Youth with a Mission

While world leaders come together in Davos to address the major problems facing the global community at the World Economic Forum (WEF), Euro RSCG’s CEO David Jones - one of the WEF’s Young Leaders - has decided it’s the great mind of the future, not the present, that need to be harvested to activate change.

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In his role as a WEF Global Young Leader, Jones has resolved it’s not just the business leaders of today that can affect change, but a group of young adults hand-picked and brought together from the four-corners of the globe.

“This generation of young people is unique,” says Jones. “They have access to unprecedented amounts of information and knowledge, and unparalleled power and influence in social media. If the world’s leaders can’t make the right decisions, then maybe the world’s young people can.”

Jones’s brainchild, One Young World, is a global conference broadcast live through international social media platforms, where representatives under the age of 25 have been plucked from 120 countries to create and enact resolutions on a host of different issues - from climate change to human rights. The main criteria to apply: you must be born after 1984.

The young guns selected will be joined by the likes of former UN secretary general Kofi Annan, activist Bob Geldof, and cleric and peace activist Desmond Tutu, plus more who will act as counsellors for the event.

A live feed to the event will broadcast through social media sites, including Facebook and Twitter, to help answer questions that come in through the internet. And for Jones, the creative industry has an obligation to promote some form of positive awareness and change.

“What we really want to do here is get the next generation of leaders together, so that they can share their experiences and address some of the issues that they themselves are going to have to resolve in coming years,” states Jones.

The One Young World summit comes off the back of the Tck Tck Tck initiative launched at Cannes last year. Jones teamed up with Kofi Annan for the programme, which saw 15.2 million people sign up as climate allies and more than 100 major global companies, from iTunes and Google to Lloyds Bank and MTV, supported and sponsored the project. The multimedia campaign was aimed at mobilising the international community into pushing global leaders to go to last year’s Copenhagen Climate Summit and bring publicity to the event - all of which it achieved - but what it couldn’t do was influence the decisions made at the summit.
“Make no mistake, Copenhagen was a failure,” Jones rues. “I’m pleased we were able to get so many people to support the campaign and demonstrate that this is a real issue for the world’s people. But despite going into it with fairly measured expectations, the lack of agreement has been a massive disappointment and a costly missed opportunity for the planet.”

Jones is hoping the younger generation can make decisions where the older generation of world leaders have so far failed.

“Ultimately in Copenhagen the world’s leaders demonstrated they’re out of touch with the world’s people. Next week at One Young World, young people will be passing their own resolutions and perhaps they can show the ‘experienced’ world leaders the way.”

One Young World kicks off on 8 to 10 February, check out the website to find out more.