

Design Directions 2006/07

An innovative programme of awards

RS&A

Introduction

by Susan Hewer, Head of Design



Design has always been central to the work of the RSA. In 1924, as part of its advocacy of good design, the RSA established a student award scheme with the aim of linking education and industry in beneficial partnerships; in a contemporary form, this scheme continues today. During the course of its 82 year history the scheme has been reviewed and re-focused to respond to the prevailing demands and concerns of education, industry and society.

Today, *RSA Design Directions* is informed by the RSA's central manifesto. By developing projects within the scheme to reflect the manifesto's key concerns, the scheme challenges emerging young designers to consider their future professional role and responsibilities more broadly in ways that can have meaningful effects on business, public services and wider societal concerns.

For 2006/07, *RSA Design Directions* is once again setting a range of thought provoking and challenging student projects that directly address the goals of the RSA's Manifesto while commenting on the changing role of the designer in relation to society, technology and culture.

Through this competition the RSA aims to enthuse and motivate young designers to explore the new ground design is now occupying and to reward the most innovative and creative responses.

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It is likely that we will be running a transport project as part of this year's Design Directions although it is not yet available. Please check the website regularly for an update.

Schedule

Dates for submission of Entry Forms/Fees and Work

Thursday 23 November 2006

Deadline for Entry Form(s)/Fee(s) for all projects

(except for the Wired Design project: deadline for Entry Forms/Fees for this project only is Friday 23 March 2007)

Entry Forms/Fees should be sent under separate cover – **not** with your entry – to:
RSA Design Directions Registrations
8 John Adam Street
London WC2N 6EZ
UK

Monday 20 November – Friday 15 December 2006

Submission period for all project entries

(except for the Wired Design project: deadline for entries for this project only is Friday 23 March 2007)

Entries will be accepted at **Brooks Transport Services Ltd** on any weekday within the dates stated between 08:00-18:00, excluding weekends and bank holidays. Entries arriving after 18:00 on Friday 15 December 2006 will not be accepted

Please remember that entries (except digital submissions for the *Inclusive Worlds* project*) should be sent or delivered to:

Brooks Transport Services Ltd
Unit 2/15
Second Avenue
Bluebridge Industrial Estate
Halstead
Essex CO9 2SU
UK

All Entry Forms/Fees should be sent or delivered to:

RSA Design Directions Registrations
8 John Adam Street
London WC2N 6EZ
UK

**Inclusive Worlds* digital submissions should be sent or delivered to:

RSA Design Directions Inclusive Worlds, 8 John Adam Street,
London WC2N 6EZ, UK

Food Information System

From Farm to Fork – innovative approaches to reducing food miles



Design Challenge

Drivers of heavy goods vehicles already endure supervision by a tachometer, logging their speeds and driving times on behalf of a myriad of external authorities. What would happen if we applied a similar monitoring system to food: a tachometer for tomatoes, fish and potatoes, say? What would be revealed if these 'food miles' were made explicit?

Context:

why food is a global design opportunity

Food miles represent the distance a food travels from the field to the plate. Agriculture and food now account for nearly 30% of goods transported on our roads contributing substantially to CO₂ emissions and thus climate change. Furthermore, 95% of the fruit and half the vegetables in the UK are imported; strawberries, for instance, flown in from warmer climates to satisfy consumer desires, contribute to the huge environmental impact caused by air freight.

Food distribution can be tremendously wasteful, often invisibly so. Here are some issues to keep in mind:

- the contemporary food system is unsustainable and is damaging the environment, but in order to do things differently, we need to see things differently
- there are 52 transport and process stages in one bottle of ketchup
- the CO₂ emissions attributed to producing, processing, packaging and distributing the food consumed by a family of four, is about eight tonnes a year
- in the UK the five largest retail chains account for 80% of the market, and their marketing decisions have a massive effect on the producers, other retailers and the environment. The supermarkets exert a virtual monopoly over many towns and villages, so many consumers have little choice but to shop at the major multiples. The supermarkets' drive for efficiency, central distribution systems, overseas sourcing and the expansion of their retail area incur costs to the environment and society that are not accounted for. http://www.sustainweb.org/chain_fm_why.asp
- 127 calories of energy (aviation fuel) is needed to transport 1 calorie of lettuce across the Atlantic
- food often travels long distances and in an inefficient way. It is not assumed that all food exports will cease as there are implications in that, too, but that the real energy and environmental costs of such distribution shall be explicit and, where appropriate, offset in some way

- number of food miles has increased by 15% in the ten years to 2002. 19 million tonnes of CO₂ emitted from foods transport in 2002
- the environmental, social and economic costs of food transport are estimated at £9bn per year of which £5bn is due to road congestion, £2bn is due to road accidents, £1bn is due to pollution and £1bn to other factors. Looked at another way food shopping by car accounts for 40 per cent of the total costs
- if all foods were sourced from within 20km of where they were consumed, the country would save £2.1bn in environmental and congestion costs
- food shopping is one of the most basic and regular activities that people undertake, and accounts for over five billion car miles a year in Britain

Brief

Your challenge is to use innovative design practice to draw attention to the environmental, social and ethical implications of transporting food. Develop a proposal for how this might work and what it would look like to the consumer: a device, a product-service system, what? – you decide.

Criteria

Several criteria should inform the development of your ideas and proposal:

- your submission should be informed by, and/or located in, a real location/situation, preferably your own
- your submission should demonstrate evidence that your research engaged with people, organisations and companies involved in the food system so you can learn from what's already happening
- your submission should show consideration and/or use of new technologies
- your submission **must** demonstrate input by a multidisciplinary team and, ideally, you should submit as a team. If you have been unable to work through the whole project as part of a team however, then you may still submit, but evidence must be shown that as part of your research during the project, you connected meaningfully with other specialists, relevant expertise and assistance – from staff and students – in other faculties of your own institution, or in other universities. This is very important
- whole systems approach: this brief offers the opportunity to tackle a real issue in depth, and to adopt a broader 'systems' approach or strategy that changes attitudes and engages the wider public as part of the solution

RSA

- Evidence of research: as with all projects, research is crucial. You must familiarise yourself with the issues and arguments – and counter-arguments – in order to ensure the integrity of your response

Outcomes/Submission Details

The delivery must be a written outline together with a visualisation of your device/product-service system idea that addresses the issue. This must include the communication, through any medium you see relevant, of the following:

- 1 **A statement of creative strategy** – this is your big idea. It is essential and should be done whether you are proposing a device, product, a service or something more conceptual. It should be no more than 500 words (typewritten, sans serif, 14pt)
- 2 **Evidence of research** – including information about whom you consulted and how this led to your strategy and proposal – this can be in sketchbook form and be a mix of visuals and words. It may also be in the form of a journal, a blog, or a video diary but it must be easily accessible for judging purposes
- 3 **Realisation** – this is how your proposal tackles the issue and can be presented in the form most appropriate to your chosen solution. For example the options might be:
 - four A3 boards (700 gsm)
 - if appropriate, one sketchbook only, related to the brief
 - a running demo on a CD-ROM or other digital medium. The resulting designs/products should be entirely self-contained (that is, should be self playing and, if necessary, self-decompressing without special software). Consider that your presentation will not necessarily be shown on the same sort of machine as the one on which it was created. Your work will be shown to the jury on an Apple all-white iBook or a PC; specify which machine your disc should be played on and display this clearly on the disc. Application software should be Macromedia Director (or popular alternative), and should be able to be viewed using Flash Player; Shockwave Player; Quicktime 4 or 5, or Adobe Acrobat
 - video (VHS) or DVD
 - all work should carry an RSA label on the back; do not submit work in plastic sleeves or on foam board, metal, wood or perspex, or in boxes; these requirements are in the interests of students to ensure the safety of their work whilst in storage and transit, and to ensure that it can be displayed for judging

Remember that your entry, as well as being the primary vehicle by which your work will be judged, may also form part of an exhibition. For both, the communication of ideas – powerfully and succinctly – is absolutely vital.

Sustainable Tourism

Encouraging practice that is ecologically light and culturally sensitive



Design Challenge

Minimising impact on both the environment and the local community, in all aspects of the holiday experience, is as important domestically as it is abroad. With this in mind, how might you improve the experience of a cycling or walking holiday for example, using youth hostels (or, perhaps, the novel use of under exploited buildings or locations such as farm or industrial buildings), as nodes in an improved network? Think of this as a way of encouraging domestic or international travel where the total emissions of the journey are taken explicitly into account. The point is to encourage tourism that inspires, excites and educates, and leads to a change in the trend of travel choices and behaviour.

