

Press Release

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From Waste to Wear - Unleashing Creativity for a Greener Future with “Back in Fashion” Design Competition

“Pause and ponder” - a phrase that not only applies to pet ownership but also serves as a reminder to think thrice before discarding anything. A group of amateur fashion designers have cleverly embraced this concept, turning items to be discarded into a series of eco-friendly fashion pieces. These creations recently made a dazzling appearance at the grand finale of HK Electric’s “Back in Fashion” Design Competition.

The competition, co-organised by HK Electric and the Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong (THEi), aimed to encourage the public to reduce waste and to breathe new life into unwanted items by transforming them into stylish outfits.

A total of 30 entries were selected from more than 220 submissions across four categories - Open, Parent-child, THEi, and Secondary Schools - to participate in the grand finale fashion show held last Saturday, 6 July, at the Central Market. All designs embodied elements of environmental protection and sustainable development.

The pieces “Utopia” and “The Recycling Fairy” have respectively clinched the championships in the Open and Parent-child categories. The THEi and Secondary School categories were topped by “Rewritten Echoes” and “Kinship”. These winning pieces fully showcase the boundless potential of creative reinterpretation. *(For details of all winning pieces, see Appendix 1.)*

All contestants had to design and produce at least one set of clothing which was judged against its relevance to the theme, originality and creativity, aesthetics, practicality and safety. An added surprise was the glamorous performance of some child and teenage models on the catwalk.

Officiating at the competition, HK Electric Managing Director, Mr. Francis C.Y. Cheng, said he was impressed by the creativity on display. He pointed out that fashion must reflect the styles and trends of the times, with reducing carbon emissions and achieving carbon neutrality as the most pressing issues in today’s society.

“That’s why HK Electric has been actively promoting waste reduction and recycling. We organised this competition to encourage participants to transform clothes and materials to be discarded into unique, beautiful, and creative eco-friendly outfits through recycling and upcycling,” said Mr. Cheng, also a judge at the finale.

“Power supply too, must evolve with societal changes and aspirations. To support global efforts in reducing carbon footprint and achieving carbon neutrality, HK Electric has been increasing the use of natural gas for electricity generation to about 70% of our total output in 2024. We will also fully support the government and explore the use of green hydrogen to achieve zero-carbon power generation,” he added.

Dr. Vanessa Au, Assistant Director of Environmental Protection (Waste Reduction), also joined to officiate at the ceremony and adjudicate. She highly commended the purpose of the competition: “This event allows participants to unleash their boundless imagination, transforming used items into interesting design elements through creativity, which are then repurposed into stylish fashion items.”

“Not only does this allow participants to practice upcycling, but it also encourages citizens to reduce waste in their daily lives, contributing to Hong Kong’s carbon neutrality goal,” she further stated.

The competition’s judging panel also included Dr. Paul Tsang, Vice President (Academic) of THEi; Morgane Parizot, Education Director of Redress, Denise Seto, an experienced fashion KOL and stylist, and representatives from Green Ladies & Green Little, a social enterprise under St. James’ Settlement, and members of HK Electric’s “Smart Power Education Fund” Advisory Committee.

The competition was supported by various organisations, including the Education Bureau’s “Business-School Partnership Programme”, the Clothing Industry Training Authority, the Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel, Redress, The Salvation Army, Green Ladies & Green Little, and Dress Green. A series of sustainable fashion lectures and workshops were held earlier to deepen participants’ understanding of and interest in the industry.

Also held on the same day was the final presentation and award ceremony of the annual “Green Energy Dreams Come True” competition. A total of 12 teams from the tertiary and secondary school categories shared their green dream projects, covering energy efficiency, renewable energy, and low-carbon living, all funded by HK Electric. The University of Hong Kong’s “The Future Smart

Garden: OASIS” and Ng Yuk Secondary School’s “NYCool Clay Refrigerator” came first in the two categories respectively.

Recognition was also given to outstanding “Happy Green Schools” and “Happy Green Ambassadors”. They were funded and trained by HK Electric to promote environmental protection and advocate a green lifestyle in schools and communities. *(For details of all winning projects, schools and ambassadors, see Appendices 2 and 3.)*

The “Happy Green Campaign” is a flagship project under HK Electric’s “Smart Power Education Fund”. Through a network of more than 650 primary and secondary schools and kindergartens, social media, and online platforms, it promotes energy efficiency, renewable energy, and low-carbon living to the public and the younger generation. Programmes for the 2024/25 school year will accept applications in mid-July and member schools can also participate in a variety of “Other Learning Experiences” activities for free. For more details, please visit HK Electric’s website www.hkelectric.com/happygreencampaign, the “Happy Green Campaign” Facebook page, call 3143 3727, or email happygreen@hkelectric.com.

Photo captions:



1. Mr. Francis C.Y. Cheng (middle in back row) and Dr. Vanessa Au (second from right in back row) pose with models wearing four championship outfits.



2. HK Electric's "Back in Fashion" catwalk finale demonstrates how waste can be turned into fashion.



3. Parent-child category's winning creation, "The Recycling Fairy", is made from waste paper, old bag and straws. Through its fairy-like appearance, it conveys the message of "Save the nature, Save the future".



4. Through the use of green and white colours, the winning piece of the Open category “Utopia” evokes the boundless imaginative space of individuals with depression, symbolising both the inner utopia of patients and their vision of a sustainable future.



