

Coventry-built Microcab up for illustrious international design award

A hydrogen fuel cell vehicle which was conceived and manufactured in Coventry has been shortlisted for a prestigious international transport design award.

The zero emission machine from [Microcab](#) – a spin-out company from Coventry University – was picked out from an array of contenders to be in the running for the sixth annual Condé Nast Traveller’s [Innovation & Design Awards](#).

Condé Nast’s awards celebrate excellence in a number of categories from fashion and gourmet to leisure and sustainability, and its judges – including industrial design guru Sebastian Conran and Top Gear editor-at-large Jason Barlow – chose to shortlist the Microcab for the transport section.

Microcab’s H₂EV is up against some stiff competition for the sought-after accolade, with candidates such as the BMW i3 electric car, a 220mph luxury high-speed train and a cableless, gearless electric bicycle all vying for top honours.

The H₂EV is the brainchild of John Jostins, professor of sustainable transport design at Coventry University, and is powered by a state-of-the-art 3kW fuel cell which gives the car a 100 mile range. Hydrogen from a filling station is combined with oxygen from the air to create electricity (which drives the car’s electric motors) and water (the car’s only emission) in a reaction known as ‘reverse electrolysis’.

The vehicle was supplied to the West Midlands-based CABLED (Coventry and Birmingham Low Emission Demonstrator) trial, and forms a key part of Coventry University’s [Low Carbon Vehicles Grand Challenge Initiative](#) – an applied research programme through which the University works with businesses to explore the development of ‘green’ automotive technologies.

John Jostins, managing director of Microcab and professor of sustainable transport design at Coventry University, said:

“It’s an honour for Microcab to be shortlisted for this illustrious award, and I’m delighted that recognition for the H₂EV’s success and innovation is extending across continents. This not only represents a boost for hydrogen as an alternative fuel in a low carbon vehicle sector crowded with battery-powered cars, it also shows that in

spite of the recession the West Midlands is retaining its position at the cutting edge of zero emission technology development in the UK.”

The Microcab H₂EV will be on display in Coventry next month as part of the free-to-attend Coventry Car Day in the city centre. For more information, visit www.coventry.ac.uk/coventrycarday.

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For further information, please contact Alex Roache, External Press & Media Relations Officer, Coventry University, on 024 7679 5050 or email alex.roache@coventry.ac.uk.

Notes to editors

- The world’s first fuel cell was developed by Welsh scientist Sir William Robert Grove in 1842. His invention, which he called the ‘gas voltaic battery’, produced electrical energy by combining hydrogen and oxygen. He later became known as the ‘Father of the Fuel Cell’.
- John Jostins, managing director of Microcab and professor of sustainable transport design at Coventry University, is no stranger to innovation – he is one of the men responsible for the creation of R2D2 for the Star Wars movies in the late seventies.