



Brief 3:



# In your skin



**How might we increase the skin confidence of every young person to enable their unique identity to flourish?**



RSA

+



Bond & Coyne



## Brief 3:

# In your skin

In partnership:



**Bond & Coyne**

There is one award available for this brief:  
**In your skin**  
award of £2,000

## How might we increase the skin confidence of every young person to enable their unique identity to flourish?

### Background

- Everyone should feel confident, safe and able to celebrate their skin. Despite perceived beauty standards, there is no 'normal' and it's important for everyone to find what works for their individual needs and desires.
- Skin confidence and inclusivity is a challenge that spans generations. However, for this brief we're inviting you to focus on 16-25-year-olds. As a group, the approach to appearance and beauty is becoming more centred around [identity](#) and personal expression.
- Being confident with your identity and in your own skin is a constant challenge; [52 percent of 11-16-year-olds](#) regularly worry about their appearance and 36 percent said they would do 'whatever it takes' to look good.
- While social media provides a platform for self-expression and connection, it can also set unrealistic expectations and drive misinformation. [A survey with 14-24-year-olds in the UK](#) found that Snapchat, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram all led to increased feelings of depression, anxiety, poor body image and loneliness.
- Perceptions of beauty constantly change and vary globally, differing between cultures and individuals. Certain innovations and treatments are built around these perceptions and don't work for all skin types resulting in damaging consequences. This can be referred to in some cases as racist product development:
  - For example, in many cultures people strive for flawless skin with no sign of hair, resulting in laser hair removal. Due to the technology used, these treatments can have negative health implications, such as burning, discolouration or scarring on people with darker skin.
  - Whilst skin tanning products are seen positively in western cultures, skin lightening products, as used in other parts of the world, are often seen negatively.
- This is mirrored in the medical sector where current systems aren't supporting skin practitioners to diagnose, treat and advise their diversity of patients effectively. This is due to lack of scientific knowledge and gaps in our understanding of ethnic skin health.
- In a medical setting skin is usually defined by seven limited types. It's time to shift the narrative and celebrate skin in a broader and more individual sense. How might we platform the beauty of skin diversity, considering colour alongside age, gender, and health (including chronic skin conditions such as vitiligo, psoriasis, eczema and keratosis pilaris)?
- It's critical that the future of skincare is based on scientific evidence. Open access to trusted and understandable information is key to developing approaches that enable people to be safe in their skin. How can we ensure skincare, education and innovation are driven by inclusive, scientific data that is clear and accessible? If we can increase visibility, we have the potential to challenge misconceptions and inspire skin confidence.
- To enable unique identities to thrive we need to feel safe, comfortable and accepted. This can be described as 'belonging', which means you feel valued because of who you are.
- Our identities change throughout our lives. We all hold multiple identities: cultural, racial, familial, professional, and more. The relationships we form within ourselves, and others around us, are key to our wellbeing. Accepting, celebrating and nurturing our uniqueness helps us to grow confidence and find joy.

### How to approach the brief

- Be mindful that skincare and skin health products can go far beyond traditional products that we apply directly onto our skin. For example, technology like humidifiers and shavers, as well as materials we wear can all affect our skin health.
- Traditionally, many products have been designed for specific, binary ideas of gender or colour, however these categories do not do justice to the complexity of gender and ethnic identities and expressions. We are looking for inclusive and innovative proposals that celebrate identity: gender, sexuality, age, ethnicity, disability, skin conditions, culture and more.

- Your approach needs to be rooted in participatory and collaborative practices that help build community pride and cohesion. Through this brief we invite you to explore what defines a community: is it a sense of place that connects people, a common interest, shared values? Clearly illustrate how you have equitably engaged your chosen group, whilst considering the wider communities that will interact with your idea.
- Skin safety is critical. Ensure your proposal is driven by proven scientific data.
- Think about the wider systemic barriers that may be affecting your audience's skin confidence. How can these barriers be addressed? How can perceptions and mindsets around skin and identity be shifted?
- Ensure you explore the socio-economic factors of your chosen group. We are looking for proposals that have considered viability and ensured their final outcome is financially accessible and sustainable.
- We encourage you to bring together multiple disciplines and approaches to address the complex challenges within this brief. Explore ways of building a multidisciplinary team or inviting people to enrich your research.
- Be open-minded, creative, and inquisitive, we're interested in multi-channel proposals that consider different touchpoints. Your solution ultimately needs to aim to play an active role in improving skin confidence amongst young people in some way. For example, this could be physically and mentally, or how we see skin in our society.

For the purposes of illustration only, viable responses could include:

- **An online community group** for people unrepresented in media – allowing them to share their personal experiences to raise awareness around skin diversity.
- **A national festival of skin**, that celebrates skin diversity and invites participants to challenge misconceptions.
- **A digital art project** that allows people to anonymously upload images of their skin conditions to build a living portrait of our collective skin, seeking to question what is normal.  
...and many more are possible.

