

NeoCon®

NEOCON EVOLVES WITH NEW PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVES AND OUTREACH FOR 2020 *BUILDING AN INSPIRATIONAL WEEK OF DESIGN IN CHICAGO*

(Chicago, IL, October 2019) Extensive planning is underway for the 52nd edition of [NeoCon](#), the world's leading platform and most important annual event for the commercial interiors industry, running June 8-10, 2020, at theMART in Chicago. In addition to NeoCon's core role as a major launch pad for game-changing new products and design innovations, NeoCon 2020 will introduce new partnerships, programs, and experiences that address broader currents of design and reach expanded audiences. These efforts are built on NeoCon's commitment to inspire and engage the commercial, hospitality, and residential design communities, as well as C-suite executives and other design decision makers, design professionals and creatives from other industries, and the design-savvy public.

"With an influential and globally-based group of design professionals and thought-leaders in attendance each year, the NeoCon audience has grown in strength as the show continues to expand," says Byron Morton, VP of Leasing, NeoCon/theMART. "It is important in the evolution and ongoing vitality of NeoCon—and for its stakeholders and audiences—that we actively explore and create new opportunities that further extend the conversations surrounding and celebrating design. We will continue to move the NeoCon experience forward in inspiring and far-reaching ways."

Two major new partnership entities launch during the week of NeoCon 2020: Confluence Chicago, a multidisciplinary design ideas platform created in tandem with BIFMA (the not-for-profit trade association for business and institutional furniture manufacturers); and Designing a Better Chicago, a partnership with Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) and the Design Museum of Chicago, created to highlight, leverage, and support Chicago's vast design legacy, talent, and resources.

Confluence Chicago is BIFMA and NeoCon's collaborative effort to elevate and amplify the conversation about design and design thinking in its many forms. Programming for 2020 will focus on "the intersection of design and our world" and include a large-scale, high profile, design forum at the Harris Theater, several salon-type design experiences throughout Chicago, and a Confluence seminar track hosted at theMART. Programming details and registration will be available in January.

Tom Reardon, Executive Director for BIFMA, remarks, "We are pleased to partner with NeoCon and theMART in the launch of Confluence Chicago. Our members are leading manufacturers who clearly understand the importance of good design and the extent to which design is a

differentiating value. Confluence Chicago will help place a wider spotlight on design both within the commercial interiors world and beyond it.”

NeoCon’s new city partnership Designing a Better Chicago is aimed at elevating the visibility of Chicago’s design legacy, assets, talent and community, and at supporting civic good through design. For its 2020 launch, Designing a Better Chicago will include a large-scale commissioned design installation on Chicago’s Riverwalk, a grant award program recognizing individuals or organizations using design for civic good, and related special programming. The selected Riverwalk design will be announced in November along with details about the grant award program.

“We hope that everyone who travels to Chicago for NeoCon will make time to experience iconic Chicago design and the exceptional design talent of our beautiful city,” says Mark Kelly, Commissioner of DCASE. “At the same time, we are thrilled that this collaboration will introduce new Chicago audiences to the power of design and ensure that great design impacts all of our neighborhoods.”

NeoCon is also gearing up for another successful exhibition throughout the floors of theMART. Morton adds, “As the premier global platform for connecting, learning, and conducting business in the commercial interiors industry, NeoCon is stronger than ever. Our robust roster of showroom tenants and 7th floor exhibitors are already on course to showcase another fresh, exciting, and innovation-filled NeoCon in 2020.”

The NeoCon Plaza, the popular outdoor amenity space spanning theMART’s South Drive, will return in 2020 with Gensler Chicago back on board as the design partner. NeoCon 2020 will also debut a danishdesign MAKERS exhibition featuring the work of 20 designers with strong ties to the Danish design culture. Details about these and other NeoCon programs, events and activations will be updated in the coming months on NeoCon.com. Online registration for NeoCon 2020 will open in January at www.neocon.com

For showroom, exhibitor and general NeoCon news, images and real-time information, follow NeoCon Shows on the following: [Facebook \(@NeoConShows\)](#), [Twitter \(@NeoCon Shows\)](#), and [Instagram \(@NeoCon Shows\)](#).

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About NeoCon: NeoCon is the world’s leading platform and most important event for the commercial interiors industry, held each year at The Mart in Chicago. Since launching in 1969, NeoCon has served as the annual gathering place for the commercial design world’s manufacturers, dealers, architects, designers, end-users, design organizations and media. The three-day event showcases game-changing

products and services from both leading companies and emerging talent—providing unparalleled access to the latest and most innovative solutions. A robust educational program of keynote presentations and CEU sessions offers world-class expertise and insight about today's most relevant topics as well as the future of commercial design. www.neocon.com

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About theMART: theMART (formerly The Merchandise Mart), located in the center of the sought-after River North submarket, is interwoven into the fabric of Chicago as an innovator in business, technology, culture, art, media and more. As the largest privately held commercial building in the United States, it is one of the world's leading commercial buildings, wholesale design centers and the preeminent international business location in Chicago. Encompassing 4.2 million gross square feet, theMART spans two city blocks, rises 25 stories, and is visited by an average of 30,000 people each business day and nearly 10 million people annually. Offering continuous innovation and creativity from leading manufacturers and design forward showrooms, theMART serves as the home to Chicago's most creative and technologically innovative companies.