Context

The average tourist uses as much water in 24 hours as a villager in a less industrialised country uses in 100 days. Before we even get there, our flights add to the 600 million tonnes of carbon emissions emitted by aircraft each year. If you multiply those indicators by rising tourist numbers, the result is yet another grim eco trend. In 1950, there were about 25 million international tourist visits; by 2020, if current trends persist, 1.6 billion of us will go on holiday each year – carbon emitting and water guzzling as we go.

Carbon emissions are not the only damaging by-product of tourism. Tourists change local cultures, too. Tourism can kill the toured. A growing clamour among its citizens holds that Barcelona has become “over-branded and over-gentrified”. House prices are rising so fast that locals find it hard to continue living there, and “labour precariousness has now become a mainstream situation”. Coolness, say these critics, is not innocent, when cultural projects act as camouflage for unsustainable development.

The good news is that many of us wish to travel lightly: eco-tourism, although imprecisely defined, already accounts for about one in five trips worldwide.

Brief

What might sustainable tourism mean in the case of walking and cycling or any visit that is not based on private motorised transport? How might innovative design thinking and practice enable a visit that is both ecologically light and culturally sensitive?

Identify a **walking or cycling route (or whatever route you have chosen)** as the site of your investigation. Research and document the territorial assets and resources of the route. Learn from what is already happening. Make an opportunity map of situations to be improved. Among the aspects that could be improved:

- 1 Mapping local knowledge / Connecting with living memory / Living history / Embodied knowledge / Situated learning
- 2 21st Century B&B
- 3 Next-generation youth hostel
- 4 Train_2_Farm (Beyond the convention centre) (green and away) Village halls and community buildings
- 5 Urban pilgrimage
- 6 AgriTourism + Farm trails + Community based tourism

Criteria

- Several criteria should inform the development of your ideas and proposal:
- your submission should be informed by, and/or located in, a real location/situation
 - your submission should demonstrate evidence that your research engaged with existing people, places and organisations within the tourism system
 - your submission should show consideration of technologies – such as wireless, tagging, or Geographical Information Systems – that enhance one’s knowledge of place.
 - your submission **must** demonstrate input by a multidisciplinary team and, ideally, you should submit as a team. If you have been unable to work through the whole project as part of a team however, then you may still submit, but evidence must be shown that as part of your research during the project, you connected meaningfully with other specialists,

- relevant expertise and assistance – from staff and students – in other faculties of your own institution, or in other universities. This is very important
- Whole systems approach: this brief offers the opportunity to tackle a real issue in depth, and to adopt a broader 'systems' approach or strategy that changes attitudes and engages the wider public as part of the solution
- Evidence of research: You must familiarise yourself with the issues and arguments – and counter-arguments – in order to ensure the integrity of your response
- Evidence of bench marking

Outcomes/Submission Details

The delivery must be a written outline together with a visualisation of your service system idea that addresses the issue. This must include the communication, through any medium you see relevant, of the following:

- 1 **A statement of creative strategy** – this is your big idea. It is essential and should be done whether you are proposing a device, product, a service or something more conceptual. It should be no more than 500 words (typewritten, sans serif, 14 pt)
- 2 **Evidence of research** – including information about who you consulted and how this led to your strategy and proposal – this can be in sketchbook form and can be a mix of visuals and words. It may also be in the form of a journal, a blog, or a video diary but it must be easily accessible for judging purposes
- 3 **Realisation** – this is how your proposal tackles the issue and can be presented in the form most appropriate to your chosen solution. For example the options might be:
 - four A3 boards (700 gsm)
 - if appropriate, one sketchbook only, related to the brief
 - a running demo on a CD-ROM or other digital medium. The resulting designs/products should be entirely self-contained (that is, should be self playing and, if necessary, self-decompressing without special software). Consider that your presentation will not necessarily be shown on a machine the same as that on which it was created. Your work will be shown to the jury on an Apple all-white ibook or a PC; specify on which your disc should be used clearly on the disc. Application software should be Macromedia Director (or popular alternative), and should be able to be viewed using Flash Player, Shockwave Player, Quicktime 4 or 5, or Adobe Acrobat
 - Video (VHS) or DVD
 - all work should carry an RSA label on the back; do not submit work in plastic sleeves or on foam board, metal, wood or perspex, or in boxes; these requirements are in the interests of students to ensure the safety of their work whilst in storage and transit, and to ensure that it can be displayed for judging

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Design for Patient Safety

Re-designing Hospital Catering Services

Background

Five years ago a report from an expert group, led by Sir Liam Donaldson, Chief Medical Officer, proposed the introduction of a new national system for identifying patient safety incidents, that would act to reduce risk and prevent similar events occurring in future. The government accepted all the report's proposals and recommendations, leading to the formation of the National Patient Safety Agency in 2001 (NPSA) www.npsa.nhs.uk. This project is a collaboration between the RSA and the NPSA encouraging students to explore how design-led strategies can have a positive impact on the delivery of an efficient health service that places the safety and fast recovery of its patients at the centre of its operation.

Overview

The development of strategies for patient safety, and the reduction in medical errors, are two of the key issues in the delivery of healthcare systems. Mistakes – results of human error or systemic failure – can lead to unnecessary harm and suffering caused to patients and even, at worst, the tragic loss of life. Preliminary research carried out in England indicates that as many as 10% of all patients treated by hospitals experience some kind of safety incident. Six per cent of these result in permanent impairment and eight per cent in fatality. As many as 50% of the latter are believed to be avoidable; that is an estimated 34,000 preventable deaths annually. Moreover, the knock-on effects on staff working in the healthcare system, not to mention the financial cost, further increases the need to improve all aspects of patient safety.

Many errors result when the role of the user is not taken into account in the design of tasks and systems and when the designer does not understand the system within which new or old objects are placed. An over reliance on memory, a lack of standardisation or the lack of availability of information can lead to situations in which mistakes are more likely to happen. For instance if the purposes of a system or process are not properly understood or clearly communicated to the user then this could lead to a breakdown in the system, resulting in what could be a life threatening error. The fact that there are an overwhelming number of machines used in hospitals with perhaps too few people being familiar with their use could lead to

drugs being wrongly administered. Other examples range from surgery at the wrong site to infection control and medication dispensing errors – the scope for mistakes to occur is wide.

A role for design?

Having insights into the ways that people live and work is at the centre of what designers do – whether they are designing a product, service or an environment – knowing the user is key. Design is a process that can create connections and effect change. Designers have the ability to visualise and give life to radical ideas and solutions. It is therefore clear that these skills could have a valuable and vital role in identifying and improving patient safety in a variety of contexts. Patient safety issues receive high media attention, for example healthcare acquired infection, surgical mistakes and fatalities resulting from major clinical errors. These are all highly important issues and extra consideration of seemingly routine or mundane factors can have a positive impact in the delivery of a safe and efficient health service.

The potential of a design-led approach to help prevent medical errors across the NHS was explored in a study commissioned jointly by the Department of Health and the Design Council and carried out by a team of researchers from the Universities of Cambridge and Surrey and the Royal College of Art. This study should form part of your background reading for this project.

Brief

Setting the scene

Patient safety issues receive a high media focus. Often the stories we hear about relate to so-called 'hospital super-bugs', cleaning issues or fatalities as a result of major clinical errors. Whilst these are all highly important issues, there are other areas within the NHS that are also of vital importance in the delivery of an efficient health service that places the safety and fast recovery of its patients at the centre of its operation. This can include areas as ordinary sounding as food and catering, but these can have a vital impact on the levels of safety and care experienced by patients whilst in hospital.

Hospital food is an essential part of patient care.

The NHS spends £500 million a year on its catering services, £300 million of which is spend directly on ingredients.

A report published in December 2005 estimated that malnutrition costs the UK more than £7.3 billion of actual expenditure each year (double the projected £3.5 billion cost of obesity). £3.8 billion of that staggering amount goes toward the treatment of malnourished patients in hospital. These can be people who, when admitted to hospital are already undernourished or, who in the course of a hospital stay, become so through a variety of reasons and practice errors. This in turn can make recovery slow thus adding to the time patients may need to spend in hospital, adding to the costs to the NHS.

Food service through the NHS hospital catering system largely reflects the timings of domestic eating patterns, with food delivered to wards at the same time, every day, for every patient. This not only causes huge peaks and troughs in the food service throughout the day – staff frantically busy for short bursts with periods of under-use in between – it also means that often patients are being expected to take meals at times that may not suit their mood or appetite due to on-going treatments, unusual sleep patterns and a whole range of other factors that will mean regimented eating times are not ideal.

