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Architecture graduate takes a bite out of the big apple

A graduate from Northumbria University, Newcastle has gained global recognition in a prestigious student competition which saw his designs go on exhibit in New York.

Architecture MArch graduate Jacob Boardman's thesis for a hydrogen-fuelled transport hub was chosen as one of only 20 designs, from over 300 entries worldwide, to appear in an exhibition and charrette at the American Institute of Architecture (AIA) Centre for Architecture, New York.

The Urban SOS Open Ideas student competition, hosted by international construction firm AECOM, saw entries from students representing 123 universities worldwide, in response to a brief seeking sustainably viable proposals re-imagining derelict places of production and infrastructure.

AECOM convened juries across 30 of its offices around the world for a week of intensive judging, with entrants scored on their ability to demonstrate a holistic approach to the brief and embrace interdisciplinary thinking.

Jacob's entry, 'Hydrogen Port', was recognised for its intelligent response to the world's challenging and increasing pollution levels, caused by shipping and aviation industries and the proposed return to airships for freight and tourist travel, as pioneered by UK leading Scientist Sir David King and the UK Government.

Jacob, 26, from Warrington, Cheshire, who is currently working at 5 Plus architects in Manchester, said: "The competition initially caught my eye as it related to urban regeneration of former industrial landscapes and future sustainability schemes touched on during my MArch Architecture studies at Northumbria, so I thought why not give it a go? I never dreamed I'd get this far.

"New York City is the pinnacle of American urban architecture so to see my work recognised by the US industry is an amazing feeling and an incredibly proud moment for me."

Sebastian Messer, Senior Lecturer in Architecture at Northumbria University, said: "Competitions such as this can serve as fantastic platforms into industry for graduates, with the unrivalled opportunity to raise their profile at the very start of their professional career.

"Jake's project is an excellent example of the value which architecture can add by applying lateral thinking to a problem."

Northumbria's Department of Architecture consistently produces award-winning graduates and this year staff and students have enjoyed success at a number of events, including the London degree shows, where their work was exhibited alongside some of the UK's best universities.

Architecture at Northumbria was rated 6th in the UK by The Guardian, 7th by the Sunday Times, and was also in the top ten of the Complete University Guide 2015.

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