STUDENT RSA DESIGN AWARDS

Think Differently About Design

Take Leave

08

Awards

There is one award available for this brief.

RSA Award of £2,000

Winner/s will also be offered a free, 6-month membership at Makerversity in London.

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

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Brief

Design a system, service or campaign to encourage or enable parents, employers or society more widely to embrace Shared Parental Leave.

Background

– Introduced in the UK in 2015, Shared Parental Leave (SPL) is the most significant overhaul of parental leave in decades. SPL is designed to enable both parents to split up to 50 weeks of statutory leave after the birth or adoption of their child between them as they see fit. This leave can be taken together (both parents could take 6 months at the same time) or split into chunks taken by one parent at a time.

– Primarily SPL has been introduced to offer parents flexibility and equality of opportunity domestically and professionally. It has been suggested that SPL could play a key role in reducing the gender pay gap and improve chances of increasing the number of women in the most senior roles.

– There is also evidence that child wellbeing is improved with a more equal split in childcare. Across Scandinavia sharing parental leave is the norm.

– Despite the domestic and professional benefits, take-up in the UK has been minimal – only between 0.5 percent and 2 percent of eligible parents have undertaken SPL since 2015.

– In 2018 reports showed that nearly three years after it was introduced, around half of the general public were unaware the option to take SPL existed. The UK Government has responded to this with a Shared Parental Leave campaign that aims to address this awareness gap: www.sharedparentalleave.campaign.gov.uk

– But lack of understanding is not the only reason that parents are deterring from sharing parental leave. Financial pressures, cultural barriers, inflexible attitudes from employers, and the prevalence of traditional gender role stereotypes are also preventing people from taking it up. How might we design solutions to overcome these barriers and enable parents, employers and wider society to embrace SPL?

How should you approach this brief?

– Undertake some primary research. Think about the different groups of people you could engage with to gain insights into this issue and try to get a range of different perspectives (including people who do/do not have experience of Maternity, Paternity and Shared Parental Leave).

– Identify a user group. There is a wide and complex user landscape for this brief; your user could be an employer, a mother, a father, even a baby or child.

– Remember that encouraging uptake of SPL could be a systemic, societal or practical/financial challenge, or could combine all three – make sure you explore the specific challenges experienced by your user.

– Explore cultural norms, values and stereotypes relating to parenting and work – how might they be challenged?

– Our behaviour is profoundly influenced by what other people are doing, the way the environment around us is designed and options that are more prominent, affordable or convenient – what would make SPL easier or more attractive?

– Solutions may be physical, digital, communication or service focused, or a combination of any suited to encourage or enable uptake of SPL.

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

– A campaign or strategy that effectively challenges social or business/career stereotypes.

– A service or business model redesign that makes Shared Parental Leave easier to engage with.

– A product that showcases the personal development of a father/partner who undertakes Shared Parental Leave and how that might benefit their employer.

… and many more are possible.

Aug 2018	14 Jan 2019	13 Feb 2019	13 Mar 2019	20 Mar 2019	May 2019
Briefs launch + register your interest online	Competition opens	'Early bird' submission deadline (£25)	Final submission deadline (£35)	Judging begins: shortlisting and interviews	Winners announced

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Judging criteria

There are 6 criteria that your entry will be judged against – make sure that your submission materials demonstrate that your solution meets these criteria:

1 **Social and environmental benefit** – how does your solution benefit society and/or the environment?
2 **Research and insights** – how did you investigate this issue? What were your key insights?
3 **Design thinking** – how did your research and insights inform your solution? How did you develop, test, iterate and refine your concept? Demonstrate the journey you've been through to the end result.
4 **Commercial awareness** – does it make sense from a financial point of view? What is unique about your solution compared to other interventions? Who would need to pay for, deliver or support your proposal in order for it to succeed?
5 **Execution** – we are looking for a design solution that feels pleasing and well resolved.
6 **Magic** – we want to see a bit of 'magic' – a surprising or lateral design solution that delights.

Key dates

Aug 2018 – Briefs launch
+ register your interest online

Mon 14 Jan 2019 – Competition opens for submissions via www.thersa.org/sda

Wed 13 Feb 2019, 4 pm GMT
– Deadline for 'Early bird' submission at reduced entry fee of £25

Wed 13 Mar 2019, 4 pm GMT
– Final deadline for online registration + submission (£35 entry fee)

Wed 20 Mar 2019
– Judging begins (2 stages: shortlisting + interviews with finalists)

May 2019 – Winners announced

Jun 2019 – Awards Ceremony

Submission requirements

All entries must be submitted through our online entry system, accessed via www.thersa.org/sda

If you are unable to submit online, please contact us by email at 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.

The submission requirements are:
– **1 x A3 PDF Hero Image, with project title and 1 sentence description**
A singular 'poster image' that conveys the essence of your project, and includes your project title plus a 1 sentence description. For example: '*Bare Technology: a product and service design solution 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.
– **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 – what were your key insights? What journey did you go through to get to your final solution?
  – **Solution (50 words max)**
  What is your proposed solution? How will it solve the problem?
– **4 x A3 PDF Boards Outlining Your Proposal**
4 pages describing your proposal and demonstrating that you have met the 6 judging criteria. Each board should include a heading. It is important that you number each board in the top right hand corner, in the order you want them viewed by the judges.
– **5 x A3 PDF Pages of Supporting Material**
Up to 5 A3 pages of additional material illustrating your development process – this could include scanned pages of your sketchbook or computer modelling (if applicable).
– **Optional YouTube/Vimeo + website links**
Please note that we cannot guarantee supporting films and websites will be viewed at the shortlisting stage. If you have created digital materials, we recommend referencing them (for example by including labelled film stills or website screen grabs) in your 4 main PDF boards.

Partner information

This brief is supported by legacy funds to the RSA. For the first time this year, we invited the RSA Student Design Awards (SDA) Alumni community to propose brief topics and vote on the suggestions. Our first attempt to open source a brief topic from this community was a big success. Tom Tobia proposed this brief, which is one of two alumni suggestions that have been taken forwards in 2018/19.

Brief developed and devised by Tom Tobia, Creative Entrepreneur, Cofounder of Makerversity. He teaches at Sheffield Hallam University (who have recently supported his own SPL application!). Tom won an RSA Student Design Award in 2004.