

Biography

Design disruptor, creative boundary pusher, and cultural provocateur, Dr. Leyla Acaroglu (A-jar-a-loo) embodies the innovation that instigates positive environmental and social change. A New York-based Australian designer, social scientist, and sustainability expert, she is internationally recognized as a leader in the use of disruptive design across sustainability and educational initiatives. Leyla was awarded 2016 Champion of the Earth by the United Nations Environment Programme, and her 2013 mainstage TED talk that has collected over one million views is one of the most watched TED talks on sustainability.

In 2014, Leyla completed her PhD at RMIT in change-centric disruptive design and started developing the Disruptive Design Method, which is the backbone of her unique approach to design-led social change. She has won a host of awards for her work, was named one of Melbourne's 100 Most Influential People, and has been forging positive change through creative practice in multiple ways for over a decade. Her systems-based thinking coupled with her highly-skilled communication techniques is featured in several publications, including the New York Times.

Leyla is the founder of two design agencies, Disrupt Design in New York and Melbourne-based Eco Innovators, as well as the UnSchool, her uniquely rebellious experimental knowledge lab that is all about disrupting the mainstream way that knowledge is gained and shared. It runs innovative pop-up programs around the world and recently won a CORE77 Design Education Initiative Award. With Leyla's expertise at the helm, each of these operatives serve as multidisciplinary approaches to pioneering social and environmental change through design.

As a designer, her works such as Design Play Cards, Game Changer Game, Secret Life of Things, Designercise, and the AIGA Gender Equity Toolkit are at the forefront of activated experience design. She has authored several handbooks for change makers and continues to agitate for new ways of solving complex social problems through beautifully designed interventions. Leyla's creative work is highly acclaimed, having been featured in a permanent exhibition in the Leonardo di Vinci museum in Milan and earning commissions from the National Gallery of Victoria.

She is an internationally respected keynote speaker and trusted expert, having led thousands of hours of workshops, lectures, activations, and educational experiences around the world. Leyla was a visiting scholar at NYU and an Innovator in Residence at the Center for Social Innovation NYC. She was also an invited Artist in Residence with Autodesk and managed the development of 'Greenfly,' one of the first online life cycle assessment tools for designers. Leyla is regularly invited to provide her professional opinions on radio and TV, having been a regular judge on the ABC TV show The New Inventors, along with a host of international programs.

Leyla's most notable areas of expertise include: Sustainability, Systems Thinking, Cognitive Activation Design, Disruptive Design Method, Circular Economy, Creative Intervention Design, Life Cycle Thinking, Social Innovation, Change Methodology, and Experiential Education.

More information: <https://www.leylaacaroglu.com/bio/>