

**Royal College of Art  
Annual**

**Review**

**20<sup>09</sup>  
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# Innovation- RCA

InnovationRCA manages and commercialises the Royal College of Art's portfolio of intellectual property and leads its knowledge-transfer programmes – from helping students integrate business and employability skills with creative practice, to inspiring and enhancing the innovation performance of industry and the public sector.

Six early-stage RCA student companies took part in 'Selected Start-ups' – the College's first ever business investment evening. The students pitched their business ideas to over 30 angel investors, following intensive presentation and business skills training organised by FuelRCA. The pitches ranged from businesses developing a novel fire-detection system to one developing a sustainable leather alternative produced from pineapple leaves. Two of the start-ups are now in active negotiations with investors.

The RCA Selected Works' panel chose two new student inventions for patent protection and support with development and commercialisation; a 'plug and play' fire- and smoke-detection system and a cycling helmet made of sustainable materials, which delivers improved resistance and offers the wearer greater protection and comfort. Two licensed products went on sale this year: 'All in One Cutlery' by Lakeland and 'Tonguesafe' by Wallace Cameron.

James Dyson Innovation Fellow, Duncan Fitzsimons, road tested the world's first wheelchair with foldable wheels, and his innovative design was selected as one of *Wallpaper* magazine's 10 Designs for 2010. He is now seeking investment to take the patented wheels to market.

Creative directors of Virgin Atlantic, LOCOG, LG, Ford, Diageo, Herman Miller, UK Sport, Sony and other major brands participated in RCA Innovation Forum seminars, hosted by the professors of Design Products, Vehicle Design and Sculpture, where they debated innovation management, sustainability and educational priorities with their industry peers. Forum members were among the 600 senior industry, academic and government figures attending Innovation Night 2010, including special guest Deputy Prime

Minister Nick Clegg. YouTube co-founder and CEO Chad Hurley gave an inspirational 'innovation lecture' in conversation with RCA Rector Paul Thompson, and The Rumi Foundation generously agreed to sponsor Innovation Night for the next five years.

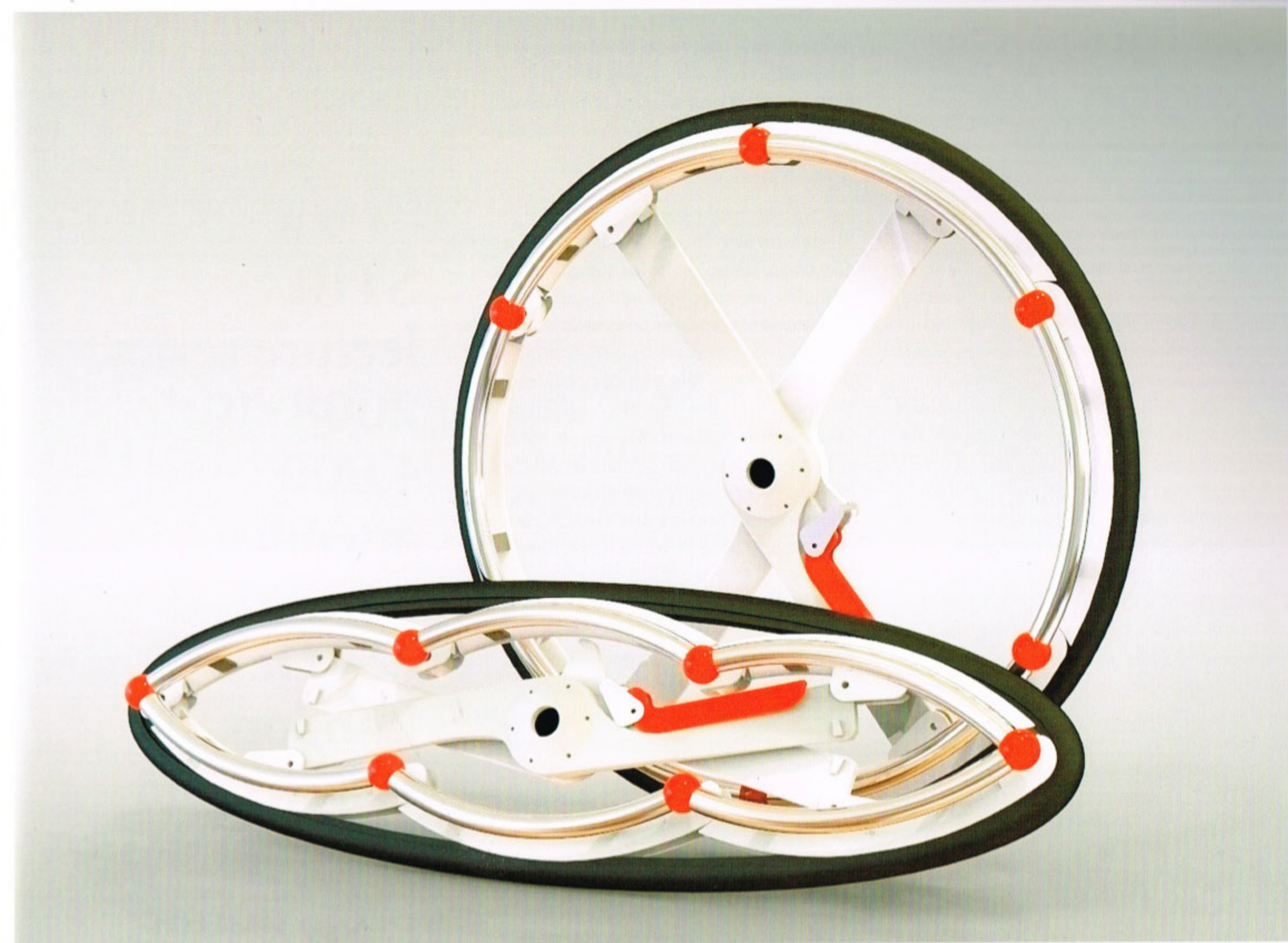
At 'Materials Information for Art & Design', 50 top materials scientists, design educators and manufacturers debated how access to materials and process knowledge could be improved across the UK. The conference was organised for the Materials and Design Exchange of the government-backed Materials KTN, and further knowledge exchange with the scientific community is planned for 2010/11.

InnovationRCA worked with Design London and Grant Thornton to provide training in design innovation to over 300 small businesses (SMEs) in London. Delivery partners included Croydon Chamber of Commerce and the London Business Network, and the programme was supported by the London Development Agency to improve the capital's competitiveness.

Finally, the Home Secretary launched prototypes of a new generation of 'safe pint' beer glasses based on InnovationRCA-led research and concept generation, while 'Beyond Workshop' – an ongoing collaboration with RCA Innovation Design Engineering – mapped best practice in running creative workshops for product or service development.

## World's first folding wheelchair wheel

## 30 angel investors



Top: James Dyson Innovation Fellow Duncan Fitzsimons' 'Folding Wheel'

Bottom: Selected Works, Anirudha Surabhi Venkata's 'Kranium', a safety helmet providing strong head protection