



SAGENTIA SUPPORTS LOUGHBOROUGH UNIVERSITY PRODUCT DESIGN ENGINEERING PROJECTS

2016 sees the seventh consecutive year that Sagentia has supported second year product design projects at Loughborough University. As part of the 2015/16 academic year, Sagentia challenged the students with two design briefs to choose from: an affordable product to help elderly people to transfer material around the garden, or a device to help elderly people with picking fruit from the top of a tree. The students were required to build and test a working prototype and produce a poster and report for their solution, including considering its commercial viability, the target market's needs, technical requirements and manufacturing feasibility.

The project ran throughout the academic year, with Sagentia mentoring the students at key stages of the development, including support and advice on concept selection and on turning a concept into a manufacturable product. Three consultants from Sagentia attended the final exhibition, where judging and prize giving took place after the 11 teams of students presented their concepts and prototypes, all with accomplished and well thought out designs.

Two winners were chosen, one for each design brief. 'TRUNDLE' was selected due to its simplicity, novelty, effectiveness and commercial viability. It is a transportation and spreading device which allows compost to be loaded into the barrel and comfortably carried to where it is needed. Once in position the function of the barrel is simply adjusted to enable the compost to be evenly distributed as it rolls over the ground. 'GYROPIK', the second winner, was chosen because it was the most innovative way of addressing the problem. It comprises a pole with a novel mechanism to grab the fruit, then pull and twist it off the tree. The fruit then drops down the centre of the device and is safely caught within an integrated mesh netting which prevent damage to the fruit.

Martyn Mitchell, Consultant Mechanical Engineer at Sagentia, attended the final judging and commented: "This has been another successful year with some remarkable design projects demonstrated by the second year undergraduates. This year's project briefs were focused on products that could assist people, so factors such as usability were really important, as well as all of the usual product design elements such as concept ideation, cost analysis, materials research etc. We thoroughly enjoy working with the teams at Loughborough and helping them put some of what they've been learning into practice in order to design products that could genuinely be commercially viable."

Dr Ian Graham, Lecturer in Engineering Design at Loughborough University, observed: "However carefully academic tutors guide teams through their projects, students are always extremely keen to hear from industry professionals. The visits from the Sagentia team provide crucial focus – their fresh perspective and incisive questions bring the students' experience closer to a real-world design project."

Sagentia's involvement with Loughborough is part of its parent company's wider Academic Partnership Programme, which aims to bring a real world perspective to students' learning and to gain access to some of the best upcoming talent in science, technology and design. The programme includes guest lectures, developing course material and offering internships and summer placements. Two of the students from this year's Loughborough course will be joining Sagentia for one year placements starting this summer.

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About Sagentia

Sagentia is a global science, product and technology development company. Our mission is to help companies maximise the value of their investments in R&D. We partner with clients in the consumer, industrial, medical and oil & gas sectors to help them understand the technology and market landscape, decide their future strategy, solve the complex science and technology challenges and deliver commercially successful products.

Sagentia employs over 150 scientists, engineers and market experts and is part of Science Group, with headquarters in Cambridge, UK and offices in London, Guildford, Boston, Houston and Dubai. Other Science Group companies include OTM Consulting, Oakland Innovation and Leatherhead Food Research.

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