Added to this – or partly resulting from this – statistics have revealed that patients in British NHS hospitals are leaving 17 million meals untouched – whilst the Department of Health claim the quality of hospital food is improving steadily.

Clearly, nutrition is a key element of patient recovery rates and therefore is high on the agenda of considerations in patient care and safety. Set against the backdrop of the statistic that reveals that between 10-60% of people admitted to hospital are malnourished (with elderly people most at risk), the importance of the issue cannot be underestimated.

The Challenge

By putting the needs of the patient at the centre of the service, what might a re-designed food service look like? How would it also benefit staff and add to more efficient practice?

Within the context of the current system, you should to take a holistic look at every aspect of the food service within the NHS (there is a huge amount of published and internet material available and research is important in gaining a broad understanding of current practices, pitfalls and guidelines).

Then, within this context, students from across the disciplines are encouraged to formulate a response from any angle they choose. It could be product based (from trolleys to tableware – think of others), communications based (from menus to social marketing strategies – think of others);

service based; it could be anything you consider that would make a valuable and important contribution to the whole process of hospital food service. This is really up to you. What the judges will be looking for are proposals that are supported by a systemic argument, in other words a solution that has been developed from a process angle rather than something that has been developed in isolation. Make your solution fit this very specific context

Think also about some of the conditions that might make eating and swallowing difficult and painful for some patients, as well as those for whom sitting up to eat and drink is not possible.

Start with a clean slate: a hospital food service where the safety, dignity and recovery of the patient, and the ability of staff to facilitate this, are central.

Submission Details

Entries must comply with the following:

- A3 presentation boards (max. five; 700gsm) showing an outline of your approach with one board as a developed plan of the scheme
- a short typewritten report (max. 400 words, sans serif, 14pt) expressing idea development from research to final designs, to help communicate your proposal
- a further typewritten list of bullet points (sans serif, 14pt) detailing the principal benefits of your design
- one sketchbook only containing developmental sketches, drawings and ideas
- all work (except sketchbooks) should be submitted on A3 lightweight card and everything should carry an RSA label on the back; do not submit work in plastic sleeves or on foam board, metal wood or Perspex, or in boxes; these requirements are in the interests of students to ensure the safety of their work whilst in storage and transit, and to ensure that it can be displayed for judging
- a CD containing images of your presentation boards (not sketchbook).

Water, water

Innovative approaches to expressing the value of water

This could be your most challenging brief so far. It could also be the most exciting and important. So read on...

Context

Some water facts

- water makes up 75% of the human brain
- sales of bottled water in the UK currently stand at two billion litres a year
- world-wide over one billion people lack access to safe water resources and over two and a half billion do not have access to sanitation
- 30% of domestic water goes down the toilet
- the campaigning charity WaterAid says that it would cost £9bn a year to meet the UN's millennium development goal of halving the number of people around the world without access to safe water and sanitation
- water is colourless, odourless and tasteless
- less than 1% of the water treated by public water systems is used for drinking and cooking
- according to NASA the natural rotation of the Earth has been altered slightly by some 10 trillion tons of water stored in reservoirs over the past 40 years
- trees are 75% water
- water breaks all the rules when it comes to the laws of physics
- water expands by 9% when it freezes, making it less dense, which is why ice floats on water
- once it evaporates, a water molecule spends around ten days in the air
- £10 would be enough to provide one person with safe water for life
- water is gentle enough to support delicate living things...
- ...but tough enough to corrode the hardest metal
- it takes about 2.5 litres of water to cook pasta and about 5 litres to clean the pot
- tomatoes and jellyfish are 95% water
- you are 65% water
- it is possible to drink water today that was here in the dinosaur age
- water is the only substance that occurs at ordinary temperatures in all three phases: liquid, gas and solid
- we each contain around 38 litres of water – we need to replace two of these every day

This project is sponsored by Ideal Standard – it is the largest producer of bathroom products in the world but this doesn't mean you have to make a bathroom proposal

Water. one thing's for sure, we can't live without it. More often than not though, we don't think about it – except for when its overwhelming power captures our attention (think tsunami, think Hurricane Katrina), or its sheer invigorating and soothing energy takes us to another place (think the last time you swam in the sea or took a shower after a long, hot, dusty day's travelling). Another thing is for sure, its power is undeniable.

There are a myriad of meanings and values placed on water around the world where it often takes on magical, healing properties, for instance. As a source of inspiration, it has moved poets, artists and adventurers. Now we want it to inspire you, so you in turn can inspire us with your discoveries and insights.

Think about water for a moment and jot down a couple of things that **amaze** you about it; a couple of things that **shock** you; a couple of things that **frighten** you. We want you to share your insights with us.

Brief

Inspired by your thinking and research, take any approach you choose to build a project that expresses, enhances, reflects and communicates the value, importance and preciousness – the very essence – of water.

We are looking for any, and all, kinds of responses. There are no restrictions on how you choose to realise this brief other than that it increases awareness and appreciation of water.

You may be a product designer or a graphic designer. Perhaps textiles or interiors. You can be from any discipline. It is your ability to show an inspired and innovative take on the subject, in any form you choose, that will win the day. Think poetic and whimsical; think valuing and educating; think emotional and psychological. Think surprising and beautiful. Think domestic. Think global. Think anything.

RSA

You may decide to work in a multi-disciplinary team to explore the value of designers working collaboratively, and even perhaps bring a non-designer team into your team. This is up to you.

Aims

- uncover an insight through appropriate research
- illustrate the insight with a single visual scenario board
- translate your insight into a well thought through and appropriately expressed design proposition

Guidelines

- Your entry should deliver the following:
- Design proposal boards (max. three): visualise your proposal on no more than three A3 boards. Remember the judging panel must immediately understand your design propositions. To support your argument, additional research can be evident on your design solution sheets i.e. photographs, interviews, questionnaires, desk research etc

Submission Details

- Entries must comply with the following:
- A3 boards (max. four; 700 gsm) showing development and final proposition
 - ‘The Big Idea’: a short, typewritten text (max. 150 words, sans serif, 14pt) that captures your idea and helps the jury to quickly understand your proposal
 - any models or mock-ups should be submitted as photographs or print-outs mounted on A3 board (this can be in addition to the four design boards)– do not submit 3D work at this stage
 - one sketchbook only, related to the brief
 - all work (except sketchbooks) should be submitted on A3 lightweight card and everything should carry an RSA label on the back; do not submit work in plastic sleeves or on foam board, metal, wood or Perspex, or in boxes; these requirements are in the interests of students to ensure the safety of their work whilst in storage and transit, and to ensure that it can be displayed for judging

Inclusive Worlds

Creating an inclusively designed world

People are living longer and will be working longer, and there now exists both the will and legislation to enable disabled and older people to become totally integrated into mainstream society. Rapid social and technological change gives us the opportunity to rethink products and services that are currently not responsive enough to meet people's real needs and capabilities.

It is now three years since the RSA launched the *Inclusive Worlds* project. In turn the Jury has been impressed by the range of entries, the original thought behind solutions, the action-research and consultation with non-designers – and above all, by the insight, empathy and *joie de vivre* displayed in designs.

Three years on and the Jury now feel that it is time for some new challenges. In 2006/07 there will be two challenges:

Challenge 1: Making Products Work

This challenge is about making things better, more fun and desirable. User research and user participation in your project, and specialist expertise outside the design field will be essential. Part of your research should be to gain an understanding of what people want, what captures their imagination, what stimulates them into action, what increases their sociability, their motivation, their independence, what encourages their activity, and their lifestyle goals. This research should also reveal what is an impediment to people's quality and enjoyment of life, what makes them feel excluded from certain activities. This research can be obtained in many ways: through diaries written by your subjects, or their own visual (simple camera) recording of what enhances or impedes the quality of their lives. An understanding of social and lifestyle trends will also be important and how your product concept will fit in with imagined future living scenarios.

You may like to select an area of life that you are familiar with or opt for say, healthcare, work, travel, leisure or entertainment, shopping, or some form of social activity. Once you have selected your aspect of life, the challenge is to rethink or redesign an existing product, system, environment or service to make it more inclusive, more accessible for users, and more enjoyable to use.

User participation in the development of your concept, and for providing feedback, will be important. It will also be important to engage other disciplines: what other specialist disciplines would it be useful to consult? Could these be, for example, from the fields of arts, sciences or technology, or social services, or from the leisure or travel industries, or from entertainment or broadcasting?

