



PRESS RELEASE

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IKEA to explore off the grid solutions in collaboration with WIRED UK

IKEA believes in providing as many people as possible with the means to create a better everyday life. Today, a lot of people lack access to the common water, energy and communications grid, which in many cases are key to make life at home work. That is why we want to explore independent off the grid solutions that allow people to be less dependent on existing systems. This is a huge challenge in need of many competences working together. IKEA will take this on in collaboration with WIRED UK and their extensive network of creatives.

Around the world, more than one billion people lack access to electricity. Add housing, water and plumbing and the numbers become even bigger. With urbanization, even more people will be dependent on a flawless infrastructure in big cities. But with catastrophes linked to climate change, this infrastructure is being challenged. Alongside this, there is a growing number of people that want to be independent, be self-sufficient. This is why IKEA in collaboration with WIRED UK will explore off the grid solutions.

“Through the use of democratic design, I hope IKEA has helped to nudge people’s behaviour into saving energy by making the LED technology accessible to many more people. Now it’s time to focus on all the people who don’t have access to energy, light or clean water, to offer them the same opportunity. It will be a huge undertaking that will take far more brains than we can gather inside of IKEA, that’s why we want as many creatives as possible to partake in our world tour of workshops that will be held together with WIRED UK for the idea creation of the off the grid solutions”, says Marcus Engman, Head of Design at IKEA Range and Supply.

The collaboration will start off with a number of work sessions around the world, where creatives and local communities will be invited to partake and contribute with ideas around water, energy and communications. A session will be taking place during WIRED LIVE, WIRED UK’s annual flagship innovation festival taking place in London on November 2 and 3, where Marcus Engman will also be speaking.

“WIRED UK champions innovation, in any field. So, inevitably, we have been charting the developments in technologies and products concerned with off-grid living: battery innovations, sustainable energy solutions, material developments and construction projects. We have also been following IKEA’s work in bringing internet-connected products and smart-home systems to the mass market, and have even reported from the company’s development labs around the world. Working with IKEA and to help them explore the possibilities of off-grid living is a natural fit for WIRED UK, and we are proud to be partnering with them on such a worthwhile undertaking”, says Greg Williams, Editor of WIRED UK.

During Democratic Design Days in Älmhult, Sweden, in June 2018, IKEA and WIRED UK will make the choice of the best ideas and turn them into a completely new collection for IKEA.

“We will also look into how to make these solutions accessible in the parts of the world where the needs are greatest.” says Marcus Engman, Head of Design at IKEA Range & Supply.

The collection is planned to launch during 2020.

ABOUT WIRED UK

WIRED is recognised as the multimedia authority on the future, delivering smart, intellectually curious readers the latest thinking and developments in science, technology, culture and business with ground-breaking photography and design. Since launch in 2009, WIRED has won a host of awards including Technology Magazine of the Year, Cover of the Year and overall Magazine of the Year at the Digital Magazine Awards for two consecutive years in 2014 and 2015, PPA Media Brand of the Year for Consumer Magazines in 2013, the BSME Art Director of the Year for Consumer Magazines in 2013 and the BSME Editor of the Year Award for Special Interest Magazines in 2012. The WIRED enhanced digital edition iPad app was in the top five ranked titles in the consumer magazine lifestyle category as selected by iMonitor in 2013. WIRED has a combined print and digital circulation of 51,006 (ABC Jan-Jun 2017) with a readership of 290,000 (projected Jul 2015-Jun 2016); and unique users to the website total 2,514,109 (Google analytics Jul-Sep 2017). WIRED Events is designed to cut through the noise and deliver insights into what's coming next across a range of areas. Events include WIRED Energy, WIRED Health, WIRED Money, WIRED Retail, WIRED Security, WIRED LIVE and WIRED Next Generation. WIRED Consulting uses the collective power and intelligence of WIRED's network to help organisations adapt to the fourth industrial revolution.

IKEA is one brand and many companies. Around the globe, a large number of companies operate under the IKEA trademarks.

IKEA Range & Supply, consisting of IKEA of Sweden in Älmhult and IKEA Supply, have the responsibility to develop, design, produce and supply IKEA stores around the world with home furnishing solutions available to the many people. Each year IKEA Range & Supply introduces 2,000 new products in the IKEA stores. The total range is almost 10,000 products.