ONE MAN’S WASTE

Brief
Design a way to help eliminate the concept of waste within developed societies by promoting it as a valuable material resource.

Challenge and scope
In developed countries we enjoy a life of fantastic convenience and quality due to the abundance of material goods, tools and technologies available to us. In the production and consumption of these goods, enormous volumes of ‘waste’ are generated that we have no effective way of using, despite the expense and energy expended in their creation. Generally, in manufacturing, 90% of the raw materials which go into making durable products become waste even before the product leaves the factory, and approximately 80% of what is made gets thrown away within the first six months of its life.

The RSA’s Great Recovery project notes that “It is estimated there is five times more gold in a tonne of electronic waste than there is in a tonne of mined ore from a gold mine.”

The quantity of resources consumed and waste generated is increasing at an alarming rate, due to rapid urbanisation and the expansion of the middle classes in populous nations such as Brazil, China and India. Improved wealth and quality of life is something we desire for every person on the planet; however our current resource management and concept of ‘waste’ is unsustainable in a way that will ultimately lead to a catastrophic depletion of finite and renewable resources. Buckminster Fuller described it best saying: “Pollution is nothing but the resources we are not harvesting. We allow them to disperse because we are ignorant of their value.” - pollution and waste, both words for resources we are unequipped to use.

This brief asks you to design a way of aiding the elimination of waste in developed societies by changing our perception of waste and how we address it. How can we reuse the existing materials that we have already mined from the earth, the materials that are currently in the products that we use and the buildings and environments that surround us, materials that will soon be thought of as ‘waste’, when they reach the end of their current life?

Useful examples of existing products and services that you may want to reference include:

- Heineken WOBO (bottle that’s a brick)
- Atlantic Leather (leather made from fish skins, notably salmon)
- Freecycle
- Marks & Spencer Shwopping initiative
- Obsidian Project by Studio Drift
- Newspaper wood
- Flip-flops made from recycled tyres
- The Ocean Cleanup, waste collection system

Your response may be a new material, textile, brand, product, system, service or even business model. For the purposes of illustration only, the following would all be viable responses:

- a new or repurposed textile or soft furnishing product made from existing waste streams
- a material solution: for example, one that transforms a ‘worthless’ waste source into a useful, potentially valuable, raw material for the production of new products
- a new product designed to inspire the reclamation and re-use of its materials, clearly illustrating the value of waste as material source
- a service solution or environment, digital or physical, that facilitates the collection, sorting, extracting, processing and/or transformation of a waste source into a viable raw material source
- a communication solution: such as a marketing campaign or an app that promotes the idea of waste as a valuable resource
- a system: such as an initiative, website or app that facilitates the obtaining, trading or sourcing of secondary materials reclaimed from waste streams

… and many others are possible.

AWARDS
Natracare Award of £1000
Eddie Squires Award of £1500
Paid internship at Springetts Brand Consultants

For full Award details, please see page 2.

The judging panel may decide on more than one winner and will allocate the awards accordingly. In addition, the judging panel may award commendations.

How this brief will be judged
1 Social and environmental benefit 10%
2 Research 25%
3 Design thinking 15%
4 Commercial awareness 25%
5 Execution 20%
6 Magic 5%

SUPPORTED BY The Patricia Tindale Legacy and the Eddie Squires Legacy to the RSA
Judging criteria

There are six judging criteria that your entry will be measured against.

1 Social and environmental benefit
   How does your design benefit society and the environment?

2 Research
   Where did you go to research this issue? Whom did you speak with or interview? What questions did you ask? What did you learn?

3 Design thinking
   We want to know about your thought processes and insights. Your insights might be research-based or intuitive, or a combination of both, but the judges want to see you relate the final concept clearly to these insights. What journey did you go through to get to the final result?

4 Commercial awareness
   Does your design make sense from a financial point of view?

5 Execution
   We are looking for a design that is pleasing and looks and feels well-resolved

6 Magic
   We are looking for a bit of ‘magic’ – a surprising or lateral design solution that delights

Submission requirements

All entries must be submitted through our online entry system, accessed via sda.thersa.org. If you are unable to submit online, please contact us by email at: sdaenquiries@rsa.org.uk.

Entries should comprise the following (please note there is an upload limit of 10GB on all files submitted). Please ensure that your upload files do not exceed this limit.

- 4 x A3 PDFs (portrait or landscape), describing your proposal, your insights and research, the benefits you believe it will create, and possibilities of implementation and scalability.
- 1 x A4 PDF or Word document of no more than 250 words describing your ‘Big Idea’
- No more than 10 scanned pages of your sketchbook or computer modelling/sketches (if applicable) illustrating your development process
- 1 x ‘hero image’ – a singular image of your project that represents and sums it up in its best light

Please note: your submissions must not have your name, university or other identifying marks on them to ensure that work is judged fairly. If any entries do contain entrant, college or tutor names, we will contact you and ask you to resubmit your work without these, or remove them ourselves

Key dates

- Tues 1 Sep 2015 – Briefs launch and pre-registration opens
- Wed 27 Jan 2016 – Competition opens for submissions via sda.thersa.org
- Wed 10 Feb 2016 – Deadline for ‘early bird’ submission at reduced entry fee of £25
- Thurs 10 Mar 2016 – Final deadline for online registration and submission ($35 entry fee)
- Mon 21 Mar 2016 – Judging begins
- Wed 1 Jun 2016 – Winners announced

Awards

There are three awards available for this brief.

Natracare Award of £1000

Eddie Squires Award of £1500
   The Eddie Squires Award will be granted to the entry that best demonstrates how waste materials can be used to create a new or repurposed textile or soft furnishing product.

Paid internship at Springetts Brand Consultants
   Remuneration: £2600 (London Living Wage)
   Duration: 8 weeks
   Location: Central London
   The winning student will have the opportunity to work on a range of live projects in Springetts’ Central London office.

Please note that the judging panel may decide on more than one winner for each award and will allocate the awards accordingly. In addition, the judging panel may award commendations.

Sponsor information

This brief has been devised and developed by the Materials Council and is supported by the Patricia Tindale Legacy and the Eddie Squires Legacy to the RSA with additional support from Springetts Brand Consultants.

The Patricia Tindale Legacy Award is an annual award administered through the RSA Student Design Awards programme to celebrate and honour the memory of the late Patricia Tindale, the first and final Chief Architect at the Department of the Environment.

The Eddie Squires Legacy to the RSA is dedicated to promoting innovation in design education, particularly around textiles and soft furnishings.

Springetts are an independent UK-based, international design consultancy working on brands across many categories, from the large and global to the small and local. From brand creation and the development of brand positioning strategies to maintaining the saliency of well-established household names. The Springetts name has been associated with outstanding strategic and creative solutions for three decades.

Brief devised and developed by Ian Hunter, The Materials Council.

\[1\] Robert Girling - Rubbish - Dirt on our hands and crisis ahead