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Keio University

Olfactory Training Device “yokun” Wins Multiple International Design Awards

Joint project between KGRI and SDM

“yokun,” an olfactory training device jointly developed by the Keio University Global Research Institute (KGRI) and the Graduate School of System Design and Management (SDM) has won five awards in international design competitions.

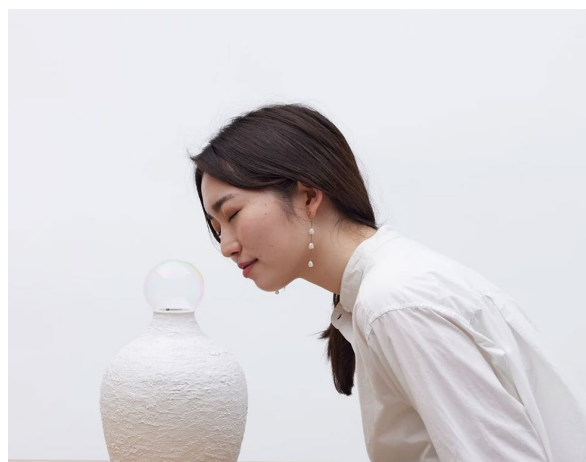
The device won in both the “Design for Elders” and “Design for Public Awareness” categories of the US-hosted European Product Design Award 2022. It also won the German Design Award 2023 for “Excellent Product Design Household” and the Asia Design Prize 2023 held in South Korea. Finally, it was shortlisted for the London International Creative Competition held in the UK.

The team hopes to advance yokun research and development as a device for sustainably improving one’s olfactory senses.

What is “yokun”?

In our daily lives, how aware are we of our own sense of smell? When our sense of smell is impaired, we become insensitive to unusual odors and unable to detect harmful materials. Our sense of taste is also affected, causing a loss of appetite which can be detrimental to our health. Despite our sense of smell playing a vital role in staying safe and maintaining long and healthy lives, there is a problem: it is difficult to detect its gradual decline as we age. yokun, a word meaning “lingering scent,” is a device that trains the user’s sense of smell, effectively preserving it by encouraging them to differentiate between aromas. The jar-shaped apparatus produces a scented soap bubble that piques the visual senses before popping. The aroma that spreads from the popped bubble is picked up by the user’s sense of smell, providing a fun way to practice using their olfactory systems. “yokun”: new healthcare for your olfaction.

yokun: <https://www.yokun-ot.com>



About the awards

- **European Product Design Award**

The European Product Design Award is a design competition held to recognize the efforts of talented international product designers. Among the thousands of design projects received from around the world, judges award the most aesthetic, functional, and innovative products.
URL:

<https://www.productdesignaward.eu/winners/hm/2022/22492422/?fbclid=IwAR3jrtuXbM4fpuf6NTupD5zX-PKxTnjuhcaBSSWUXnhsxHIABtfyVzjKwFA>

- **German Design Award**

The German Design Award is an international design award bestowed by the German Design Council, established in 1953. This prestigious award is given only to products that have been nominated by the German Design Council from among those that have won design awards around the world and are recognized to have outstanding designs.

URL:

<https://www.german-design-award.com/en/the-winners/gallery/detail/44476-yokun-olfactory-training-system.html>

- **Asia Design Prize**

The Asia Design Prize is an international design competition organized by DESIGNSORI, the largest design portal site in Korea. Launched in 2017, this year marks the sixth iteration of the competition. The jury consisted of 34 designers and university professors from around the world, mainly from Asia. Evaluation is based on three criteria: aesthetics, uniqueness, and practicality.

URL:

https://asiadesignprize.com/index.php?filter=search&mid=exhibition&category=180266&search_target=title&document_srl=181222&fbclid=IwAR2Ye3Te0ZrYrA0_XAduikRBCheympJiZ8kWtteMEi49-Nh1NweIBEW_0&ckattempt=1

- **London International Creative Competition**

The London International Creative Competition aims to be a platform that connects talented artists from all over the globe with worldwide audiences. The jury consists of prominent figures in six fields: architecture, interior design, art, graphics, photography/videography, and consumer products. The contest has been held annually since 2006 and is based in London, an international hub for acclaimed artists gather.

URL:

<https://licc.uk/winners/winner.php?id=123836&fbclid=IwAR1BhzVQZs9w2lkdrPnRkjLVp9n0HYpMHoMVQGqcx1zCQ5PuNix0xCl-Lc4>

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