In responding to this brief the Jury will be looking for:

- before and after scenarios of the product, system, service, environment or communication that you have chosen indicating how your ideas present new and more inclusive possibilities in terms of function and usability
- clear storyboards showing how your design will be pleasurable to use, own, wear, interact with and above all, how it will enhance and improve the quality of life of the user
- a report or other means to describe the initial research with users and also which other disciplines you have approached for collaboration or information

Challenge 2: Using Technology Inclusively

Technology moves at an ever-increasing rate and offers many potential benefits to ageing and disabled sectors of society. Mobile phones offer older people the benefit of staying in touch with family and friends and are crucial to maintaining independence for many disabled people. The use of text messaging also benefits those of us who are hard of hearing. Computers can open up all sorts of new hobbies and social interests, particularly through on-line services and forums, and can offer choice and flexibility about how we choose to work. Technology can also give us the means to monitor and control our own health effectively, or to provide assistance by extending our functional, sensory or even cognitive capabilities.

However, many people, particularly older people and people who may not have been in the workforce for some time, can become alienated and feel excluded from aspects of society. Examples of this are the introduction of the chip and pin system for all banking and purchasing procedures, online banking and also the digital television revolution that is already upon us. We are now able to complete official forms online which reduces waiting periods

or the cost of lengthy telephone calls but for many people, computer use is not an option. Older people particularly feel that they are unable to cope with these elements of modern life whereas in reality technology can offer them a huge amount. Often this problem occurs through the way products are designed than by the technology itself: if only products, systems and services were designed more simply and for all users, and from a user-centric point of view, then technology could be seen as assistive, fun and friendly. For example, much simpler and easier to use types of mobile phones designed for older users without unnecessary features are now available in Japan.

So the challenge here is to select a product, system, environment, communication or service which is currently not accessible or usable by a large number or particular sectors of people, and to make it user-friendly and workable. Your choice must involve technology and you should try and understand how potential developments in technology together with sympathetic and user-friendly design could offer benefits for clearly identified future scenarios. For instance, these could be the application of technologies in areas of:

- self-medication, telemedicine, and healthcare services
- safer and more flexible home living for older single people to sustain autonomy and independence
- personal communication, or navigation devices with particular reference to user-friendly interfaces
- improved home fuel/energy management, or financial support services
- encouraging social networking or innovative services
- extending the ability to work, and the better deployment of older and disabled persons' experience and expertise
- encouraging activity and exercise where possible

In responding to this brief the Jury will be looking for a key understanding of:

- how and why older, disabled and other sectors are alienated from innovative technologies and a set of principles to guide user-friendly applications of technology
- key future needs in an ageing population that could be served by emerging technologies
- lifestyle trends and future scenario storyboards illustrating how your ideas present new possibilities and improvements in terms of access, engagement, stimulation and usability, and how this will enhance and improve the quality of life and lifestyle goals of the user

In addition, a report or other means is required which describes the initial research into technologies, discussions with users and also with other disciplines you have approached for collaboration or information.

Information and resources

To find out more about inclusive design visit the RSA's *Inclusive Design Resource* (which, from August 2006, will be known as *EDeAN DfA Education and Training*) at www.theRSA.org/inclusivedesign. This dedicated website tool makes key information on inclusive design readily available to students, tutors, design professionals and design managers. It contains contextual information and inspirational design concepts. The sections that deal with strategies, tools and methods assist in the development and implementation of design solutions that put people at the centre of the process.

Submission details for both challenges

The Jury welcomes multidisciplinary team entries from a combination of design and other relevant discipline areas. We realise the inherent difficulties of this option so individual entries are welcome but consultations with representatives of other disciplines must be made clear and well documented.

Users are central to the project solution and must be involved, ideally throughout the process and from the early research stages. You may approach these challenges from any angle so long as you have identified the problem from research and this is stated clearly in your submission.

To facilitate the judging of this project, entries must be submitted as flat work and in digital format. Flat work should be sent to Brooks Transport Ltd in Halstead, Essex, digital submissions to the RSA in London (see Schedule).

Your flat work submission must include a single A4 overview sheet (typewritten, sans serif, 14pt) stating the design issue, how you identified it, and what your design delivers for the end user.

You should also include:

- 1 Research showing which users you have consulted, how this was done and how it helped you understand the issues. There should also be an indication of how users have evaluated your concept and what benefit could be derived from your design
- 2 Evidence of working with other disciplines as part of your research and development – e.g. for materials or technology research, or a clinician in the case of medical conditions
- 3 A set of working principles of inclusive design that you have employed strategically in developing your ideas and how the results enhance life quality
- 4 Visualisations and scenarios of use, which illustrate ergonomic and human factors, technologies, market/lifestyle/styling considerations, and materials used,
- 5 Some consideration of manufacturing issues, including materials, processes and costs, and final price point

The flat work should be submitted on lightweight card (max. five A3 boards, 700 gsm) and accompanied by no more than three sketchbooks/reports, and must be sent to Brooks Transport in Halstead, Essex (see Schedule).

RSA

All work (except sketchbooks) should be submitted on A3 lightweight card and everything should carry an RSA label on the back – indicate clearly the challenge to which your project is a response; do not submit work in plastic sleeves or on foam board, metal, wood or Perspex, or in boxes; these requirements are in the interests of students to ensure the safety of their work whilst in storage and transit, and to ensure that it can be displayed for judging.

Your digital submission should include:

- 1 A short summary report detailing briefly:
 - the problem you addressed
 - your consultation with users and how this influenced the project
 - details of your collaboration/consultation with other disciplines
 - a description of the final design and how the intended users benefit
- 2 Images (max. three) of the final design
- 3 Images of two development boards

The digital submission should be presented on CD, with an RSA label attached, in one of the following formats: PDF, PowerPoint, or as a folder containing JPEG/Word files, and must be sent separately from your flatwork to the RSA in London (see Schedule).

Designing Public Services

Meeting 21st Century needs in public service delivery

Background

Public services were designed over 50 years ago – the welfare state having been created in response to social needs following the Second World War. However, many of our social needs have changed beyond recognition and our present social services are losing their relevance. Why is this? Many of the problems now facing society such as climate change, antisocial behaviour, chronic disease and so on, are complex issues that will not necessarily be solved by just providing more efficient hospitals and institutions. The answer lies as much in changing individual behaviours as it does in relying on the institutions and public services that support society.

Brief

New public services must engage the public itself in producing 'public good' – health, happiness, sustainable living. This will require new relationships with professionals – no longer just the deliverers of public services to passively receptive citizens – and new public services need to be designed to support lifestyle change.

Examine our contemporary social needs and think about what new public services we might need to address them. Critically, this relationship between state and citizen – between service provider and service recipient – is changing. In this brief, you are asked to explore new relationships between these two stakeholders. For example, what happens if the public begin to provide services for the government?

Look at what is dominating the political agenda currently, choose ONE area and design a public service based on the needs and insights your research uncovers.

Process

Research: base your design on real needs understood through interactions with UK citizens and an understanding of the existing political debate. You must clearly communicate the social need you are addressing and support it with real user insights.

Requirements: Who is the service for and what are the needs you perceive in this community?

Proposition: What is the service? Create a visual description of the service that communicates what it does, for whom and why.

Definition: How does the service work? Who provides it? How is it experienced? How does it add value to society? What is the relationship between the state and the citizen?

Collaboration

As part of your research during the project you should be connecting with other specialists whose own fields of activity are involved in this area. This should include sourcing relevant expertise and assistance – from staff and students – in other faculties of your own institution, or in other local universities.

Outcomes/Submission Details

The delivery must be a written outline together with a visualisation of your service idea. This must include the communication, through any medium you see relevant, of the following:

- 1 recognition of the need for a radical re-design, including the communication of scenarios around its existence, and thus the problems it poses
- 2 evidence of exploration of the key issues, including collaboration with others
- 3 a 'value proposition' for the service – including who will benefit, how is it provided, how it is accessed, how does it add value.

A service proposal, demonstrating how it would work including new scenarios of use: for visualisations in storyboard format you should use A3 lightweight boards (max. four; 700 gsm). For submissions on CD (PC or MAC) or DVD please list clear details for loading and any other information that will enable the content to be easily viewed; please test your discs prior to submission and check that they are virus-free – any discs that cannot be opened will not be judged. Director and Flash applications should be saved as Projectors for the relevant platform (PC or MAC) and clearly labelled as such.

All work should carry an RSA label on the back; do not submit work in plastic sleeves or on foam board, metal, wood or perspex, or in boxes; these requirements are in the interests of students to ensure the safety of their work whilst in storage and transit, and to ensure that it can be displayed for judging.

Designing Wellbeing

Enhancing everyday living

Background

Wellbeing *n.* the condition of being contented, healthy or successful

The focus on wellbeing is well documented and marketed in the current nutritional sector with many brands pushing the 'goodness' and 'health benefits' of using particular products. It is all part of the theory that now suggests we should be encouraging people to invest in enhancing their 'wellness' instead of their future illnesses. Essentially, we should be focusing on the positives and not the negatives by celebrating feeling good and healthy.

