

Grid appointed as brand agency

 By Leigh Andrews

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Stop the press, Design Indaba has appointed a new brand agency! Helène Lindsay, general manager of Grid Cape Town, lets us in on how they're bringing Design Indaba to life ahead of the 2017 Festival in March, as "fellow custodians of an incredible movement that promotes design-thinking as a means to solve real-world challenges".

Elaborating further on why Grid was appointed as brand agency for Design Indaba 2017, Lindsay says it wasn't so much a selection as an inevitable coming together of like-minded agencies. "Grid has had a long-standing relationship with [Design Indaba founder] Ravi Naidoo, and we've been waiting for the right time for this natural partnership to come to fruition." So, after 10 years of creating and refreshing global and local iconic brands, they finally get the chance to add their own special touch of Grid magic to this proudly homegrown, internationally respected design initiative.



Grid Jhb team pic.

Lindsay explains how they're doing so below.

■ 1. What does it mean to Grid to work with Design Indaba on this level?

Lindsay: Our philosophy of creating meaning and purpose for brands is strategically, and beautifully, aligned with Design Indaba's philosophy of using creativity in the service of people, not brands. So we are ecstatic about bringing the Design Indaba team's vision of how the brand needs to evolve and make even more of an impact on society to life.

■ 2. Explain the 'brief' in bringing Design Indaba to life across SA media channels ahead of the Festival in March.

Lindsay: The brief was multi-dimensional and expansive, spanning the commercial imperatives and collateral requirements for the Festival itself, as well as the need to communicate what Design Indaba stands for at a higher level.



An example of Grid's Design Indaba work, with strong call-to-action in terms of messaging style

We don't see ourselves as an agency delivering on a campaign brief, but as fellow custodians of an incredible movement that promotes design-thinking as a means to solve real-world challenges. Our approach is consequently based on taking a stand against passive participation, or the notion that delegates and Festival attendees attend for three days of the year, and then go back to doing the same thing as in the past. We want to be the catalysts, the thought-starters that encourage people to go out and do things. Make things. Make things happen.

■ 3. What do you most admire about Design Indaba and its effect on local design-thinking and creativity?

Lindsay: Many Gridsters are alumni of the Design Indaba, so it has had a very personal impact on our lives as an agency. More importantly though, Design Indaba has introduced us to incredible people, often before they became famous. It has delivered incredible experiences that are cerebral, entertaining, thought-provoking and inspiring. And it has made incredible things possible, from supporting [Emerging Creatives](#) to actively driving social change and community upliftment projects.

Arguably, its effect extends way beyond our local borders, into Africa and beyond.

■ 4. That it does. What are you personally looking forward to from the 2017 Design Indaba Festival?

Lindsay: An impossible question to answer! How does one narrow down an all-immersive experience into a few bullet points? We are all looking forward to watching our ideas unfold and ignite action. We can't wait to explore [Selly Raby Kane](#)'s transformation of the Artscape Piazza. Or to lap up the mental nuggets from the speakers. To feel challenged because we didn't think of something. Or feel frustrated because we did, then did nothing about it. We're looking forward to networking with old friends, and meeting new ones. In short, we're pretty excited about everything at the Festival, and how it will inspire meaningful initiatives thereafter.

As official media partners to the Design Indaba Festival, we're just as excited. Click through to our [Design Indaba special section](#) for further updates, and be sure to get your tickets from <http://inda.ba/Fest2017!>

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

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