

2010 Good Design Award

The winners of the 2010 Good Design Award, the only comprehensive award for evaluating and endorsing design in Japan, were announced in September 2010. The Good Design Award was established by the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (now Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry) in 1957 to “improve living conditions by creating a superior quality of products, and to work toward industrial development and promote international trade.” In 2010, 1,100 products were presented with the Good Design Award, and among them,

fifteen items recognized for particular excellence were selected for the Good Design Award Best Fifteen with one of them chosen for the Grand Award, and the other fourteen presented with the Gold Award. Products given the Good Design Award can use the so-called G Mark as evidence, and are able to market their products on the back of a high sense of design.

“A design award with a history going back more than fifty years is extremely rare even internationally,” comments Sae Suzuki of the Good Design Office at the Japan Industrial Design Promotion Organization. “It is unique in terms of the number of applications, the number of awards and the breadth of genre.”

Since the Good Design Award targets “everything that has been developed for the diverse spheres of human activity,” systems and ideas are also considered designs. In 2010, the idol group AKB48 was selected for one of the Gold Awards for its Entertainment Project Design. In recent years, foreign corporations have also started to pay attention to the Good Design Award accounting for approximately 20% of total applications. A bladeless fan made by the British firm Dyson won the Grand Award in 2010. The Air Multiplier is profiled on the facing page, along with some of the Gold Award winners.

Japanese Good Design Exhibition in India

In 2007, the Government of India announced a National Design Policy, launching the India Design Council as the organization to implement the policy, aiming to promote design and raise the national profile. This year, the Indian version of the Good Design Award (see story above), is expected to be launched. At the same time, a Good Design exhibition from Japan will be held at the facilities of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) in New Delhi for three days from March 4 to 6. From cup ramen containers, stationery and other objects long familiar in Japan, to consumer electronics, an electric bidet toilet seat, batteries, cameras and other objects with advanced functionality, about 90 recipients of the Good Design Award over successive generations were on display at this exhibition.

Yamaha's Silent Violin will be shown at the exhibition in India.



Grand and Gold Award Winners (Selection), 2010



GOOD DESIGN GRAND AWARD

Air Multiplier (Dyson KK)

The Air Multiplier is a fan without blades. It suctions in the surrounding air, accelerates it and blows it out. No blades, safe, easy to maintain.

GOOD DESIGN GOLD AWARD (Living)

Leaf (Nissan)

Presented with the award for comprehensive initiatives to promote the zero emissions society and grow the market for the Nissan Leaf electric car. Comprehensive initiatives such as forming partnerships with national and local governments or electric power companies, producing lithium ion batteries, using recycled materials in vehicles, and setting up a charging infrastructure.



GOOD DESIGN GOLD AWARD (Society)

Kibo Japanese Experiment Module

(Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency)

Kibo, the Japanese experiment module, is one of the facilities at the International Space Station being built with the cooperation of Japan, the United States and fifteen other countries. Kibo improves astronaut operability and prevents errors in operations, the system automation reduces the workload and, in addition, the design is easy on both vision and hearing with base tones in white and blue and a silent interior.



GOOD DESIGN GOLD AWARD (Network)

AKB48 (AKS)

With songwriter Yasushi Akimoto as producer, this "idol" group started performing in December 2005. The concept is "idols you can go to meet." The group has its own AKB48 Theater in Akihabara where there are daily performances focused on song and dance. As of October 2010, there have been 2,072 performances, attracting a total audience of approximately 510,000 people. The members are selected by means of auditions based on applications from every part of Japan. The group also performs overseas in the United States, Russia, Korea and Singapore.

