APPLICATIONS OPEN FOR EXPANDED AUTOCAR COURLAND AWARD 2015

Friday 29 May, 2015

Autocar and Courland Automotive have opened up their unique Next Generation Award programme to all UK residents aged 17-25 for 2015.

Previously open only to students, the Award is designed to be a career springboard for young people aspiring to work in the ultra-competitive automotive industry.

The winner of the 2015 competition is set to receive a £9000 cash prize, plus six months of hands-on work experience, shared between award sponsors Jaguar Land Rover, McLaren Automotive, Peugeot, Skoda, Toyota and Honda, which returns as an award sponsor this year.

The competition invites entrants to submit an original idea or innovation that would improve the UK automotive business in one of four categories – mobility, connectivity, sustainability or customer experience. This means those who specialise in marketing or communications can now enter the Award with an idea centred on ways of improving the car ownership experience, sales, or the aftermarket processes.

Applications for the 2015 Autocar Courland Next Generation Award are now open at Autocar Next Generation Award.

Started in 2009, the Autocar Courland Next Generation Award has been a proven path into the UK auto industry.

Roberto Antonio Pace, who won the Award in 2012, is now working as an engineer at McLaren Automotive and last year's winner, Nicole Agba, is currently in her first of the five months of invaluable work experience at the major car makers that comprise the Award's top prize.

To help direct entrants even further, the brief for entering the Award has been made more detailed, with the addition of the four categories into which any idea submitted should fit. Proposed innovations can apply to any element of automotive business, from concept through to the sales showroom, car ownership and the aftermarket sector.

Autocar Editor-in-Chief and Award head judge, Steve Cropley, said: "Our panel of judges have been constantly amazed by the wide variety and ingenuity of the young people who have entered the Autocar Courland Award down the years.

"The Award is now entering its seventh year and has touched thousands of lives and resulted directly in several people starting careers in their dream industry. By opening the Award to all young adults, we look forward to seeing an even more dizzying array of innovative ideas and unlocking the door to the next automotive industry star."

Courland Automotive Chief Operating Officer, Adam Pumfrey, said: "Although we operate predominantly at board level for the automotive industry, it has become abundantly clear to us that the automotive industry is in real need of new young candidates to fill the vast variety of roles the sector has on offer. We support this Award because it offers an unparalleled opportunity for the bright industry leaders of tomorrow to gain first-hand experience of what it's truly like to work across the various departments of some of the best known brands in the business, highlighting the fabulous range of careers open to those with a passion for automotive business."

Entries to the 2015 Award will be open until Friday, 28 August 2015 at 17:00**.** Six finalists will be selected to present their innovations to the panel of judges in November, with the winner being announced at the 99th Annual Dinner of the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) at London's Grosvenor House Hotel on Tuesday, 24 November 2015.

For more information about the Award, entry brief and application process, please visit Autocar Next Generation Award.

ENDS

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Previous winners:

2009	Mohsin Basharmal	Coventry University
2010	Hari Meyyappan	Loughborough University
2011	Oliver Brunt	Northumbria University
2012	Roberto Antonio Pace	Kingston University
2013	Jake Larsson	Cranfield University
2014	Nicole Agba	Coventry University

About Autocar

Autocar is the essential news, entertainment and reference magazine for committed car buyers and enthusiasts everywhere.

It specialises in revealing the secrets of new cars, while its famous road tests – invented by the magazine in 1895 – are used by industry and consumers alike as the authoritative benchmark.

Autocar's readers are recognised as the most influential in the UK. The knowledge they glean from the magazine and pass on leads to thousands of car purchases a year.

Autocar now has 16 editions worldwide, in countries including China, India and Italy, and its fast-growing website means Autocar now has two million readers a month, viewing 18 million pages. The mobile version of the site has 600,000 unique users a month.

Meanwhile, Autocar's YouTube channel has become the most authoritative motoring video site in the world, garnering 32 million views in 2013, 338,000 subscribers and 90 million minutes of film watched.

About The Award

The Autocar-Courland Next Generation Award was launched in 2009 by Autocar in partnership with Courland Automotive and the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders and was set up to find and nurture bright new talent for the automotive industry. Seven years on it has touched thousands of people and is regarded as the leading competition of its type.

The Next Generation Award challenges young talent to come up with a problem-solving idea or innovation that will improve the UK automotive business.

A team of industry judges assesses entrants ideas based on innovation, technical and commercial viability, and how easily the innovations can be implemented. The winner receives a £9000 prize plus a six-month work experience placement shared between the award sponsors.

This year the award has been opened up to more people. Anyone aged between 17 and 25 can enter, as long as they reside in the UK or study at a UK school, college or university. All entrants must be eligible to work in the UK and be available for work experience.

Once again the award programme is backed by Jaguar Land Rover, McLaren Automotive, Peugeot, Skoda, and Toyota. We're delighted to welcome back Honda this year, too.

Entries are put through a two-round judging process that's carried out by senior industry professionals. The six finalists will then be given a mentoring session with a partner judge before being invited to a presentation day at the Autocar HQ at Teddington Studios, Middlesex.

Next Generation Award finalists and winners go on to achieve great things and many have used the

awards as a launchpad towards the commercialisation of their ideas. In addition, many of our finalists have found industry positions – 2011 runner-up Katie Jones is Colour and Materials designer at Jaguar Land Rover, 2012 finalist Jonathan Maynard is Lead Engineer, Interior and Exterior Components at Aston Martin, and 2012 winner Roberto Antonio Pace is Design Engineer at McLaren Automotive; he has designed a key steering rack part on the P1 hypercar.

Last year's winner was Nicole Agba (23), of Coventry University for her biometric steering wheel concept. Nicole's 'Steer Right' system employs a Smart Fabrics Interactive Textile on the steering wheel that incorporates sensors to monitor the driver's heart and respiration rates. It also detects psychological signals that could indicate fatigue, anger or nervousness. If put into production, the steering wheel would even detect alcohol in the driver's system, immobilising the vehicle if they are over the limit.

Nicole graduated from Coventry University with a degree in Transport Design in May. Her fellow finalists were Freddie Lee from Plymouth University, whose entry was an app that alerts drivers to the presence of cyclists in their blind spot, and Serge Kaldany from City of London University, who came up with a gaming console-inspired control system.

Nicole was presented with her trophy at the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders' annual dinner last November.

To see how 2013 winner Jake Larsson got on after his win, and to watch our 2014 finalists in action, you can watch our video here.

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