

## Objectives

The low carbon automotive sector has made breath taking strides in recent years and now promises a new era of motoring which maintains performance, increases efficiency and sharply reduces pollution, both in the manufacture and operation of vehicles. China has placed developing its new energy automobile industry high on the agenda in its 12<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan and is also a priority for the UK. British Council China's Knowledge Economy Partnership Programme aims to support higher education and industry collaboration in this sector by providing a platform and framework for the creation of sustainable partnerships that link the higher education sector, government and business communities to drive forward global, national knowledge economies.

Chinese partners were sourced in the Municipality of Chongqing (population XX million) in Southwest China, and included Chongqing Industrial Service Centre, Chongqing Industrial Design Association, Chang'an Automobile (Group) Co. Ltd and Sichuan Fine Arts Institute. The objectives of the collaboration project were to promote higher education collaboration, joint research and technology dialogues in the new energy auto industry among Chinese and UK universities and auto companies. Specific objectives of the programme were:

- Students: by working together in mixed UK China students groups in Chinese auto enterprises, students will develop their language skills, team work and intercultural skills, and demonstrate their creativity and improve their employability.
- Universities: institutional links will be set up as the result of the programme. By working with industry, curriculum will be adjusted to better meet the industry needs.
- Enterprise: the automobile industry will be inspired by the students' design work and at the same time identify talent in industrial design.

## Participants

The following universities were recruited through an open call and each university sent a team of 3, including one teacher and 2 students (in total 8 teachers and 24 students). As the host institution, Sichuan Fine Arts Institute was represented by two teams.

1. Leeds University
2. Aston University
3. Sichuan Fine Arts Institute
4. Chongqing University
5. Chongqing Technology and Business University
6. Chongqing Jiaotong University
7. Chongqing University of Technology

## Activities

A series of events took place from 9<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> March 2013 in the municipality of Chongqing.

1. Student workshop:
  - a. Pre-programme: one month before the programme started, the students were mixed up and divided into 6 groups of 4. They were sent design descriptions and specifications provided by Chang'an Auto Group. Team discussions were conducted online.
  - b. During the workshop: As soon as all participants arrived in Chongqing, they actively started working in teams – getting to know team members, having discussions and brainstorming, design ideas etc. At the same time, they worked diligently on their individual designs which would also be assessed. Each team was supervised by an English speaking teacher.
  - c. Post-workshop: By 22 March, 6 group designs and 24 individual designs had been completed and displayed in the exhibition hall where the closing ceremony was held. On 23<sup>rd</sup> March, each team did a short presentation in both Chinese and English to introduce their designs to a panel of judges comprising members from the government, automobile companies, universities and British Council China. 3 group works and 16 individual works were awarded prizes in cash provided by Chang'an Auto Group.
2. Visits: During their stay in Chongqing, students and teachers made several visits, i.e. the visit to Chang'an Auto Group; Chongqing Planning Museum; Chongqing Three Gorges Museum; Chongqing Dazu Stone Carvings; Chongqing University and Sichuan Fine Arts Institute. From these visits, students and teachers were able to develop awareness of the local auto industry and Chinese cultural influences and gain a better understanding of the development and needs of new energy automobile design in China.
3. Public Lectures: During the two weeks,, three public lectures were organised where the two UK lecturers presented to students in University Town of Chongqing and over 30 key enterprises in the city. Concentrating on "Auto Design", the topics and content of the lectures ranged from cultural implications, social functions, and academic challenges to further development of new energy car concept, to the marketing and international collaboration in the area of auto and industrial design. The three lectures attracted over 400 students and 60 employees from the auto design industry. After the events, many students commented the lectures were a "great opportunities for us to get more cutting-edge information about the world and the UK auto and industrial design, and our views were broadened."
4. Evening of Designers Reception: On the evening of 15<sup>th</sup> March, a networking event was organised where participating students and lecturers had the opportunity to meet with local auto and design business representatives as well as well-known designers. Officials from Chongqing Economic and Information Commission, Chongqing Industrial Design Association, and participating universities and also senior managers from several companies based in Chongqing joined the Reception.
5. Exhibitions: From 23<sup>rd</sup> March, all design works from the workshop were exhibited for the first 2 weeks in Sichuan Fine Arts Institute and then in participating universities in Chongqing.