## Partner information:

### Skin Health Alliance

The Skin Health Alliance is the world's leading skin health accreditation body. We are an independent not-for-profit, working globally alongside dermatologists, scientists and industry. Together we aim to promote skin health education and ensure products meet the highest scientific standards of skin safety. This enables consumers to make the right skincare choices for their individual needs – improving their health and confidence.

### Bond & Coyne

Bond & Coyne is a strategic creative agency. Informed by our love of education, we take a positive, human approach to design-based problem solving. We collaborate with international organisations, turning their knowledge into brand power and creating the momentum for change. This includes working closely with the Skin Health Alliance to challenge damaging misconceptions and grow awareness of scientific approaches to skin health.

## Judging criteria

**Your entry should demonstrate a design thinking approach to the brief and clearly communicate the following principles:**

### Social and environmental impact:

**Social:** How is your approach benefiting people and generations to come? How have you considered diversity and inclusion in your proposal? How have you brought in different voices and perspectives?

**Environmental:** How does your proposal make a positive difference for the natural world in your chosen context? How have you considered effective use of resources including materials and processes that can do more good short and long term for people and planet?

### Rigorous research and compelling insights:

How have you combined your own first-hand research with a review of existing research and wider trends? How are your insights and proposal grounded in people's needs and desires? How have you considered the potential of your chosen place and the global context? How did you get feedback and incorporate new ideas through prototyping and iterating?

### Systems thinking:

What's the bigger picture? How have you considered the root causes of the challenge you're exploring? How does your idea connect to a wider set of issues? What might be some unintended consequences of your proposal?

### Viability:

Have you considered potential models for how your proposal could work in the real world? How could it be funded and sustained financially with the resources and skills needed? What are potential barriers? How would you measure success? How could your proposal be adaptive to changes over time?

### Creativity and innovation:

How is your idea different from existing interventions? Are there unexpected or surprising elements in your proposal? How is it an imaginative and hopeful alternative for the future?

# Entry requirements (Briefs 1-5)

## Open briefs

The competition will open for entries via [sda.theresa.org](https://sda.theresa.org) on 31 January 2024, and the final deadline for entries is 16 March 2024 at 4.00pm GMT.

### Submission requirements

For all briefs EXCEPT the Centenary celebrations brief, the submission requirements are:

**1 x A3 PDF hero image with a one sentence description** – a single 'poster image' that conveys the essence of your project and includes your project title plus a one sentence description. For example: 'Bare technology: a product and service design proposal to convert old computers (e-waste) into simpler, more straightforward, accessible computers for older people'. Your hero image should aim to bring your concept to life – make sure it is vibrant and engaging. Your one sentence description is very important, make sure you take some time to craft an impactful message.

**1 x A3 written summary** – a single A3 PDF page that summarises your big idea using the following format:

- **Problem (50 words max).** What is the specific problem you identified within the brief topic? Who experiences this problem, and how does it impact them?
- **Process (75 words max).** How did you investigate this issue and what were your key insights? What journey did you go through to get to your final proposal?
- **Proposal (50 words max).** What is your proposed intervention? How will it address the problem?

### Online entry

If you are unable to submit online, please contact us by email at [sdaenquiries@rsa.org.uk](mailto:sdaenquiries@rsa.org.uk). As you prepare your submission, please ensure that:

- You do NOT include your name, university/college or other identifying marks anywhere on your submission.
- None of your PDF submission files exceed 10MB – this is the maximum size for each individual file/board when you submit online.

We are open to submissions in alternative formats - such as audio or video. Please contact us for more information if this would help you participate.

**4 x A3 PDF boards outlining your proposal** – 4 pages describing your proposal and responding to the 5 sections of the judging criteria. Number each board in the top right-hand corner in the order they should be viewed by the judges. You may include relevant hyperlinks in your boards, however we cannot guarantee this will be viewed by the panel.

For details on the submission requirements for the Centenary celebrations brief, please see the Centenary celebrations entry requirements and guidelines. Please note that late submissions will not be accepted, and all entrants are encouraged to submit their work in good time before the deadline.

# Competition timeline

**07/09/22**

## Briefs soft launch

The 2023–24 RSA Student Design Awards competition briefs go live on [sda.thersa.org](https://sda.thersa.org).

**Nov–Dec**

## Workshops and events

Free learning workshops and events based on all brief themes.

**14/02/24**

## Early bird deadline

Submit by 4.00pm GMT on 14 February 2024 for a reduced entry rate of £25.

**16/03/24**

## Final deadline

Submit by 4.00pm GMT on 16 March 2024.

**Early June**

## Winners announced

Stay tuned for the big announcement.

**Sept–Oct**

## Online launch events

Sign up to [our newsletter](#) to learn about our in-depth brief launch sessions held by our partners and the SDA Team.

**31/01/24**

## Submissions open

Go to [sda.thersa.org](https://sda.thersa.org) to submit your proposal.

**28/02/23**

## Needs-based bursary deadline

Submit your application for a needs-based bursary to cover the cost of your submission by 11.59pm GMT on 28 February 2024.

**March–May**

## Judging

Entries will be evaluated in a two-stage process: shortlisting and interviews.

**Late June**

## Awards ceremony

Join us to celebrate the 2023–24 RSA SDA Winners.