

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Mobility guides year two of Rimowa Design Prize

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Finalists' projects run the gamut, including transportation solutions, modular meeting spaces, environmental services and various forms of wearable technology. Image credit: Rimowa

By ZACH JAMES

LVMH-owned German luggage brand Rimowa is spotlighting rising names in the country's design field once again.

Following its debut last year, the Rimowa Design Prize has returned with the same aim: to uplift mobility through a distinctly German lens. After announcing its shortlist of seven finalists last month, a winner has been named, with their project taking the form of wearable technology that can help alleviate a widespread, commonplace issue.

"The Rimowa Design Prize continues to embody Rimowa's commitment to innovation and cutting-edge design, which is what many have come to associate with their brand," said Romey Louangvilay, head of communications and creative strategy at [ELMNTL](#), New York.

"The Mobility theme aligns perfectly with Rimowa's ethos as a brand known for its premium luggage and travel accessories," Mr. Louangvilay said. "By focusing on wearable technology that promotes well-being and stress relief, the winning project RO' exemplifies Rimowa's dedication to enhancing the travel experience beyond physical Mobility."

Mr. Louangvilay is not affiliated with Rimowa, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

A glimpse of the future

Announced at a ceremony at the James Simon Gallery in Berlin, 22-year-old student Janne Kreimer from Anhalt University took home the ultimate prize.

A first-place finish earns the winner a 20,000 euro or \$21,524 at current exchange reward alongside a mentorship program run by a jury member and networking opportunities to further her career. The latter two benefits are provided to all finalists.

Rimowa grants a look inside the event

Ms. Kreimer's project, titled "RO," is a wearable product that helps relieve stress and anxiety through deep pressure stimulation and acupressure points through a system of "soft robots" worn on the user's chest.

SRH Berlin University of Applied Sciences student Daniela Lindenberg placed second, earning a \$10,766 prize package for her "IXO" safety device. The item uses an integrated camera, flashlight, microphone, and speaker to record interactions for

accountability purposes, as hate crimes have risen mightily in German cities in recent times.

Other finalists' submissions spanned transportation solutions, modular meeting spaces, environmental services and other wearable technology. For their efforts, the group each received the aforementioned networking and mentorship services, with a \$5,383 bonus to boot.

The Rimowa Design Prize's jury is constructed from a group of German executives, including those from Porsche, Braun and Rimowa itself, among several others. Alexandre Arnault, a board member of the luggage brand's parent company, also serves on the awards board.



"RO" uses body scans to let the "soft robots" know where to provide pressure. Image credit: Rimowa

After kicking off last year ([see story](#)), the innovation spotlight serves as a way to display the creative talent of the future, incubating their ideas and potentially providing a German solution to often global issues.

"Hosting the Design Prize enhances brand engagement by attracting attention from design enthusiasts, industry professionals and the media," said Mr. Louangvilay.

"It creates opportunities for the brand to connect with its audience on a deeper level and foster meaningful conversations around design and creativity," he said. "And the involvement of a jury comprised of German luxury and design executives, including those from Rimowa, Porsche, and LVMH, underscores Rimowa's dedication to fostering creativity and excellence within the design community.

"The prize not only recognizes outstanding talent but also provides support and mentorship to emerging designers, reflecting Rimowa's commitment to nurturing the next generation of innovators."

Spotlighting creatives

Rimowa is not alone in uplifting the future of the industry.

The luggage brand is a very recent entrant into the space, with other maisons embracing the next generation, as well as those who came before, well before this decade.



The awards serve as a way for luxury brands to recruit and incubate rising talents. Image credit: Rimowa

French jewelry maison Cartier named the honorees of its annual Women's Initiative last month, with the first, second and third place winners set to be announced on May 22, 2024 ([see story](#)). The label has run the project since 2006.

U.S. luxury retailer Neiman Marcus Group hosted its fashion awards earlier this year, rewarding big and small names from throughout the luxury space ([see story](#)). Far older than Cartier's program, the show dates back 90 years.

In an action that began much more recently, the corporation also highlights students' achievements with the help of national nonprofit Fashion Scholarship Fund ([see story](#)), which began in 2020.

Other luxury staples, such as Kering, LVMH and Cl de Peau Beaut, among many more, also spotlight current and future industry talent through awards and scholarships. However, these awards serve a purpose outside of celebrating youthful innovators and established talent.

RIMOWA extends its congratulations to Janne Kreimer, the winner of the 2024 RIMOWA Design Prize with her project RO. A special mention also goes to Daniela Lindenberg for her design, IXO. [#RIMOWA](#)
[#RIMOWAdesignprize pic.twitter.com/yS2KkaSQZP](#)

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"By hosting the Design Prize, [Rimowa] aims to solidify its position as a leader and innovator in the design industry," said Mr. Louangvilay.

"It showcases the brand's commitment to fostering creativity and pushing the boundaries of design excellence," he said. "The Design Prize provides a platform for emerging designers to showcase their work and gain recognition within the industry.

"By supporting and nurturing new talent, the brand contributes to the development of the design community; it [also] cultivates a network of future collaborators and partners."

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