



Northumbria University graduate, Rob Law MBE.

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## Graduate showcase and sleep workshop form part of Tyne Design Week

Northumbria University graduate, [Rob Law MBE](#), joined sleep scientists and design experts from the University for Tyne Design Week – a new celebration of North East creativity and innovation.

Best known as the founder of Trunki, the iconic ride-on suitcase for kids, Rob is an award-winning entrepreneur, product pioneer and strategic advisor with a track record of building and scaling purpose-driven consumer brands. He formed a key part of the programme for the first ever Tyne Design Week,

which got under way on Monday 23 June.

The aim of [Tyne Design Week](#) is to bring together design thinkers, practitioners, businesses, educators, students and communities, to take part in shaping a vibrant and inclusive design future at events across the region. A programme which runs until Friday 27 June includes guest speakers, live design challenges, open studios, exhibitions and more.

Northumbria University is one of four leading partners in the five-day event, along with Edge Innovation, the North East Combined Authority and Newcastle University.

[Professor Katy Shaw](#), Director of the Arts and Humanities Research Council's (AHRC) UK Creative Communities programme and Professor of Writing and Publishing at Northumbria, was among the line-up of guest speakers included in the launch event held on Monday.

Visitors to the University heard an insightful talk from Rob on his entrepreneurial journey as part of a [graduate showcase event](#) held on Monday evening. After studying product design at Northumbria and graduating from the Design for Industry course in 2000, Rob is returning as a Visiting Fellow to work with the next generation of design students and innovators.

He said: "I have very fond memories of my time at Northumbria so it's always great to come back when I can to support the work that goes on here. I'm excited for the opportunity to be working more closely with current and future Product Design students. My design background and the skills I learnt during my degree continue to inform my work and business decisions today and I hope we can learn a lot from each other."

After a visit to the University's [Incubator Hub](#) on Tuesday, which plays a pivotal role in offering co-working space and providing high-quality support for student and graduate entrepreneurs to establish and grow thriving businesses, Rob collaborated with sleep scientists and experts in design-led innovation at Northumbria to run a special Tyne Design Week [workshop with a focus on the impact of ageing on sleep](#).

Supported by [Professor Mark Bailey](#) and [Dr Nick Spencer](#) from [Northumbria](#)

[School of Design, Arts and Creative Industries](#), as well as Dr Nayantara Santhi and Dr Mario Leocadio-Miguel from the [Northumbria Centre for Sleep Research](#), Rob introduced the workshop audience to his innovative new start-up business, Zeepy Ltd, a science-backed sleep training brand.

The workshop brought together students and people with lived experience with the scientists and designers to reveal how great designs stem from clear project briefs.

Speaking about the workshop, Dr Spencer explained: “Our work is always multi-disciplinary and there’s something really authentic about having alumni like Rob who we can continue to engage with and have work with our students. His perspective and experience is really valuable for everyone and we’re so grateful to him for sharing that. This is one of many ways we work to ensure our students are industry-ready when they graduate.

“Being involved in Tyne Design Week is important for everyone at Northumbria and, for us, felt like a natural progression from our own Responsible Design Week of events hosted last year. The aim from the workshop with Rob is to bring together all sorts of knowledge and points of view to develop a design brief that our [Product Design](#) students can work on as a live project in the next academic year.”

Experiential learning is a cornerstone of Northumbria’s strategy to power an inclusive economy – helping to place graduates in highly skilled jobs across the North East and beyond. The University has built a strong reputation for working with industry partners to offer high-quality, real-world learning experiences that enhance career opportunities – especially for students from backgrounds without ready access to professional networks. By continually expanding its provision of experiential learning underpinned by world-leading research, Northumbria aims to equip all students with the skills necessary to thrive in a rapidly evolving job market.

Tyne Design Week events run until Friday 27 June. Discover more on the [event website](#).

Northumbria is a research-intensive university that unlocks potential for all, changing lives regionally, nationally and internationally.

Two thirds of Northumbria's undergraduate students come from the North East region and go into employment in the region when they graduate, demonstrating Northumbria's significant contribution to social mobility and levelling up in the North East of England.

Find out more about us at [www.northumbria.ac.uk](http://www.northumbria.ac.uk)

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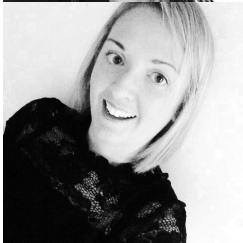


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