

74,424ft² of public art.

10,328 student artworks exhibited.

3,734 free days.

1,519 designers published.

547 community partners.

303 public events.

108 talented interns.

62 skill-building workshops.

56 design exhibitions.

www.designchicago.org

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