The Creative Industries in the Age of AI. East Creative 2026 on October 15–16

On October 15 and 16, Lublin will become the international capital of design, architecture, and the creative industry for the third time. The Center for the Meeting of Cultures will host East Creative 2026 - one of the most important events in the creative sector in this part of Europe, organized as part of the Lublin 2029 European Capital of Culture program.

This year's theme, "HUMAN ONLY," draws attention to the role of humans in a reality increasingly shaped by new technologies.

Artificial intelligence is changing the way we design, communicate, and work. East Creative 2026, however, proposes looking at this change from a different angle. Instead of asking yet again what AI is capable of, the organizers want to discuss what remains within the human domain and how the role of those working in the creative sector is changing. The theme for this year's edition was developed in a unique setting - at the DesignNature campus owned by Gosia and Tomek Rygalik. The process of creating the theme involved, among others, speakers from previous editions from Slovakia, Romania, and Poland, as well as representatives of the creative sector and the most important nationwide institutions related to design. It was there, in close contact with nature and among a group of experts, that the theme for the third edition of East Creative was born. Rather than focusing solely on the possibilities of technology, it centers on what remains the unique domain of the designer: responsibility, sensitivity, intuition, craftsmanship, and authentic human needs.

"HUMAN ONLY" is not a manifesto against technology. It is a starting point for a conversation about responsibility, collaboration, sensitivity, intuition, and the ability to assign meaning—competencies that may become even more important as technology advances.

Design, Architecture, Culture, and Business

The event is international in scope, serving as a bridge connecting creators and businesses from Central and Eastern Europe. Experts from Poland, the Czech Republic, eastern Germany, and Lithuania, among others, will take the stage on two stages to present diverse perspectives on architecture, branding, technology, and circular design. The event program will feature lectures, panel discussions, case studies, and workshops aimed at representatives of both the creative industries and the business sector.

Among the guests announced so far are:

- Paweł Garus and Jerzy Woźniak from the mode:lina™ studio,
- Dr. Mateusz Machalski, Professor at the Academy of Fine Arts (ASP)—designer, typographer, and Vice Rector for Artistic Affairs at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw,
- Aleksandra Koperda - journalist, curator, and advocate for Polish design,
- Michał Piernikowski, director of the Łódź Design Festival and the Łódź Art Center Foundation,

- Paulina Grabowska - designer of solutions in the field of sustainable and regenerative development.

However, this is only part of this year's lineup. Information about additional speakers, workshops, and program details will be published gradually on the East Creative website.

The conference program will be complemented by free workshops for representatives of the creative and business sectors. Due to limited seating, participation in these workshops will require separate, advance registration.

East Creative will also be accessible to a wider audience. The organizers will provide simultaneous interpretation of presentations from Polish to English and from English to Polish, and part of the program will also be interpreted into Polish Sign Language (PJM).

More Than Just a Conference

This year's East Creative will also extend beyond the conference rooms. At the Center for the Meeting of Cultures, visitors will be able to view **an exhibition of works by Dawid Ryski, the creator of the visual identity for this year's edition of East Creative.** His distinctive posters and illustrations will add another dimension to the event, linking the conference program with a showcase of contemporary graphic art.

A Space for the Younger Generation

East Creative 2026 will also feature **Young Stage,** a competition open to students and graduates of creative fields under the age of 35. Finalists will present their projects on the conference stage, receive support in preparing their presentations, and have the opportunity to win cash prizes.

Young Stage aims to create a space where young creators can test their ideas against a professional audience, showcase their work, and make their first industry connections.

The conference will take place on **October 15–16, 2026, at the Center for the Meeting of Cultures in Lublin.** Participation in East Creative is **free and requires advance registration.** Separate registration will be required for select workshops due to limited space.

East Creative is organized by the **LuCreate Foundation.**

The conference is co-organized by the Center for the Encounter of Cultures in Lublin.

The project is carried out with funding from the Minister of Culture and National Heritage, as part of the "Development of Creative Sectors" program of the Institute of Creative Industries, and with the support of the City of Lublin.

This year, East Creative poses a question that goes beyond technology itself. We'll have the opportunity to seek answers together on October 15 and 16 in Lublin.

Link to register: East Creative - Wschodnia Konferencja Kreatywna - Evenea.pl

East Creative 2026
October 15–16, 2026
Center for the Meeting of Cultures in Lublin
Free admission | advance registration required