

Batch.Works and the Design Council launch ‘Products for Planet’, a student competition to design a new product that’s good for the planet and community

Hackney, London, UK, 20 November 2023

Agile manufacturing company [Batch.Works](#) has teamed up with the Design Council and Seymourpowell to set a challenge for design students across the UK, to create a sustainable product that meets real community needs around the climate crisis.

The deadline for submissions is before midnight on 15 December 2023 and the winner will be contacted on Monday, 8 January 2024.

“Over the past year, in collaboration with Matta.ai and PlusX innovation, we have been developing our own advanced, AI-powered Additive Manufacturing (3D printing) technology to support our mission to make distributed and circular manufacturing a reality, reducing production waste and transport emissions,” said **Milo Mcloughlin-Greening, partner and head of R&D at Batch.Works.**

“To train the AI, we need to print approximately 10,000 parts on our pilot machines in Brighton. This competition takes advantage of this amazing production opportunity to make objects that are designed to solve real problems and, aligning with the Design Council’s mission, are [designed for planet.](#)”



Batch.Works’ agile manufacturing systems are transforming the way things are made to enable the circular economy. Pictured here are the materials and components of Kibu, the circular headphones for kids. (Photo: Batch.Works)

“So many young people have fantastic ideas for how to Design for Planet so we’re delighted to be able to support making some of them a reality through this competition,” added **Cat Drew, Chief Design Officer at the Design Council.** “And by

asking students to design products with communities, we can then train the AI-enabled printing service in a really inclusive way.”

The brief: concepts must be driven by [Design for Planet](#)

Students (from GCSE to master’s level) can submit ideas of products to be locally manufactured by Batch.Works. Submissions should be in the format of: x2 A3 boards, including 1 ‘Hero’ board.

A winner will be picked from each theme. The products should be looking to solve a real-world problem within the below themes:

Food

‘Is your idea a hydroponics system that allows people to grow salad or herbs from their home; a gardening implement for people with limited mobility or a tool that extends the life of food so that it reduces food waste?’

Materials

‘It could be: a filament that can be used for compost; a 3D-printed shoe, or even 3D printed parts for headphones!’

Mobility

‘It could be a phone holder to allow people to navigate easily to work on a bike; or a hands free door opening device to allow the immune-compromised to open doors on public transport and in work.’

Energy

‘It could be a component part that holds a mini-PV panel for a phone charging station; or a wheel that can be wound to generate electricity.’

Consider design for disassembly and design for repair

“We expect to see user research as the first part of the design process and are looking to select winners based on the validity of the concept, not the design execution,” said **Eddie Hamilton, sustainability lead at Seymourpowell**. “Applicants shouldn’t worry about creating refined, developed solutions, but rather should focus on concepts that solve real world problems.”

Developed products will be manufactured in the hundreds (or even thousands), therefore judges are looking for ideas that will allow the Design Council to donate the objects to a group of users who really need them. Submissions should clearly identify the intended user group and demonstrate demand from the future users for the submitted concept.

Applicants should make sure that their design concept is simple to manufacture, and parts fit within a 3D printer bed measuring 350mm x 350mm x 350mm.

Designs will be selected by a panel of leading experts from the Design for Planet festival speakers, Seymourpowell, and Batch.Works.

Chosen designs will then be co-developed with designers at Seymourpowell and Batch.Works for local manufacture.

The final products will be exhibited in an exhibition and gifted to the identified user group (after the Design for Planet Festival 2024).

Notes to editors

Contact rupert@reh.ltd for more information, image and interview requests.

Batch.Works is an agile manufacturing company that is transforming the way things are made to enable the circular economy. The start-up based between London and Eindhoven develops smart technology and sustainable production methods with the vision to become the leading supplier of sustainable production and manufacturing capabilities to brands and designers around the world.

batch.works
[@batch.works](https://twitter.com/batch.works)

The **Design Council** is the UK's national strategic advisor for design, championing design and its ability to make life better for all. It is an independent and not for profit organisation incorporated by Royal Charter. The Design Council uniquely works across all design sectors and delivers programmes with business, government, public bodies and the third sector. The work encompasses thought leadership, tools and resources, showcasing excellence, and research to evidence the value of design and influence policy. Their Design for Planet mission was introduced in 2021 to galvanise and support the 1.97 million people who work in the UK's design economy to help achieve net zero and beyond.

designcouncil.org.uk

Seymourpowell is a design and innovation company with nearly 40 years' experience of creating award-winning designs and world-first innovations. Our team is a multidisciplinary group of design researchers, strategists, forecasters, brand experts, product, UX, UI designers and makers. As silent partners to some of the world's best loved brands and most disruptive start-ups, Seymourpowell has developed many of the products and services you interact with on a daily basis: from your morning shower to the train you take to work, the phone in your pocket to the products and packs of your most loved brands.