

The Year of Science and Technology. The month of new production technologies and materials. ItalDesign Days in Russia



The year 2021 was named the Year of Science and Technology. Each month is dedicated to a different theme. In June, special attention is paid to new production technologies and materials. The thematic month opened with the «ItalDesign Days in Russia,» launched at the Technopolis site of Peter the Great St. Petersburg Polytechnic University.

Italdesign-Giugiaro s.p.a. was founded in Turin in 1968 by Giorgetto Giugiaro, an Italian car designer who was awarded the «Car Designer of the Century» award in 1999 and included in the Automotive Hall of Fame (USA). Today, the bureau is part of the Volkswagen concern. The company has gained a worldwide reputation for its design projects for Audi, BMW, Fiat, Lamborghini, Lotus, Maserati, Renault, Saab, Volkswagen, Volvo, Nissan, and other major players in the automotive industry. Today, the company offers a wide range of engineering services — from industrial design to prototype production and IT solution development.



On June 1, leading experts and managers of the world-famous Italian engineering company, the leader of industrial design in the global automotive industry, first gave public lectures in St. Petersburg and participated in joint round tables with their Russian colleagues, the Polytechnic.

In his video address, the Director-General of Italdesign-Giugiaro S.p.a. Jörg ASTALOSH thanked St. Petersburg Polytechnic University for the willingness to jointly develop competencies in engineering, industrial design, and manufacturing: *We are looking forward to cooperation between our countries — we have a common language, which allows to implement the most daring engineering ideas.*

The participants were greeted by Vladimir Knyaginin, Vice-Governor of St. Petersburg, Andrei Rudskoy, Rector of SPbPU, Alexei BOROVKOV, Vice-Rector for Digital Transformation of SPbPU, Head of the world-class Scientific Center «Advanced Digital Technologies,» NTI Center, SPbPU, and Engineering Center (CompMechLab[®]) SPbPU, Head of Automotive Business Development Italdesign-Giugiaro S.p.a. Marco VOLPENGO and Head of Industrial Business Development Italdesign-Giugiaro S.p.a. Corrado BECCHIO.

"We are overwhelmed by the fact that your company, this intellectual center, where new ideas are born, is close to our spirit," Andrei Rudskoi said to his Italian colleagues. «Your activity is not only about design, which is reflected in the company's name, but also about solving a whole range of problems in various fields of science and technology. A polytechnic university, we see it only too well how exact the company's strategy was.



Vladimir KNIAGININ stressed the potential of such cities as St. Petersburg or, for example, Milan or Turin to implement integrated design solutions. *Since this year, our city has had a design development program, including industrial design. We launched a competition for students, mentored by manufacturers. One of the key awards is to bring the project to a prototype with a high degree of readiness, and in some cases — to a small series*, said the vice-governor and stressed that the exchange of competencies is very valuable. «Designers, as I see it, give not only form but also meaning to the world around them. To learn from the best is right.»

ItalDesign, one of the largest and global design bureaus, which developed a huge number of industrial products, vehicles, and cars, for the first time, opened access to the experience and knowledge accumulated in more than 50 years of work. According to experts, the automotive industry today is the driver of the high-tech industry and stimulates the development of advanced «end-to-end» technologies in all industries. Moreover, the automobile industry is the most obvious reflection of the depth and complexity of mutual penetration of industrial design and high-tech engineering.

St. Petersburg Polytechnic University has considerable experience in this kind of integration: the Engineering Center of SPbPU has been cooperating with the world's leading automakers for many years and participated in the Single Modular Platform project (Kortezh, led by NAMI), which resulted in the development and production of Aurus cars. And at the end of last year together with KAMAZ it presented the first Russian electric smart-crossover KAMA-1, developed on the basis of digital twin technology and recognized by the expert community as a «technological breakthrough» in 2020.

We [SPbPU and ItalDesign — Author's note] signed an agreement in February 2020," Alexei BOROVKOV recalled. «We did not anticipate at that time that our plans would be pushed back almost a year and a half. Nevertheless, we are glad and ready to cooperate on several projects with our partners from Italy and we hope that this cooperation will be fruitful and long-lasting.

The main topics of the presentations were concept development and stylization, digitalization and artificial intelligence, successful approaches to organizing the work of engineering teams with industrial designers, prototyping and virtual reality (traditional and new presentation technologies in design), additive technologies in mechanical engineering, and industrial design, etc.

The next stage of educational events in the framework of «ItalDesign Days in Russia» will be held at Yaroslavl State Technical University.