## Media reports

The project attracted huge media attention, and was widely and extensively covered by the following media:

- Chongqing Daily
- Chongqing Economics Today
- Chongqing Evening News
- [www.cqnews.net](http://www.cqnews.net)
- <http://dealer.autohome.com.cn>
- [www.jbnews.gov.cn](http://www.jbnews.gov.cn)
- [www.chexun.com](http://www.chexun.com)
- Chongqing TV

## Feedback and evaluation

The project received very good feedback from participants including lecturers, students and partners.

### **Quotes from Lecturers and Industry Senior Managers**

*On our trip back to Leeds the students, Luke, Stephen and Josh, have all shared with me, how much they have gained from participating in this excellent project. The students have increased significantly in their understanding of Chinese culture, Chinese car manufacture, the Chinese Higher Education system and greater understanding of the Chinese student counterparts from the participating Chinese Universities. There was some excellent sharing of skills from both the Chinese participants and from the UK participants as they worked collaboratively to create and generate the exhibition work produced as a result of these shared exchanges and efforts. All of the participants in this project have each walked away from this experience with a wealth of new experiences, new friendships and professional connections that I am sure will continue to develop and generate mutually beneficial outcomes and endeavours.*

**- Bruce Carnie, Leeds University**

*The car manufacturing plant visit this morning has certainly generated a great deal of thought and excitement amongst the students and staff alike. This experience will, I am sure, prove to be a highlight of the trip and provides a wealth of insight that will help generate ideas for the project amongst the students. Thank you for your great efforts in making this happen for us all.*

**- Christian Mclening, Aston University**

*I've learned from this project the latest development and trends of auto design in the UK and, more importantly, the importance of design in the development strategy of an enterprise.*

**- Liu Hong, Chongqing Jiaotong University**

*I'm very interested in the application of the latest technologies in the UK auto design industry.*

**-Huang Ling, Engineer, Chongqing Jiangbei Machinery Co. Ltd.**

## Quotes from students

*I thought the project was an incredible experience and I would recommend it to any UK student. I really enjoyed the challenge of working with the Chinese students and seeing what can be produced in two weeks of hard work was just outstanding. I don't think the trip would have been the same without the support and hospitality of the British Council. They made the time that we weren't in the workshop extremely fun, interesting and enjoyable, with visits to local sights, and tours of the city. Experiencing another culture and working with Chinese students is an extremely valuable opportunity that should not be passed up. I enjoyed the entire experience that much that I am currently looking at working and living in Chongqing once I graduate.*

**- Stephen Stringer, Leeds University**

*I find very interesting the different approaches of Chinese and UK students in the process of design and also the different styles of Chinese and UK instructors. The project is really a great opportunity to learn from and share with UK students my knowledge and skills in the auto design.*

**- Ai Qing, Chongqing University**

*Now I really understand the key factors to becoming a good designer. It's not just how good I can draw but to think creatively, to know the market and target audience.*

**- Yu Qin, Sichuan Fine Arts Institute**

Paula Middleton and Chen Bing, British Council China Southwest China office, attended some of the activities and observed:

*Their collaborative efforts have been inspirational for us and our partners. Chang'an Automobile Company wants to do more business with us and the Industrial Services Association who are influential with the Chongqing Government want to discuss our plans on creative industries and key institutional links for the future.*

*Our project team succeeded in a first, in working with multiple partnerships. The project succeeded in building institutional links which will be sustained with a return visit to the UK in the autumn.*

*The students succeeded in realising one of British Council's 2015 objectives – the internationalising of the young people of the UK and equipping them to seize international opportunities. The students from Aston and Leeds want to come back to China. The experience through this project has opened their eyes to their futures.*

**- Paula Middleton**

## **Follow up plans**

1. Visit to UK: A reciprocal visit to the UK has been scheduled for September 2013 to consolidate collaboration. Delegates will include the major project partners. During the visit, a workshop will be held where universities from the UK and China which are interested in further collaboration in the area of industry design will have in-depth discussions. The delegation will also visit the 2012 London Design Festival to develop further understanding of the UK's excellence in design and creativity.

2. Publication: A publication with pictures and descriptions of all the design works by UK and Chinese students will be produced by British Council China's partner, Chongqing Industrial Design Association. It is expected that the publication can attract a wider audience and generate impact through exploring how creativity can be connected with environmental sustainability.

