

SPACE

INTERNATIONAL HOTEL DESIGN

May/June 2024



PEOPLE

|

PLACES

|

PROJECTS

|

PRODUCTS

CHRISSIE GRANGER, VICE PRESIDENT DEVELOPMENT, NEWH UK CHAPTER



Inspired by the “fresh, fun, and friendly” atmosphere she experienced at her first NEWH event, Chrissie Granger was quick to put herself forward to join the tireless team dedicated to supporting the design community

How and when did you first become aware of NEWH?

I was first introduced to NEWH by Rebekah Ellis, who was President of the UK chapter at the time. Like all our board members, she was incredibly modest about both the work NEWH did and her own involvement, and it wasn't until I'd gone to a couple of events that I fully appreciated the scope of events and opportunities on offer.

What was the initial 'draw' to NEWH?

The first event I attended was TopID at the Roca showroom. Everyone was incredibly welcoming and there was a great atmosphere in celebrating the winning interior design firms. Getting to see presentations by the designers I found fascinating. As a supplier it's rare that you get the opportunity to see the designers do a pitch, it's often the other way around!

I hadn't realised at this stage how multi-faceted the NEWH mission was. Most people's introduction is through the events and networking, then you realise all the money raised goes towards scholarships for students, and that the whole event was organised by volunteers.

The scholarships mean so much to the winning students, not just the financial reward, but the exposure they receive to industry contacts and the mentoring process is incredible.

What was your first role as a volunteer within the UK Chapter?

I started as Secretary and assisting on the Marketing Team. For me that was a great introduction to NEWH as I knew very little at the time about the setup in America where NEWH originated.

My skill set is not suited to marketing though, and we are so lucky to have Rita Bancroft and the team handling that side of things now. As we've grown as a Chapter it's been brilliant to be able to move the team into roles that suit them.

As VP of Development what is the core message you wish to convey?

Please consider joining, as one extra member makes such a difference to the scholarship funds we can award. I was lucky enough to go to Nashville with Kathryn Quinn (President, UK Chapter), as UK Chapter representatives at the NEWH Leadership Conference in February, with

two of our winning students and their enthusiasm and professionalism was so inspiring! We've recently had two young people join our team at Indigo Art; Abbie and Aaron, and they are doing an amazing job. Whilst there is a lot we can teach them, we are also learning from them every day and for us it was essential that we create an environment where they are comfortable to speak up, and say "Ok you may have been working like this for many years but how about you try this..." We need more disrupters and that comes from nurturing young talent which is made possible through NEWH scholarships..

What are you currently focused on within NEWH?

As we're growing, more suppliers are keen to get involved on the events side, either hosting or sponsoring. Currently we are trying to look further ahead and get a plan in for the next 12 months, so we can offer all suppliers a fair chance to get involved.

This year I am fortunate to be one of the judges for the Student Scholarship. This is the pinnacle of everything we work for, to nurture the next generation of students, and I can't wait to be involved first hand in the process. Internationally, the NEWH has given \$8.7 million dollars to 2,959 students since it was founded, and £60,750 of that has been awarded to 62 students in the UK.

Having seen first-hand, how much time and effort goes into running NEWH, how do you fit it all in?

A lot of evenings and weekends. The last event I was at, I was talking to a group who couldn't believe we didn't have someone working full time on NEWH. The whole team puts in so many hours and I think that's what spurs everyone on to do more, as you know if you don't it will fall on someone else's shoulders. It also helps that everyone on the board is lovely, I often think of them as my colleagues in London as I work remotely, and the board meetings are like catching up with friends.

Could you tell us a little about your professional role as an Art Consultant?

My job at Indigo Art is to work as liaison between the interior designers and the artists. I work closely with designers to build a brief/ narrative that we



NEWH, UK Chapter Events and fundraisers

can weave into the artwork – that helps deliver their vision. For this I need to have knowledge of different mediums and artists styles that can work to the budget. As every single piece is bespoke, including the framing, I need to stay involved on a project from start to end, from site survey to installation.