Throughout the globe, people take comfort from objects, types of food and drink, hobbies and even places to improve their state of 'wellbeing'. This is not always intentional and has much to do with the individual's subconscious. The mind is constantly capturing memories that are stored and subsequently affect the individual's response to certain environments, scenarios and objects in the future.

Many current products that attempt to provide a feeling of wellbeing, whether it be in the form of a nutritional substance (foods, drinks) or medicinal product (tablet packs, devices) could improve the user's experience from the overall package. This could be achieved by gaining an insight into people's perceptions of what they consider to be a contributor to 'feeling good', and utilising it in the product envelope. The product envelope is what establishes initial contact with the consumer before getting to the product (contents/dose); therefore it is the obvious place to begin the relationship by prompting the desired emotions from the beginning of the process/ritual.

The idea of ritual should figure in the design of these products as many of the tasks people adopt to 'feel good' involve an element of ritual, whether it be in making a hot, milky bedtime drink, running a bath, or sitting around a fire. The 'doing' aspect makes people feel they are taking care of themselves, and is therefore creating a positive emotion.

Brief

Central to this brief is the importance of 'feeling well' and ensuring personal control of this wellbeing. Your task is to observe the consumer's relationship with products that promote this and then to try to develop it. A suitable starting point would be to research existing products that encourage 'feeling better' and understand what message they are trying to give to the user, and how they are actually perceived/received by the intended target. One of the key objectives of this brief will be to identify a need and from this need create a product solution. As an example, toothbrushes and toothpaste are probably the most common example of health products that are clearly aimed at prevention and 'wellbeing'. How can we develop other 'products' that help to promote wellbeing?

As a designer, you can take either an existing product, re-package it and turn it into a product for wellbeing, or preferably create a new product or concept. Do this with careful attention to the stimulation of consumer senses to create the desired emotions from the experience. It will also be important to understand the connotations associated with particular images (design influences). Consider how it is perceived and the responses people have to it, with the aim of driving out successful statements that could be included in the design.

Sharing this experience is also important as self-wellbeing can be good, but the sharing of it is even better, so a way of encouraging communication and community through the design solution would be advantageous, if feasible.

Show how your product or service delivers wellbeing through the whole user journey by looking at the touch points and interactions that people will have with it during its whole life, from the 'cradle to the grave' or even rebirth, through reuse.

Make sure your presentation clearly recognises a need and ensure you describe the solution in a simple, easy to understand format.

Submission Details

Entries must comply with the following:

- A3 boards (max. four, 700 gsm) showing design development and final designs; if you submit a product solution, one board must show all elevations of it to provide an understanding of the assembly
- a short, typewritten text (max. 400 words, sans serif, 14pt) expressing your idea development from research to final designs, to help position your proposal
- a further typewritten list of bullet points (sans serif, 14pt) detailing the principal benefits of the proposal
- any models or mock-ups should be submitted as photographs or printouts mounted on A3 board (this can be in addition to the four design boards)
 - do not submit 3D work at this stage
- one sketchbook only, related to the brief
- students short listed for interview will be asked to prepare a five minute presentation outlining their proposal and will be expected to bring along 3D material to support their presentation
- all work, (except the sketchbook), should be submitted on A3 lightweight card and everything should carry the RSA label on the back. Do not submit work in plastic sleeves or on foam board, metal, wood or Perspex, or in boxes; these requirements are in the interests of students to ensure the safety of their work whilst in storage and transit, and to ensure that it can be displayed for judging

Wired Design

Innovative uses for steel wire

Background

U.K. Steel Wire

Steel Wire is an extremely versatile and attractive material that exhibits distinctive technical, aesthetic and environmental qualities: it is appealing and beneficial in a wide range of applications. The U.K. Steel Wire Industry can only remain successful and viable if it succeeds in developing new and imaginative concepts and designs that exploit the unique qualities of this versatile material. Historically it has maintained its position by:

- devising new applications for steel wire
- changing designs of existing products to enhance appearance, and to reduce cost
- constantly devising and evolving new production processes
- offsetting high labour costs by enhancing efficiency in other ways e.g. automation
- making best use of our island status by providing faster and better response than its competitors

The virtues and qualities of steel wire

- it exhibits ultra-high strength: in the high carbon steel sector there has been a big push in recent years towards higher strength steels, driven by cost and weight reduction, under the 'lighter – stronger' heading. One example is in the main cables for suspension bridges, which are being produced in increasingly higher tensile strengths. In the vehicle sector, there is call for higher strength wire filaments for steel braced radial tyres, driven by the push for weight reduction in cars
- it is an aesthetically attractive material: steel wire is used in the fashion industry and in a variety of other applications: in wigs; as components in the garment industry (e.g. hooks and eyes, bra supports); fine wire can also be woven into cloth. At a different scale, architectural wire cloth has aesthetic qualities that make it ideal used as a skin allowing subtle changes of colour and light at different angles, and it offers a myriad of options for interior application as ceilings and screens

- it is an environmentally friendly material: steel lasts longer than many other materials and offers long-term value for consumers. Steel is also 100% recyclable (over 50% of new steel comes from old re-melted steel scrap), meaning less waste in landfills. Stainless steel is durable, hygienic and environmentally friendly and is therefore less of a burden on the country's waste disposal and recycling resources. It cleans easily, making it the first choice for strict hygiene conditions, such as hospitals, kitchens, and other environments where sanitation is a priority

The design challenge

Given the versatile nature of steel wire and its broad range of potential end uses, this project seeks to engage as wide a range of discipline responses as possible (e.g. product, engineering, architecture, interiors, fashion etc) to develop new and innovative uses of this exciting material that exploit its innate properties and strengths. Innovation is the key here: we want you to investigate new and untapped areas, rather than re-working areas where steel wire has already been explored (eg jewellery, some domestic products etc). The judges are looking for new ideas, concepts and strategies that would both support the buoyancy of the U.K. Wire Industry and add value to any end-product through the processes and applications used in its making. As an example, in the manufacture of flexible woven belts for industrial use, it is the weaving of the steel wire, and the difficulty inherent in that, that makes it an added-value product. Bear this in mind when exploring ideas for your own potential uses. At the same time also be aware of the other end of the scale and that simple products can be made directly from the raw material (eg pins, needles, screws, springs etc) and then covered with metallic or other coatings for protection or decorative effect.

Some useful facts about steel wire

- steel is a risk-free alternative to plastics (which can leach potentially harmful toxins – such as Bisphenol A – during regular use, exposure to heat, and especially after cleaning). Many of the plastic articles used in the home and in manufacturing could be redesigned in steel and furthermore exploit its greater strength (think of other materials that could benefit from being replaced by steel wire)
- steel could be used directly in the recycling industry e.g. in the many different types of containers used to gather recyclable materials
- structures and other products could be re-designed using high strength steels both for their structural and aesthetic qualities, combined with hygiene, making it attractive for e.g. stylish interior applications
- its strength, durability and attractive appearance make it highly suitable for robust applications in e.g. security products (think of barbed wire, wire netting etc.) or gabions or reinforcing wire for concrete structures (gabions are steel cages that, when filled with earth or rocks, are used to support earth embankments)
- gardening and garden design is a growth area, and garden products and features could incorporate steel materials
- its shape retention in woven form and its suitability for strong yet near invisible fastenings make it desirable in the area of fashion and decorative products

Submission details

We are encouraging multidisciplinary team entries from a wide range of design disciplines such as product, interior, architectural, jewellery or fashion design, in combination – where appropriate – with relevant areas such as engineering, and production technologies. While we realise the inherent difficulties of multi-disciplinary entries, individual discipline entries are welcome but consultations with representatives of other relevant disciplines should be made clear and be well-documented.

You may respond to this challenge taking any approach, as long as you have clearly identified the problem or opportunities, and understand the qualities of the material, and current and potential new applications for this through your research.

Your flat work submission must include a single A4 overview sheet stating the design issue, how you identified it, and what your design delivers for the intended end use.