## Appendix I: Winning teams and individuals

### Group Best Design

<i>SHIFT</i>	
Stephen Stringer	University of Leeds
Liu Baishan	Sichuan Fine Art Institute
Fang Ling	Chongqing Technology and Business University
Yuan Sanxing	Chongqing University

### Group Excellent Design

<i>Tweeki</i>	
Alice Gregory	Aston University
Zhang Qi	Chongqing Jiaotong University
Zheng Yan	Chongqing University of Technology
Hu Lishi	Sichuan Fine Art Institute

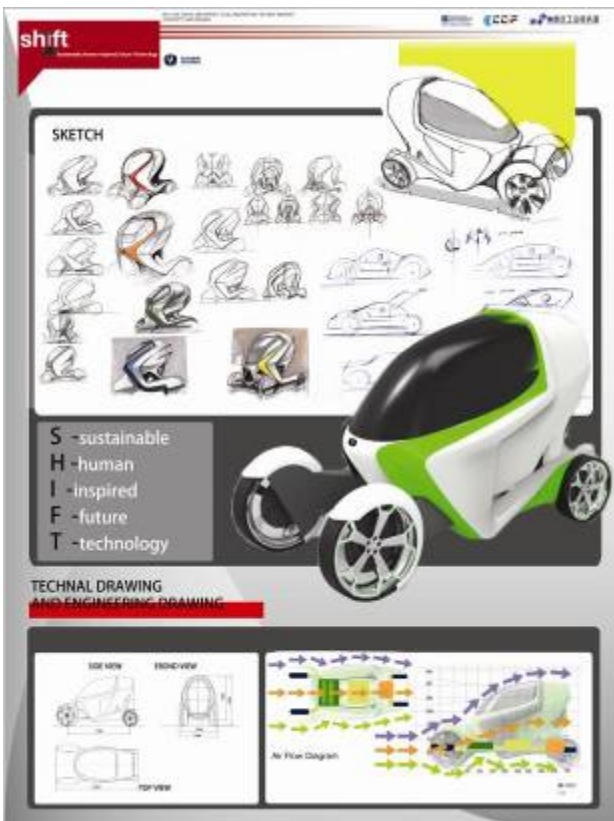
<i>REDesign</i>	
Harrison Bourne	Aston University
Zheng Li	Chongqing Jiaotong University
Xu Xun	Sichuan Fine Art Institute
Zhang Zhidong	Chongqing University of Technology

### Individual Best Design

Alice Gregory	Aston University
Zheng Lixin	Sichuan Fine Art Institute
Huang Xinran	Sichuan Fine Art Institute
Man Wancheng	Chongqing University
Chen Yu	Chongqing University
Zhang Qi	Chongqing Jiaotong University

### Individual Excellent Design

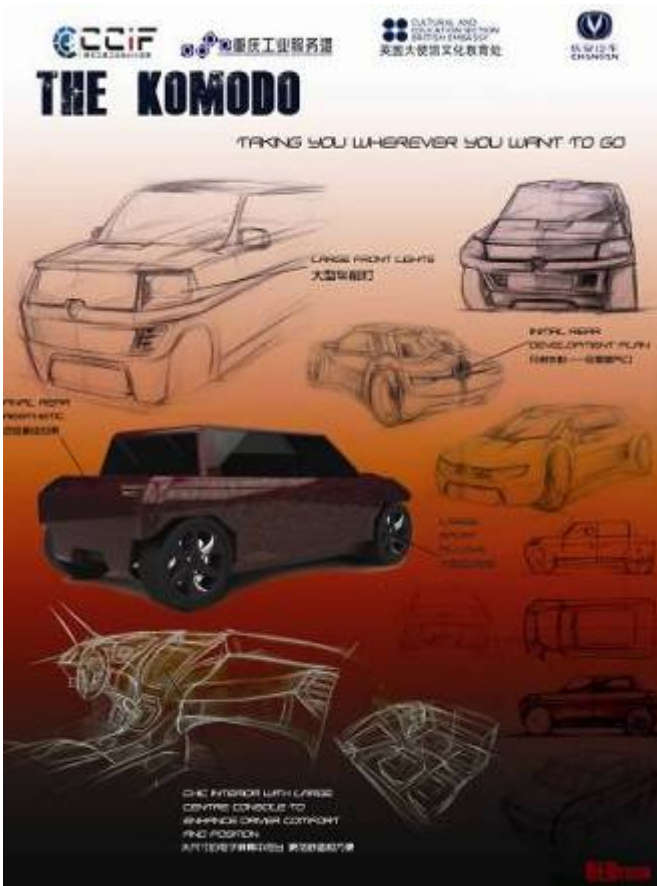
Harrison Bourne	Aston University
Zhang Zhidong	Chongqing University of Technology
Fang Ling	Chongqing Technology and Business University
Yuan Sanxing	Chongqing University
Qi Jiang	Chongqing Jiaotong University
Zheng Yan	Chongqing University of Technology
Liu Baishan	Sichuan Fine Art Institute
Hu Lishi	Sichuan Fine Art Institute
Tan Tian	Chongqing Technology and Business University
Wen Quan	Sichuan Fine Art Institute