Our projects are so varied but there are some that stand out because the research into the history of the property and the past occupants is so fascinating, such as Horwood House and most recently the Indigo Dundee. Then others like the Radisson Red Liverpool was a brilliant job to be involved in as there is not a single artwork – from the guestrooms to the basement gym – that we didn't supply.

Is there much crossover between the two roles?

Huge crossover, each event is like managing a project, and the event day feels like an install day.

What would you say to encourage someone to join NEWH?

I'd say, "Come to an event, there is nothing to lose." There is no pressure to sign up as a member, but there are benefits if you do (some members only events) and cheaper tickets, with all funds going straight into the scholarship pot for students! The price of a membership is so affordable, not much more than a round of drinks – and you will grow

your network and meet likeminded industry professionals who could be with you throughout your career.

We all need a break...

I spend much of my down time walking and hiking! We like climbing a summit, it's such a great sense of achievement! – and my dream holiday would be exploring more of Canada, particularly the West Coast.

*For details on joining the UK Chapter, please contact
Mel Wetheridge at mel.newh@yahoo.com*

NEWH, THE WORLD'S BIGGEST ORGANISATION FOR NETWORKING IN THE INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALITY DESIGN INDUSTRY, HAS CHAPTERS AROUND THE WORLD. TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT US, AND TO JOIN YOUR LOCAL CHAPTER, LOOK US UP ON SOCIAL MEDIA OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE.



newh.org



HOPE KELLETT

BA Interior Design
NORTHUMBRIA UNIVERSITY

newh.org

What prompted Hope to choose interior design as a career direction was, intuitive. "In all honesty, I chose this path with my Mum – one night we were watching Grand Designs and looking at the different jobs and people involved, interior design was the option for me. I wanted to be in the creative industry, and now I am on the path I know this is definitely the one for me." Now in her final year of studies at Northumbria University, Hope is gearing up to put her passion into practice.

Selected project (pictured): Hope's project 'WREATH' which she created during her studies, is a hotel concept based on the cyclical structure of the seasons, which permeates through all aspects of the design.

NEWH is an international not-for-profit organisation with 29 chapters across the United States, Canada, and Europe. Bringing together professionals from all facets of the hospitality industry, NEWH provides opportunities for education, professional development, and networking. To date, it has awarded more than seven million USD in scholarships that provide promising interior design and architecture students opportunities to pursue careers in the hospitality industry.

How has the NEWH scholarship benefited you so far?
 I have been given the opportunity to visit London multiple times, and meet so many designers and likeminded people giving me the first step into my design career. Recently I had the opportunity to travel to the NEWH Leadership Conference in Nashville.

What is the most enjoyable aspect of hospitality design for you?

Being afforded the opportunity to design any aspect of a space, hospitality design is such a creative industry, and personally, I enjoy the different aspects of culture that you get to immerse yourself in when designing.

Pick a design innovation that's emerging, or a major change you are you foreseeing in hotel design

The use of flexible spaces in design is such a poignant trend in interior design at the moment. The use of this in a hotel space offers more possibilities, particularly in limited spaces. A reception and waiting area could also be used as a workspace for guests. Modular furniture also provides the freedom to change to fit ever-shifting needs.

Which designers or creatives have most inspired you on your career path?

David Hockney is a big inspiration for me. I grew up admiring his art and my Nana is a massive fan of his so it's a nostalgic tie to home and her. Hockney is also a Northern lad who made it big, from Bradford to one of the most expensive living artists in the world.

Tell us about your dream design project

The Futuro House, conceived by Matti Suuronen in 1968 as a "portable" ski chalet, would be my dream project to have worked on. It is the perfect example of a design that takes inspiration from the space race and 1960s design trends. Working on such a fun yet limited space would be such a unique and exciting challenge. The concept behind The Futuro House is also fascinating – to create a ski chalet that could be placed onto a mountain to look like aliens have landed, but a movable structure that does not affect the environment.

