



## Global call for bold ideas to re-imagine deathcare for the future in first-ever “Design for Death” competition

***Two Singapore philanthropic houses join forces with U.S National Funeral Directors’ Association (NFDA) to transform deathcare<sup>1</sup> through design and innovation***

***Winning designs of the international competition to feature at the 2013 NFDA International Convention & Expo in Austin, Texas***

Singapore, 6 Feb 2013.

1. Designers worldwide now have a chance to change the way life’s final exit is made.
2. The [Lien Foundation](#) and [ACM Foundation](#) today announced their collaboration with [NFDA](#), the globe’s leading funeral service association, to launch ***Design for Death***, the world’s inaugural international competition **to re-design deathcare for the future**. Administered by [Designboom](#), the first and largest independent online publication dedicated to architecture and design with over 4 million readers, ***Design for Death*** invites designers, artists, architects and anyone with a creative mind and spirit to present their ideas and innovations to inspire and transform deathcare practices.
3. The competition’s jury members bring their field of expertise to the competition and amongst them are Pritzker Prize architect, Richard Meier and popular digital artist Ray Caesar. The competition will award a total of EUR\$80,000 in prizes and seeks submissions for (1) how various aspects of deathcare can be environmentally friendly and (2) interpretations of how design can better encapsulate the deceased and remember them. Winners will go to Austin, Texas and have their work showcased at the annual *2013 NFDA International Convention & Expo* from 20-23 October. The pinnacle event for the deathcare industry draws thousands of participants from all over the world each year. Full competition details are at [www.designfordeath.org](http://www.designfordeath.org)

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<sup>1</sup> Deathcare is the provision of services and products related to death, funerals, cremations, burials and memorials.

### ***Redefining deathcare***

4. ***Design for Death*** was conceived to catalyse the international creative and design community to re-think and re-imagine the trappings of a funeral or memorial service, how internments can be conducted or the deceased remembered. “We believe designers have the power to influence culture, consumption and the construction of meaningful experiences at life’s final frontier,” said Lien Foundation’s CEO Mr. Lee Poh Wah. He recalled how his organisation’s [“Happy Coffins”](#) design competition in 2010 received 733 entries from 33 countries. The idea of personalised coffins was positively received and even attracted offers of commercialisation from U.S.A.
5. “Through Design for Death, we hope to shift paradigms and spur new practical initiatives in deathcare - from green funerals and sustainable practices to upbeat send-offs and digital legacies,” remarked Mr. Lee, who spearheads Lien Foundation’s mission to improve care for the dying. “Good design stimulates, engages and creates an ideal backdrop for contemplation & conversations. We are leveraging design for social transformation of death attitudes.”

### ***Changing the business of death***

6. Many new possibilities are springing up from six feet under - from reef memorials in the sea to diamonds made from ashes. “It is not far-fetched to say that the business of death can contribute to life,” said Mr. Ang Ziqian, Founder of ACM Foundation, the newly set-up philanthropic organisation of Ang Chin Moh Casket. “Innovations in deathcare can impact the future of our environment and influence daily lives. For example, thermal energy from crematoriums is now being channelled to power daily energy needs in the U.K. The age-old deathcare industry is re-inventing itself and sporting a new face for the future.”

### ***Global body for deathcare lends its weight***

7. Throwing their strong support behind this initiative is NFDA, the world's leading funeral service association serving 19,700 funeral directors in the U.S and globally. NFDA’s CEO Ms. Christine Pepper said, “The needs of funeral consumers are evolving faster than ever before. Families are making decisions based on different values and expectations than previous generations. Families want funerals and memorial services to be meaningful and personal experiences that help them say goodbye to loved ones.

Funeral directors are eager to discover innovations and ideas that will help them better meet the needs of the families they serve.”

### ***Undertaking ‘Die-logues’***

8. Believing that design can erode the taboo of death, Lien Foundation and ACM Foundation have each committed equally to provide a total of S\$1.2m for *Design for Death* and two other initiatives. “We want to draw funeral directors into ‘die-logues’ as they can give practical advice and compassionate counselling to families during times of grief,” said Lien Foundation’s Mr. Lee “With thoughtful guidance from these professionals, there can be a chance for a joyous requiem at the end of life.” Mr. Ang affirmed, “The passing on of a loved one offers opportunities for care, comfort and even celebration. A fitting finale can be transformed into expressions of appreciation and love, giving healing memories and lasting legacies.”

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#### **About the Lien Foundation**

**[www.lienfoundation.org](http://www.lienfoundation.org)**

The Lien Foundation is a Singapore philanthropic house noted for its model of radical philanthropy. It breaks new ground by investing in innovative solutions, convening strategic partnerships and catalysing action on social and environmental challenges. The Foundation seeks to foster exemplary early childhood education, excellence in eldercare and effective environmental sustainability in water and sanitation.

In its mission to advance eldercare, the Foundation advocates better care of the dying. One of its flagship programmes, the [Life Before Death](#) initiative, was first conceived in 2006 to create greater public awareness about end-of-life issues in Singapore. It sought to de-stigmatise death and dying by spurring various ‘die-logues’ with the use of social media, art, films and photography and advocacy through research. The initiative has since gone beyond Singapore. In 2010, the Foundation commissioned the first-ever global Quality of Death index ranking 40 countries on their provision of end-of-life care.

#### **About ACM Foundation**

**[www.acmfoundation.sg](http://www.acmfoundation.sg)**

The ACM Foundation is an independent, non-profit organisation formed by Ang Chin Moh Casket in commemoration of its 100-year heritage. The Foundation aims to enhance the perception of death and bereavement among the public, uplift the deathcare profession and advance philanthropy in this area. The ACM Foundation will also champion and preserve the heritage of funeral and bereavement services in Singapore.

#### **About NFDA**

**[www.nfda.org](http://www.nfda.org)**

The **National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA)** is the world's leading and largest funeral service association, serving 19,700 individual members who represent more than 10,000 funeral homes in the United States and 39 countries around the world. NFDA is the trusted leader, beacon for ethics and the strongest advocate for the profession. A worldwide source of expertise and professional resources for all facets of funeral service, NFDA is dedicated to supporting members in their mission to provide families with meaningful end-of-life services at the highest levels of excellence and integrity.

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