

Vitkala Association Oy: from knowledge network to know-how

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**JORMA VITKALA
– ‘MR. GPD’ – A
MAN WITH A
MISSION!**

When we speak about GPD, we always connect this important international conference to its founder Jorma Vitkala. But do we all really know him and what he has and is continuing to do for the glass industry?

He actually started working at Tamglass Ltd. (now Glaston) in 1981 and so has 40 years of experience in the glass industry. He is, in fact, a safety glass specialist, in particular with regards to low-E glass tempering, and has obtained several patents in this field.

As the founder and developer of GPD – the world’s most respected and leading glass specialist conference in 1992 – he is also the creator of the leading worldwide contact network (+ 20,000). continuing with communication, he has a LinkedIn profile with over 16,000 glass specialist contacts.

When speaking about conferences and networking in the flat glass industry, there is a name that comes to everyone’s mind immediately: Jorma Vitkala. He set up and organized the very first GPD conference back in 1992, and continued to follow the conferences around the globe until he retired in 2020 – but has he actually retired? We’ll find out in this article.





THE START OF A LONG AND INTENSE JOURNEY - ATTENDEES OF THE 1993 CONFERENCE

He is also a frequent lecturer and has written numerous articles for trade publications. He is a member of several international committees, and a board member/senior advisor in different companies and associations. He has also received a number of international awards.

His activities, however, never seem to stop, as he founded the Glass Innovation Institute (GII) in 2014 and – when it was time to resign in 2020, he decided to start his own company ‘Vitkala Association Oy’.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS FOR THE GLASS INDUSTRY

Most of the new innovations come from outside the glass industry and need to be supported in order for the new generation to gain experiential knowledge. A huge amount of new in-



formation from industry leaders, influencers and retired experts needs to be passed on to new generations, universities, designers/structural engineers/architects and industry experts around the world. The world of glass is evol-

ving ever more quickly with spectacular new architectural and structural elements, smart glazing and circular economy. This means that collaboration benefits all players – young and old. “With my global network of more

than 20,000 persons together with the Glass Innovation Institute and Old Fox Club, we can bring together the whole supply chain to develop new ideas, give support to companies for product development, meetings, training and real



AWARDS

Tampere Congress Award in 2001 from the City of Tampere – 2001
 Glass Builder of the year 2013 by the Finnish Flat Glass Association – 2013
 Plaque in recognition of GPD's 25th anniversary from USGlass – 2017
 GANA's (Glass Association of North America) Honorary Membership – 2017
 A special award from KAFA (Korean Architect Façade Association) – 2017
 A special award from HKFA (Hong Kong Façade Association) – 2017
 'Jorma Vitkala Award of Merit' – 2017 (established by the glass industry – under the leadership of DOW and Kuraray)
 The Finnish Flat Glass Association's Honorary Membership – 2019

cooperation – and propel the glass industry to new horizons,” says Vitkala.

“My aim is to be involved in advancing development, sharing knowledge in the field and developing key cooperation between all stakeholders. My future involves supporting and involving start-up companies in order to accelerate the development of the glass industry and bring new innovations to the glass industry, so that glass can continue to be competitive with other materials.”

VITKALA ASSOCIATION OY AND DEVELOPING TOGETHER WITH THE GLASS INDUSTRY

- › Vitkala Association Oy and GII do not compete with GPD. In fact, GII and Old Fox club support GPD and other conferences.
- › Old Fox club – a consortium of over 55 years olds or already retired glass experts who want to contribute to the development of the glass

industry and share their practical and theoretical knowledge with younger generations.

- › Vitkala Association Oy and Vitkala's large international network can arrange training courses either internally or at the company's own customers.
- › Helping to compare and choose the right investment product using Vitkala's large network of the different production specialists.
- › Providing special information and helping to choose the right person to help you..., a wide network of experts in various fields available.
- › Creating different forms of alliances between industries is one sure way to support and evolve the glass and building industry.
- › Supporting and involving startup companies in order to accelerate development and bring new innovations to the glass industry.
- › In-depth integrations of electronics within glass structures (transparent PV, displays, media fa-



acades, smart glass, printed electronics, and signal transmissions etc.).

- › IoT/industry 4.0
- › 5G integration into the production chain, the construction and automotive industries.
- › Development of cloud services.
- › Reduction of CO2 emissions, sustainable development.
- › Old building stock renovations (vacuum IG and heated glass elements).
- › Circular economy.
- › Training for the entire supply chain and universities.

- › Better quality anisotropy/iridescence, roller wave, edge lift/edge deformation/frame effect, reduce chipping, bending/bi-stable glass, white haze, heat soaking, minimizing hot spots.

VITKALA ASSOCIATION OY

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