You should also include:

- 1 research showing which sources and who you have consulted, how this was done, and how it helped you understand the relevant design issues and opportunities
- 2 evidence of your research and understanding of the suitability of the properties of the material and production technologies for the conditions and uses envisaged
- 3 evidence of working or consultation with other disciplines as part of your research and concept development and of how the idea was developed,
- 4 visualisations of the application of your ideas and how your proposed design would be used
- 5 documentation of how your concept has been evaluated and how this improves on any existing solutions and applications

Flatwork should be submitted on lightweight card (max. five A3 boards; 700gsm) and accompanied by no more than one sketchbook. All work, (except the sketchbook), should carry the RSA label on the back. Do not submit work in plastic sleeves or on foam board, metal, wood or Perspex, or in boxes; these requirements are in the interests of students to ensure the safety of their work whilst in storage and transit, and to ensure that it can be displayed for judging

Sustainable Packaging

Designing out waste to minimise environmental impact

Introduction

Ever growing levels of consumption as well as growing pressure on local authority budgets provide a constant challenge to keep the environment free of discarded rubbish and to reduce waste that eventually goes to landfill sites. The RSA, through many strands of its work, promotes the reduction of waste of all kinds and recognises the important role for design in helping to achieve this.

Within this general context, Local Authority Trading Standards Departments are responsible for enforcing the Packaging (Essential Requirements) Regulations 2003 – [P(ER)R] (you must consult the Regulations prior to commencing the project – these can be found under *Resources* on the project web page). Whilst not complying with the regulations is a criminal offence the wording of the legislation is open to misinterpretation and includes loose wording that does not help with enforcement. The importance and implications of this legislation seems to be not widely recognised and so the aim of this project is to help highlight the importance of minimising packaging waste both to the designers of tomorrow and the enforcers of today (i.e. Trading Standards Officers).

Against this background however, packaging does fulfil some useful functions, including the physical protection of goods, point of sale display/promotion, storage, social ritual (for example present giving), and the provision of product information.

Designers can take action through sustainable-led packaging design: intelligent design which focuses on reducing the environmental impact of packaging and improving efficiency.

The Project

You are asked to consider designs for the sales packaging of any *retail* consumer product of your choice (possibly selecting a product or product grouping that you consider to be particularly over-packaged), with the specific intention of minimising its environmental impact and fully meeting the requirements of P(ER)R. Whilst the choice is open concerning which product you select, you are advised to spend some time examining the various options.

Undertaking background research – in order to develop design-led solutions that represent both innovative and valid responses to the demands of the regulations – is an important part of the preparation for undertaking this project. You should ensure the following:

- that you explore your chosen product packaging within the wider context of existing market and products, patterns of use, production, distribution, sale, consumption, life cycle and lifestyle
- a huge amount of research exists analysing the life cycle of packaging and its contents; it is important to have an understanding of this ‘whole picture’ in order to develop solutions that are really innovative and address the issue in depth
- that your proposals are based on real environmental improvements that also increase awareness among the customer base rather than being superficial ‘green’ marketing
- that you are aware of the central role local authorities play in this whole area – not least the role of their Trading Standards Officers in enforcing the packaging regulations
- there are big challenges entailed in “closing the loop” on many products and packaging, and preventing their linear disposal in land fill or incinerators is a huge task. By using the materials that we manufacture again and again, lower demands can be placed upon primary resources and transportation and help to prevent the build up of waste. In this sense, closed loop manufacture is an ideal but recycling should always be to the highest quality possible. You may wish to explore this area as part of your research

Participants can be from **any** discipline and may work singly or as multi-disciplinary teams. The important thing is not to let conventional practice hamper creative thinking. You may wish to consider, among others, the following approaches to broaden your thinking:

- redesigning packaging so that material quantity, energy, production processes are reduced
- giving the packaging another function so that it is retained
- reusing the packaging e.g. some dishwasher containers that then require a plastic bag product only to top up
- returnable packaging
- bio-degradable packaging

Guidelines

You should explore as an initial starting point, one or more of the following sustainability principles, which are explained in more detail on the **demi** website (www.demi.org.uk):

Appropriateness – choosing the right thing

Efficiency – doing more with less

Equity – fairness within and across all systems

Scale – the right size from the right place involving the right people

Sufficiency – how much is enough?

Systems – connections between society and nature

Submission Details

Your submission should detail the packaging design, packaging graphics/information and company logo. Presentation work should include:

- Context: a description of the design in relation to general purpose and design for sustainability principles. It should also demonstrate to the client the benefits of this packaging over traditional methods. An indication of the cost of producing X number of packs and how to dispose of them in an environmentally efficient way should also be included
- design communication in the form of isometric or orthographic projections, working drawings, exploded views
- photographs of prototypes and models
- materials and production specification
- graphics specification and illustrations
- all work should be submitted on A3 lightweight card (max. five boards; 700 gsm) and carry an RSA label on the back; do not submit work in plastic sleeves or on foam board, metal, wood or perspex, or in boxes; these requirements are in the interests of students to ensure the safety of their work whilst in storage and transit, and to ensure that it can be displayed for judging

Streets Ahead

Making street environments safe and accessible

Background

The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association's mission is to provide guide dogs, mobility and other rehabilitation services that meet the needs of blind and partially-sighted people.

To enable people to make best of use of their mobility, Guide Dogs campaigns for the rights of blind and partially-sighted people, particularly on access issues. In addition, to increase public understanding of the effects of sight loss, there is also a national eye health education programme. The work of The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association transforms the lives of many thousands of blind and partially-sighted people on a daily basis, helping them lead lives of independence and freedom.

Most guide dog owners feel that public spaces and the general physical environment have become more difficult, both for themselves and their guide dogs. The streets they move along have become busier and there are more obstacles to negotiate (A boards, bollards, street stalls, cars and bicycles on the pavement, road works, cones, wheelie bins etc.)

In addition, worthy attempts to solve some problems have actually exacerbated the situation faced by blind and partially-sighted people and created new ones. For example, posts to stop cars parking on the pavement have themselves become difficult obstacles, and shared space initiatives which are intended to make streets more pedestrian friendly create real dangers for visually and hearing impaired people.

We therefore pose the question: how can innovative design proposals reverse this trend and help provide a street environment that helps rather than hinders the mobility of blind and partially-sighted people?

Brief

Phase 1 – Identify and investigate a route or area to discover how the physical environment affects mobility for blind or partially-sighted people. You should document the route using suitable media and consider how various kinds of sight loss would affect the journey. Clearly, an understanding of the main eye conditions would be important and auditing the experience of a visually-impaired person would add to this understanding.

A report on this stage of the process should be prepared and can be in written (max. one side A4) and/or audio-visual format.

Phase 2 – Propose design solutions that would address the needs of blind and partially-sighted people moving around the streets and, in particular, guide dog owners, whilst also taking into account the requirements of people with other disabilities.

- Among the areas you may wish to consider might be:
- street construction and layout – textures, issues of shared space, etc.
 - street furniture: bollards, benches, posts, rubbish bins etc.
 - technology/product design – navigational systems, signage etc.

Your proposals should show a clear understanding of user need supported by thorough user-based research. Multidisciplinary team entries from a combination of design and relevant areas such as sociology, ergonomics, human factors are welcome if you choose to work in this way.

Submission Details

Phase 1: a report on this stage of the process should be prepared and can be in written (max. one side A4) and/or audio-visual format

Phase 2:

- A3 boards (max. four, 700 gsm) showing design development and final designs
- a list of bullet points (sans serif, 14pt) detailing the principal benefits of the proposal
- any models or mock-ups should be submitted as photographs or printouts mounted on A3 board (this can be in addition to the four design boards) – do not submit 3D work at this stage
- one sketchbook only, related to the brief
- all work (except the sketchbook) should be submitted on A3 lightweight card and everything should carry the RSA label on the back. Do not submit work in plastic sleeves or on foam board, metal, wood or Perspex, or in boxes; these requirements are in the interests of students to ensure the safety of their work whilst in storage and transit, and to ensure that it can be displayed for judging

Ceramic Futures

Exploring the potential of ceramic material

This project aims to encourage the exploration of the potential of ceramic material by students of all disciplines

Background

Ceramics has a diverse and rich heritage, claiming both the oldest recorded products created by humans and a contemporary industry that is vigorous and competitive. The UK ceramic industry is reliant for the retention of its position in world markets upon the development of quality products based upon appropriate design style, advanced manufacturing techniques, superior materials ingenuity and a high degree of craft skills and know how. The properties of ceramic have led to the manufacture of a wide range of products and applications from the obvious tiles and tableware, sanitary ware and garden products, to the less apparent achieved using technical high spec ceramics in architectural applications, for instance.

Brief

The following two options offer opportunities for designers across the disciplines as well as for those concerned solely with ceramics. The first is an exciting opportunity to engage with the material in order to explore entirely new product possibilities. The second encourages the exploration of bone china as a ceramic medium (your chosen option should be clearly stated on your submission, both on each RSA label alongside the project number and on the front of your boards).