5. The champion piece of THEi category “Rewritten Echoes,”, designed by third-year student Aroua Lee, repurposes old school uniforms into new fashion while staying in line with current trends. It also preserves precious memories from the student era.



6. The team from The Society of Boys' Centres Hui Chung Sing Memorial School wins the champion in the secondary school category with the mother-daughter outfit "Kinship" made from recycled denim jeans and skirts.



7. From waste to wear: all winning pieces of the 4 categories embody elements of environmental protection and sustainable development and successfully turned unwanted items into stylish outfits.



8. The University of Hong Kong's "The Future Smart Garden: OASIS" is the winner of the tertiary category of the "Green Energy Dreams Come True" competition.



9. "NYCool Clay Refrigerator", designed by the team from Ng Yuk Secondary School, is made with clay and solar panels. The team takes the first place in the secondary school category.



Appendix 1: HK Electric's "Back in Fashion" Design Competition Results

Parent-child Category

Award	Project Name and Designers
Champion	The Recycling Fairy Chow Cheuk Ling Chiu Sum Tsz Casie Chung Kit Ha Sheena Marie Lapating
1st Runner-up	As Before Tai Nga Ting Sze Long Ching Norah
2nd Runner-up	Cloud and Sea Yau Pak Kiu Parkio Tam Pui Yee Suki

Secondary School Category

Award	Project Name and Designers
Champion	Kinship Cheung Ka Fung Fan Pak Ching Cheng Tsz Ying Cecilia Ho Ngo Yi
1st Runner-up	Interlocking Chen Yat Nga
2nd Runner-up	Bloom Tse Chun Him Viet Wan King Po Lau Hoi Ching

THEi Category

Award	Project Name and Designers
Champion	Rewritten Echoes Lee Ngai Tung
1st Runner-up	La Chambre Claire Leung Ho Lam
2nd Runner-up	Shirt to Skirt Lam Heung Sau

Open Category

Award	Project Name and Designers
Champion	UTOPIA Kuo Chit
1st Runner-up	Gyroid Spinel Lee Yee Man
2nd Runner-up	The city story Leung Ka Yi



Appendix 2: “Green Energy Dreams Come True” Competition 2023/24 Results

Tertiary Category

Awards	School	Project Title
Champion	The University of Hong Kong	The Future Smart Garden: OASIS Present a smart city solution, Oasis, showcasing how it can effectively contribute to a smarter and more energy-efficient Hong Kong by demonstrating its functionality within a public leisure park.
1st Runner-up	City University of Hong Kong	Thermo-responsive Window with Electricity Generation Design a thermochromic smart window with electricity generation capability for building applications, to improve the issue of heat loss in the building.
2nd Runner-up	The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	GreenSmart: A Smart Waste Management System for a Sustainable Future A smart rubbish bin with voice control and sensors for precise waste sorting, promoting sustainability and user engagement.
Merit	The University of Hong Kong Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong	From Trash to Treasure: Reborn of Vegetable Scraps from Restaurants Through Sustainable Gardening Technologies Our project tackles food waste in Hong Kong by collecting vegetable scraps from restaurants and transforming them into potted edible plants using sustainable gardening techniques.

Secondary Schools Category

Awards	School	Project Title
Champion	Ng Yuk Secondary School	NYCool Clay Refrigerator NYCool Clay Refrigerator is a refrigerator that does not need to be connected to the power grid, uses local materials and can be manufactured locally
1st Runner-up	Ho Yu College and Primary School (Sponsored by Sik Sik Yuen)	Algae's Marvellous Adventure By combining algae with various substances, we aim to create biodegradable plastics to address environmental concern. Additionally, the project aims to raise public awareness about eco-friendly plastic reduction through different educational methods.
2nd Runner-up	NLSI Peace Evangelical Secondary School	SolarDrive+ Portable device with automated solar panels to charge electric vehicles and promote green energy awareness.
Merit	Wellington Education Organization Chang Pui Chung Memorial School	Intelligent AI Storm Drain Monitoring System The system uses solar power to provide stagnant water accumulation monitoring and prediction through detection devices installed in waterways and channels.
Merit	Shatin Pui Ying College	Carbon Crime Design a riddle-solving game, supported by social media promotion, the project aims to promote carbon neutrality and raise awareness about high carbon emissions engagingly.



Appendix 3: Outstanding Happy Green Schools 2023/24

YMCA of Hong Kong Christian Kindergarten (Kai Ching)	Kowloon Bay St. John The Baptist Catholic Primary School
Stewards Pooi Kei Primary School	Hong Kong Baptist Convention Primary School
Toi Shan Association Primary School	Immaculate Heart of Mary College
PLK Wu Chung College	St. Paul's Secondary School
The Salvation Army Shek Wu School	

Outstanding Happy Green Ambassadors 2023/24

School	Ambassador
Ho Yu College and Primary School (Sponsored by Sik Sik Yuen)	Hon Tsz Yin
	Wong Tsz Chin
Helen Liang Memorial Secondary School (Shatin)	Yeung Yip Tsz
	Luk Yin Ho
Shau Kei Wan Government Secondary School	Lo Hoi Yan
	Wong Ching Man
Madam Lau Kam Lung Secondary School of Miu Fat Buddhist Monastery	Chan Ching Ying
	Xu Nok Sze
SKH Tang Shiu Kin Secondary School	Mak Shing Chi
St. Paul's School (Lam Tin)	Ng Ka Yi

*In no particular order