

November 4, 2015
Japan Institute of Design Promotion

Announcement of the Good Design Grand Award Winner

Japan Institute of Design Promotion (Chairman: Motomi Kawakami) is proud to announce the winner of its 2015 Good Design Grand Award (Prime Minister's Award). Japan Institute of Design Promotion hosts the Good Design Award, an award that has a history of nearly 60 years.

2015 Good Design Grand Award (Prime Minister's Award)

Personal Mobility [WHILL Model A]

Company: WHILL Co., Ltd. (Kanagawa, Japan)

(Award Number: 15G060566)



【Outline】

“ I gave up even going to the grocery store just two blocks away. ” One comment from a wheelchair user kick-started the development of WHILL Model A. It started from a thought: trying to travel 100 meters could be a great challenge for those who have social anxieties or physical risks. Mobility, with its smart functionality, might help such people enlarge their living space outside their homes. Development of the vehicle rooted in such strong cause. The intention was, and is, to not create a wheelchair, and to create a totally new category, “Personal Mobility”, which is open to everybody who wants to try, including those using or not using wheelchairs.

【Evaluation】

The creators' high aspiration to tackle social issues with design, and the success story of a small team with unique technology achieving mass production, is all crystallized in this product. The product evokes wide sympathy to those who have different needs in this society. Its design is futuristic and completely different from the conventional wheelchair. However, looking at the details, the design is not eccentric,

with great care taken to reflect the users' perspective. One can perceive this as a "fun" vehicle as well, which is the main product message, with design that shows thorough consideration for usability. The designers have, indeed, succeeded in creating a new product category called "Personal Mobility"

【Details of the Selection Process】

The Good Design Grand Award is presented every year to one "design of the year" product, chosen from its contemporaneousness, concept, beauty, and symbolism. From the 1,337 pieces of 2015 Good Design Award products, the judges held a screening process to shortlist 8 candidates. The Good Design Award judges, winners of the Good Design Award, and visitors to the "Good Design EXPO 2015" all casted their ballots to choose the Good Design Grand Award winner.

For details of the Good Design Award winners, please refer to the Good Design Award website:
www.g-mark.org

Good Design Award website: <http://www.g-mark.org/?locale=en>

*Visual materials for press are available. Please contact below.

Press Contact: f-press@jidp.or.jp (Japan Institute of Design Promotion)