

## Winners announced in the Corus/Design Wales Eco Design Awards

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At the sixth annual Corus/Design Wales Eco Design Awards, held in Cardiff on May 13th, product design students Nick Haimes and Chris Kinder beat off ten other shortlisted young designers with their eco-friendly concepts for a portable hand warmer and a solar-powered outdoor heater.

Run jointly by Corus and Design Wales, the competition invited entries from second year product design students from the University of Wales Institute Cardiff (UWIC), Glamorgan University and the Swansea Metropolitan University.

The competition brief called for a consumer heating or cooling appliance that uses pre-finished steel and incorporated environmentally sound principles into its development. Students had to consider the product's life cycle and its resulting impact on the environment, as well as energy consumption, alternative energy sources and raw materials.

At the Cardiff finals, Chris Kinder won the Most Innovative Design Award for his two-and-a-half metre high solar-powered patio heater. In the Most Marketable Design category, first place went to Nick Haimes' hand-warming device, the Handy Heat.

Describing his Handy Heat, Haimes said that the idea for designing a product to warm up people's hands had come to him while surfing in Wales over the winter. He decided to use "a kinetic shake charger after studying a torch that had already utilised the technology," he said. Shaking the carrot-shaped metal Handy Heat while pressing a button on the top would "release heat there and then," he said, "or the unit can be charged before use by shaking without holding the button—this would then release heat when the button is pressed."

On the concept for his solar-powered patio heater, Kinder comments: "I started to think about current heaters that could be improved upon. This led me to remember gas patio heaters and how garden centres are stopping selling them due to their negative effects on the environment. I looked into patio heaters and noticed that the base was within its own heat footprint, causing it to lower the efficiency. This was the start of my original design as I moved the base of the unit out of the heat footprint, which gave me my shape."

Solar panels on the back of the heater's curved metal body generate electricity during the day. On cool evenings, the device can be switched on and ceramic plates radiate heat from the underside of the overhanging 'arm'.

Philip Harfield, Design Wales' Ecodesign Advisor and awards panel member, believes both students and industry benefit from the competition: "One of the most valuable tools in a design graduates box is having industry relevant experience, and the

winners of the competition are able to validate their portfolios through this recognition. From the industry perspective, working directly with the next generation of creative talent has to bring fresh insight into products, and more importantly, future consumers.”

“It was a tight competition and the overall standard was high,” said Corus Colors’ Consumer Products Marketing Project Manager Mark Owens. “Eco-design is becoming increasingly important,” he added, “and Corus is committed to supporting excellence in design and working with designers to meet, exceed and pre-empt eco-design legislation.”

Richard Jenkins, senior product development engineer at ventilation manufacturer Nuaire, was impressed with the designs and “the way they were presented and the application of the steel,” he said. Both winners used Corus pre-finished steel in their eco-friendly heater designs. “Pre-finished steel from Corus is 100% recyclable,” said Owens. “It can be recycled over and over again without any reduction in properties or performance, and is RoHS [Restriction of Hazardous Substances] compliant,” he said.

Haimes and Kinder each receive £500 in prize money.

Notes for editors:

Fifty product design students were given this year’s brief, with 27 students entering product designs. On May 13th, the final twelve shortlisted students were given 15 minutes to present their concept and for the judges to question them about the solution and the design process behind their products.

Competition judges:

Chris Ponting, Senior Designer at Corus Colors; Philip Harfield, Ecodesign Advisor at Design Wales; Richard Jenkins, senior product development engineer with Nuaire; and Mark Helmich, GX Group’s Managing Director.

Corus:

Corus is Europe’s second largest steel producer with annual revenues of over £11 billion and a crude steel production of around 20 million tonnes. With the main steelmaking operations primarily in the UK and the Netherlands, Corus provides innovative solutions to the construction, automotive, packaging, mechanical engineering and other markets worldwide. Corus is a subsidiary of Tata Steel, the world’s sixth largest steel producer. With the recent acquisition of Corus, the combined enterprise has an aggregate crude steel production capacity of around 28.1 million tonnes with approximately 82,700 employees across the four continents.

Design Wales:

Design Wales is funded by the Welsh Assembly Government to encourage the effective use of design by Welsh SMEs (small or medium-sized enterprises). It does this via four core activities, delivered by experienced designers acting as advisors:

The core activities are a general design enquiry line, regional brand workshops (over 50 last year), focused events to champion design in the food and drink, fashion and textile, and wider manufacturing sectors (over 1,000 people attended Design Wales events last year) and one-to-one support from the advisory team, which helped over 400 businesses in 2007.

Design Wales also encourages an active and able design agency sector via an on-line directory ([www.designdirectorywales.org](http://www.designdirectorywales.org)), provides class materials for schools and runs the annual Ffres Awards for design undergraduates.

For more information visit [www.designwales.org.uk](http://www.designwales.org.uk) or contact [enquiries@designwales.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@designwales.org.uk)

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