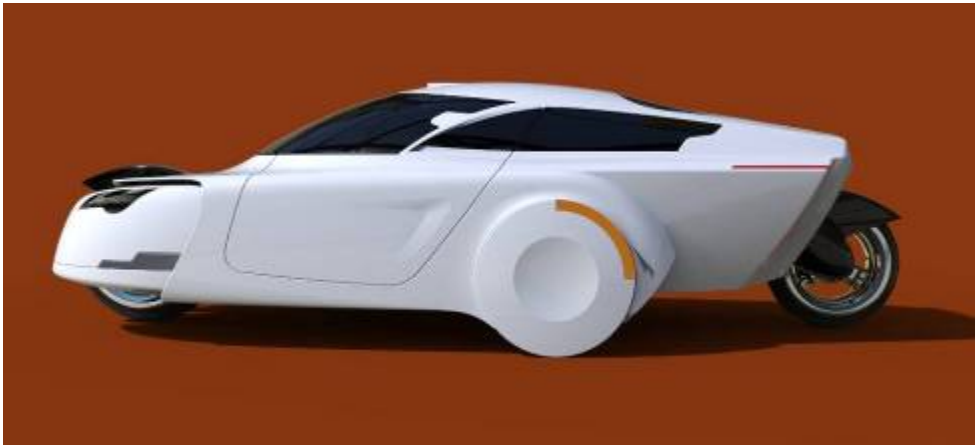
Group Best Design by team SHIFT (Stephen Stringer, Liu Baishan, Fang Ling, Yuan Sanxing)



Group Excellent Design by team Tweeki (Alice Gregory, Zhang Qi, Zheng Yan, Hu Lishi).



Group Excellent Design by team REDesign (Harrison Bourne, Zheng Li, Xu Xun, and Zhang Zhidong).



Individual Best Design by Man Wancheng

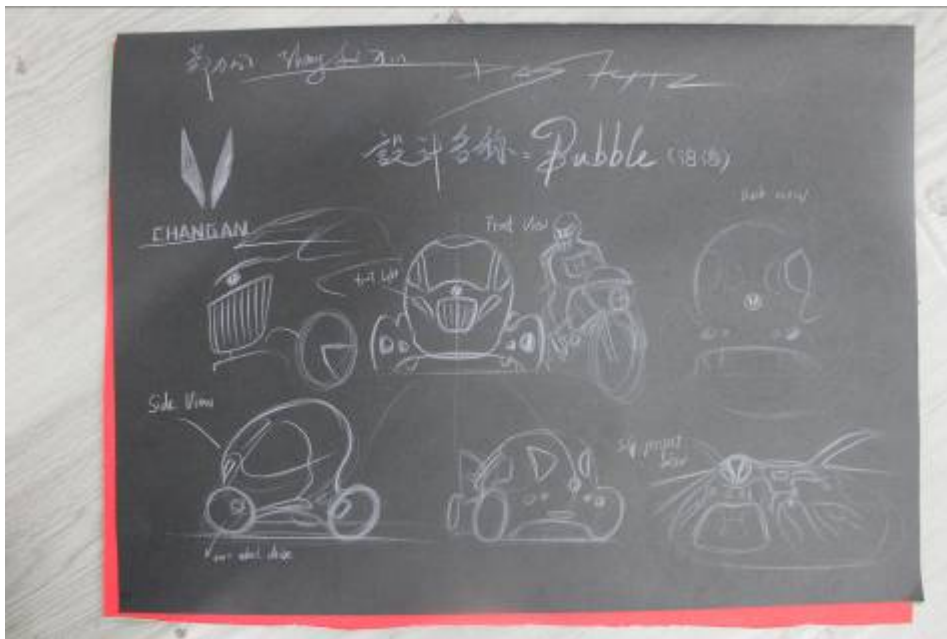


## 设计说明/illustration

定位/Position: 都市青年, 小排量, 个性, 绿色科技  
city car, unique, knowledgeable  
动力/power: 采用混合动力/hybrid electric vehicle  
材料/material: 车身采用carbon fibre reinforced plastic  
轴距/wheel base: 1950mm  
车高/vehicle height: 1550mm  
车宽/vehicle width: 1642mm