Option 1 – No Boundaries

Traditionally few designers from, for instance, fashion and the high technology industries engage with what are regarded as craft materials. This brief encourages student designers from any design discipline (e.g. architecture, engineering, product, fashion, graphics, interiors) to explore new product possibilities for ceramic materials.

You are asked to imagine that the material has just been discovered and you are exploiting its potential as viewed from your own discipline. Ceramic materials might enhance your own field or you may wish to enter the world of ceramic production with solutions informed by your own discipline. These might include the transfer of techniques and material qualities from your own field into that of ceramics.

or

Option 2 – The maker and industry

Bone china was developed in England in the 19th century as a result of trying to produce porcelain emulating products from the Far East and continental Europe. The clay body consists of 50% bone ash which gives it its translucency and hard, durable characteristics.

The UK industry today is synonymous with the finest bone china product and is still held in the highest esteem as the prestige material for ceramic products.

Those with an intimate knowledge of the craft of ceramics are invited to think like a designer whilst practising as a maker to create, develop and illustrate new forms and (or) surface decoration using bone china as the medium. Use your creative skills and individual aesthetic to experiment and create the new.

We would encourage makers to discard preconceptions of industrially produced ceramics: perhaps now, more than ever, industry is far less conventional than you might think.

You may use whatever forming techniques are best suited to demonstrate your proposals. However you may find slipcasting to be the most sympathetic method of forming your final design.

Please note: items created for the gallery environment and without the potential to be used or adapted for production will not be considered.

Market

Some new products fulfil a need – others create their own market. State where you think the market lies for your 'product'. Your ideas may be about function, alternatively they may be simply objects of desire and beauty.

Aim

To encourage the exploration and exploitation of the applications and aesthetic of ceramic material

Submission Details

Entries must comply with the following:

- A3 boards (max. four; 700 gsm) showing visual research material, design development and final designs (including a drawing or photograph of final product, where applicable)
- a short typewritten statement (max. 400 words, sans serif, 14pt) expressing idea development from research to final designs, to help communicate your proposal
- maximum of one sketchbook only, related to the brief
- all work (except the sketch book) should be submitted on A3 lightweight card and everything should carry an RSA label on the back; do not submit work in plastic sleeves or on foam board, metal, wood or perspex, or in boxes; these requirements are in the interests of students to ensure the safety of their work whilst in storage and transit and in the interest of the safety of the handlers. It will also ensure that your work can be displayed for judging
- **do not send** ceramic sample(s); shortlisted candidates will be asked to bring these to interview

Postage Stamps

Cultural festivals and celebrations

Background

Royal Mail's Special Stamp programme is developed with regard to a number of criteria that include the following:

- to commemorate important anniversaries
- to commemorate events of national importance, as well as significant contemporary UK successes on the international stage
- to reflect the contribution of the UK to world affairs in the broadest range of activities, from the arts and humanities to science and technology
- to explore 'the British way of life', celebrating the diversity of cultures and interests within the UK
- to contribute to the cultural life of the UK through the patronage of art and design, and thereby act as a showcase for the best of contemporary British creative talent
- the programme is also designed to include a variety of subjects, imagery and techniques, in order that the interests and tastes of different groups are catered for over each year of the programme.

Brief

A vital aspect of the UK's rich diversity is the cultural festivals and celebrations of the various religious groups and nationalities that make up the population.

Your brief is to explore ways to depict these celebrations on a set of six 1st class stamps at definitive size that could potentially be purchased at the beginning of the year and then used to mark the various seasonal events at the appropriate dates.

As these festivals are visually rich, we would encourage contributions from all forms of 'image-making' disciplines – for example, graphic design, illustration, photography, typography, painting and textile design, as well as collaborative projects. The research that you undertake as part of the project should provide a basis for choosing which festivals to depict and demonstrate how best to represent these. Your research must be entirely independent, and must not involve direct contact with cultural organisations.

In recent years, Royal Mail has introduced more stamp designs at definitive size (20.3x24.1 mm) to expand the range of pictorial definitives available to collectors and to meet the demands of commercial and operational viability. This reduced size provides an additional challenge in the design of stamps as the 'miniature work of art' is further 'miniaturised'. All submissions for this project should be produced at that size and as a **set of six stamps**. The values should all be first class.

Remember, that the treatment and execution can be as innovative as you choose – aim to demonstrate a fresh approach.

The images you create should transfer to a small square of paper and engage, delight, reflect and appeal to as broad a range of people as possible. Bear in mind that although these stamps must hold together as a set, they will most often be seen as individual stamps, and therefore will need to be just as powerful in isolation.

Market

- a stamp is a receipt for a service and is available to anyone within the UK wishing to use the postal service
- this service covers the globe and therefore the stamp is an ambassador for the UK when travelling to overseas destinations
- a new and younger generation of stamp collector

Aims

- to explore further opportunities for definitive size stamps
- to produce an innovative response that challenges the brief
- to think beyond conventional treatments and styles – look at recent examples of innovation in stamp design
- to demonstrate originality of thought and approach based on sound research

RSA

Guidelines

When considering the design of a stamp, it is important to remember the following points:

- think on a small scale from the outset
- the Queen's head must appear top right or left facing towards the design and must be in a correct relationship with the overall stamp size (this is shown on the digital overlays, available from the *Resource* link on the web page)
- once research is complete and decisions have been made on approach, preliminary visuals should be reviewed at stamp size
- since a stamp on an envelope is evidence of the pre-payment for postage, and because the recipient is primarily interested in the content of the envelope, each stamp must convey an immediate message
- design should combine clarity with an interest in detail
- there should be clear visual distinction between one stamp design and another to ensure there is no confusion at the post office counter as to specific stamp requests

Submission Details

Entries must comply with the following:

- an A3 board showing the six designs, ideally rendered four times larger than actual size
- an A3 board showing reductions of the stamps at actual size
- two A3 boards demonstrating the development of the thought process from the original research to final concept
- one sketchbook only, related to the brief
- a short, typewritten text (max. 50-100 words only, sans serif, 14pt) expressing your 'big idea', to help position your proposal
- the price may appear anywhere provided it is legible; it should not appear over an intricately textured area
- the design of each stamp should be such as to produce a consistent and cohesive range
- all work, except sketchbook, should be submitted on A3 lightweight card (700 gsm) and carry a RSA label on the back; do not submit work in plastic sleeves or on foam board, metal, wood or Perspex, or in boxes; these requirements are in the interests of students to ensure the safety of their work whilst in storage and transit, and to ensure that it can be displayed for judging

Fashion

Urban Sophistication

Background

We all carry various electronic devices around with us everyday from mobile phones to laptops, iPods to PDAs and games machines. Unfortunately carrying all of these items can be cumbersome and bulky, especially when you are travelling and want to look modern and streamlined.

Brief

Your brief is to design a capsule collection of four/five outfits for autumn that a young professional would take on a promotional trip to a city destination. This must include garments that will cover daywear going through to the evening. You are also to include items of luggage that will accommodate the various electronic gadgets that this person will need for a four-day trip.

Audience

Your customer is a young, creative, fashion-conscious male or female who travels extensively.

Aims

- to be able to design to a specific market and come up with practical, adaptable items that are also stylish
- to research fabrics, prints and graphic ideas that will pull together a small workable collection
- to demonstrate how pockets and storage within garments and accessories can be incorporated to accommodate today's differing electronic devices
- to think about the inside as well as the outside of garments

Submission Details

Entries must comply with the following:

- two sheets of work to be submitted on A2 lightweight card (700 gsm)
- Each sheet to be clearly marked : Sheet 1: *Ideas Board*; Sheet 2: *Presentation Board*
- one sketchbook relating to the project and containing first thought and original work
- the style and quality should be of a professional standard, with clear illustrations, not elaborately packaged; your designs and fabric swatches should be the most important items on the page
- work should be submitted in a format and scale that shows the items to their best advantage

Sheet 1 – Ideas Board

This ideas board should show drawings or photos of your research into both your collection and the accessories that accompany it, together with preliminary rough drawings and fabric swatches for your collection plus photos of toile ideas in progress, fabric sourcing information including price, name and country of origin of the fabric supplier.

Sheet 2 – Presentation Board

- This board should say everything about your collection and express every point you wish to make, a clearly illustrated line up of your collection of four/five outfits in colour, fabric swatches, back views, design details and written description of the garments
- all work should be secured properly and easy to handle
 - if you are short listed for interview you will be expected to bring a toile or garment with you; do not submit it at the first stage
 - all work (except sketch books) should be submitted on lightweight card and everything should carry a RSA label on the back: do not submit work in plastic sleeves or on foam, metal, wood or Perspex board, or in boxes: these requirements are in the interests of students to ensure the safety of their work whilst in storage and transit, and to ensure it can be displayed for judging

Fashion

Creating a New Aesthetic

Background

'Craft' is often used to describe pieces that possess unique qualities or features resulting from the practice of traditional techniques, or else to illustrate something that has been individually made such as a handcrafted shirt, suit or shoe.

