

Wednesday, June 10, 2009

DIGMA launches to promote Bay State design industry

By [Brendan Lynch](#)

The John Adams Innovation Institute has given \$150,000 to create a design industry organization called the Design Industry Group of Massachusetts (DIGMA).

DIGMA is intended to represent fields including architecture, advertising, graphic design, industrial design, interior design, landscape architecture and other design specializations. According to [DIGMA](#), the design industry employs 44,500 people in Massachusetts at 3,100 design firms. In-house designers at non-design companies and freelancers also make up a significant portion of the industry. The group is sponsored by the Massachusetts College of Art and Design and funded by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, the Boston Foundation and the Boston Redevelopment Authority, as well as the John Adams Innovation Institute.

The initiative was announced this afternoon at Newton-based design consultancy Continuum, which has developed products including the Swiffer and the Reebok Pump. It comes amid a flurry of news by state economic development officials, including a [new business plan competition](#) to fund innovation companies, a new [high-performance computing center](#) to be located in Holyoke and an IT collaboration event that drew the governor and several other state officials this morning.

Beate Becker, a Cambridge-based creative-industry economic development official, will be the founding director of DIGMA. The organization's leadership committee includes Konarka Technologies Inc. CEO Howard Berke, One Laptop Per Child founder Nicholas Negroponte, MIT Media Lab Smart Cities/Smart Cars program head William Mitchell, and Warner-Babcock Institute for Green Chemistry founder John Warner. Fashion designer Joseph Abboud, architect William Rawn, landscape architect Martha Schwartz and creative director Brian Collins are also involved in the project.

In September, DIGMA will host the MA Design Festival, a monthlong design showcase including educational and career opportunities. The festival will include events such as Boston Design Center's Design Boston 2009, Boston Fashion Week and National Design Week that are taking place during that month.

<http://www.masshightech.com/stories/2009/06/08/daily38-DIGMA-launches-to-promote-Bay-State-design-industry.html>

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