Individual Best Design by Chen Yu



Individual Excellent Design by Zheng Lixin

## Appendix II: Analysis of British Council Scorecard Survey

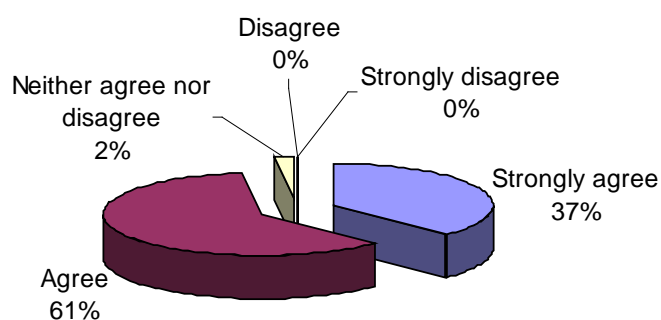
There are 4 general questions on the questionnaire.

1. How likely is it that you would recommend the British Council to a friend or colleague?

	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
<b>Number</b>	0	0	0	3	12	25	14	45	99
<b>Percentage</b>	0%	0%	0%	3%	12%	25%	14%	45%	100%

2. This event/activity met my expectations

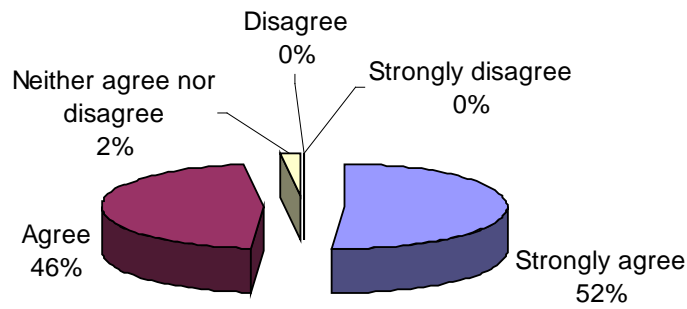
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
<b>Number</b>	37	60	2	0	0	99
<b>Percentage</b>	37%	61%	2%	0%	0%	100%



■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree

3. Overall, this was a high quality event

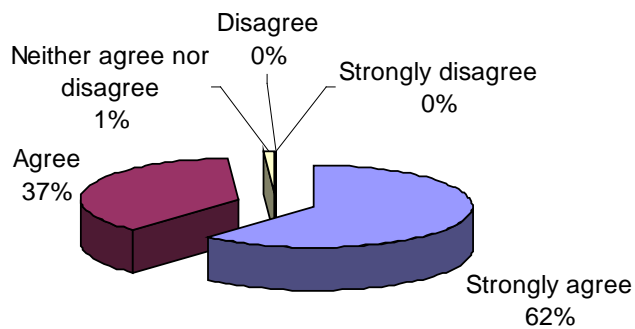
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
<b>Number</b>	51	46	2	0	0	99
<b>Percentage</b>	52%	46%	2%	0%	0%	100%



■ Strongly agree 
 ■ Agree 
 ■ Neither agree nor disagree 
 ■ Disagree 
 ■ Strongly disagree

4. I have acquired new knowledge and/or skills from taking part in this event/activity

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
<b>Number</b>	61	37	1	0	0	99
<b>Percentage</b>	62%	37%	1%	0%	0%	100%



■ Strongly agree 
 ■ Agree 
 ■ Neither agree nor disagree 
 ■ Disagree 
 ■ Strongly disagree

## Appendix II: photos



*Opening Ceremony at Sichuan Fine Art Institute on 11th March 2013. Paula Middleton, British Council Area Director, Southwest China giving opening speech.*



*The first day of the workshop: group meetings discussing judging criteria*



*Company visit on 12th March: Joshua Fry, a student from the University of Leeds is curious about Chang'an's newly released car*



*Public Lecture 1 in Sichuan Fine Art Institute*



*Display of students' design works*



*Team Tweeki showing their group works with the group teacher (Shi Xin). Left to right: Zhang Qi, Shi Xin, Zheng Yan, Alice Gregory, Hu Lishi.*



*Hot discussion in the Judging Room. Left to right: Zhang Jing, Director Higher Education British Council China, Chen Zheng, General Manager of Chang'an Automobile European Designing Centre S.R.L., and Andrew Holmes, Climate Change and Energy Consul, British Consulate-General*



*Group photo taken at the Closing Ceremony on 23rd March*

British Council, China