However, craft can also be viewed as a flexible manufacturing system. While mass manufactured merchandise more often than not guarantees a certain level of quality, it can also lead to products that are indistinguishable from one another. This is where craft can provide the means to bridge the gap between mass produced and customized products, and thus add value and increase desirability.

In the context of fashion, this could happen through the use of different techniques (e.g. embroidery, appliqué, beading, printing, weaving etc). For instance, big jeans brands like Levi's, Lee and latterly Diesel, are feeling the pressure of this phenomenon, where handcrafted, limited edition vintage jeans are highly coveted over big brand names. Smaller, niche labels are going back to the tradition of dyeing with natural Indigo, creating selvedge jeans that require a special technique of cutting and more fabric.

While India has evolved as a manufacturing and more recently as a consumer society, it still retains a strong connection to its traditional techniques and processes for various products. Also, as interest in India and its culture grows, many of its traditional techniques particularly the ones showcased by couture designers have attracted attention in the West. Look for example at Japanese designers: designers such as Issey Miyake have created a unique style with a distinctly modern and universal appeal but with an aesthetic informed by Japanese heritage and tradition.

Brief

With the above in mind **choose one of the following options** to illustrate the new and innovative ways of assimilating the rich tradition of Indian craft and techniques with modern fabrics and manufacturing processes. This project is not about using Indian ethnic textiles on international silhouettes; rather, it is about using traditional Indian craft techniques to create a new aesthetic that has universal appeal and can be produced commercially.

either:

Heritage

Create an individual yet classically cut and luxurious collection of five formal outfits for Autumn/Winter 2007/08 for a sophisticated, well-travelled market with an interest in different global cultural movements (aimed at either men or women 25+). Each outfit should consist of a minimum of two garments and have high production values.

or

Be Game

Create an edgy, individual, urban look that is contemporary and directional but without being blasé, for Autumn/Winter 2007/08. This capsule collection of five outfits (minimum of two garments per outfit) should be aimed at a teenage market (17+), either male or female – young people with a sense of adventure and a city lifestyle, but who also have a sense of social responsibility.

Aims for either option

- to demonstrate the ability to design to a clearly defined market
- to create a collection the desirability of which is enhanced by clever application of craft traditions and modern manufacturing

Submission Details

Entries must comply with the following:

- two sheets of work, each to be submitted on A2 lightweight card (700 gsm)
- one sketchbook relating to the project and containing first thoughts and original work
- the style and quality should be of a professional standard, with clear illustrations, not elaborately packaged; your designs and fabric swatches should be the most important items on the page
- work should be submitted in a format and scale that shows the items to their best advantage

Sheet 1 – Ideas Board

- this ideas board should show fabric swatches, details of craft techniques and preliminary rough drawings in colour for the five outfits for Autumn/Winter 2007/08. Also photos of toile ideas in progress, fabric sourcing information including price, name and country of origin of the fabric supplier

Sheet 2 – Presentation Board

- this board should say everything about your collection and express every point you wish to present. It must include clearly illustrated drawings of the line up of the five outfits, all in colour, plus fabric swatches, details of craft techniques, back views, design details and written descriptions of the garments
- all work should be secured properly and easy to handle
- if you are short listed for interview you will be expected to bring a toile or garment with you; do not submit it at the first stage
- all work (except sketch books) should be submitted on lightweight card and everything should carry an RSA label on the back: do not submit work in plastic sleeves or other folders, or on foam, metal, wood or Perspex board, or in boxes: these requirements are in the interests of students to ensure the safety of their work whilst in storage and transit, and to ensure it can be displayed for judging

Fashion Interiors

Protection and Provenance

Background

The jury welcomes submissions from forward thinking students with interests in both Fashion and Interiors with a passion and imagination for innovation through fabrication, imagery and colour. Also, you should bear in mind that we are the guardians for an increasingly fragile world, environment, and global population inextricably connected with and affected by each of our individual decisions.

You should focus on the living space creating an overall concept/look appropriate to the lifestyle and environment. The main focus should be upon fabrics within this area.

Brief

Protection and Provenance

Protection: "Of the planet? From the elements? Of disappearing heritage/cultures?"

Provenance: "A place of origin, as a work of art"

This is a deliberately "wide open" brief to allow you to take a more individually and more in-depth researched approach. This should be reflected through your submission, particularly in your sketchbook which should clearly communicate your "journey" through the project.

Influences – the mix, the bringing together of cultures, inspired by memories, cultural experiences, both first hand and through moving image. A collection of exotic souvenirs either virtual or tangible. But then with an understanding of provenance and consideration of a product, developed with the knowledge of where it has come from, who has made it and for what? A respect and consideration of the artistic language of a culture with a wish to protect and preserve, rather than an eclectic superficiality.

Then reworked through cross-referencing, reworking and "rehabilitating" using the combination and mixing of style, contemporary, traditional craft, hand and machine worked processes.

Colour – it should be both sympathetic with the subject matter and intended usage within the physical space and chosen market area.

Market

Unlimited spending power, well informed, fashion-forward consumers, who have an appreciation and concern for both traditional and non-traditional imagery, technique and décor. Above all, increasingly aware of sustainability and ecological issues.

Aims

- to demonstrate an awareness of sustainability issues through process, research, material sourcing and manufacture
- to produce an exciting and innovative fabric collection consisting of core products and related accessories for a domestic interior or public space (if your collection is for a public space, please state what sort of place or business)
- to demonstrate understanding of target market lifestyle
- to research and experiment using innovative combinations of techniques, media and colour
- to demonstrate the use of drawing through initial research and finished designs
- to demonstrate consideration of scale, layout and colour

Guidelines

The jury will be looking for original concepts and ideas with finished designs relating well to the target market. The brief is about innovation and emphasis will be placed upon good design development of an idea. You should choose a particular room within a domestic setting or public space, focusing upon core products such as curtains, upholstery and so on, with a consideration of how they will work alongside other accessories/products such as cushions, wall coverings, floor coverings and lighting. Only original drawings and colour studies should be used, although these can be supplemented with original photographs and computer aided design. Large drawings and designs can be folded/butted to comply with size submission specifications but must still conform to the limit of four A2 (A3 where possible) boards. It is important to convey the end use of designs effectively through a room visualisation/illustration.

Please note that eligibility for the **Eddie Squires Bursary for Outstanding Contemporary Printed Furnishing Fabric Design** will be based upon the demonstration of good freehand drawing skills being used throughout research and design development. You can include photographs of original drawings on any of your boards where appropriate; these need not be finished drawings, but could also be drawn notes/ideas. Evidence of the consistent and abundant use of drawing within the sketchbook will be a distinct advantage for consideration of this award.

Submission Details

Entries must comply with the following:

- evidence that you have considered issues of sustainability throughout your project.
- A2 boards (A3 where possible) (max. four and no double or hinged boards, 700 gsm) showing design development and research together with final designs (these must show an indication of repeat)
- include one storyboard illustrating the colour palette and inspiration. You should clearly indicate the range of colours used through colour gamuts/chips on this storyboard
- state clearly whether the designs are for print, weave, embroidery, knit or mixed media
- printed and/or woven/knitted fabric samples indicating details of materials, construction and production method. Printed fabric designs can be shown as paperwork; method of printing, number of colours and type of fabric must be indicated. Woven and knitted fabric samples should be attached to sheets with full details of the yarn used, construction and method of production; woven fabrics may be shaft or Jacquard, knitted fabrics should be machine-knitted. Embroidered fabrics may be machine or hand embroidered; samples should be attached to sheets and state type of base cloth
- visualisation/illustration of concept showing all core products within the selected space
- all work must show clear evidence that drawing/visual studies have been used throughout the project
- a short typewritten reflective summary (max. 400 words, sans serif, 14pt) showing evidence of site-specific research, explaining concept and its development and suitability to the intended consumer market
- one sketchbook only, related to the brief, showing development of initial ideas and including original artwork in preference to all magazine cuttings and photocopies
- all work (except the sketchbook) should be submitted on A2 lightweight card (A3 where possible) and everything should carry an RSA label on the back; do not submit work in plastic sleeves or on foam board, metal, wood or perspex, or in boxes; these requirements are in the interests of students to ensure the safety of their work whilst in storage and transit, and to ensure that it can be displayed for judging