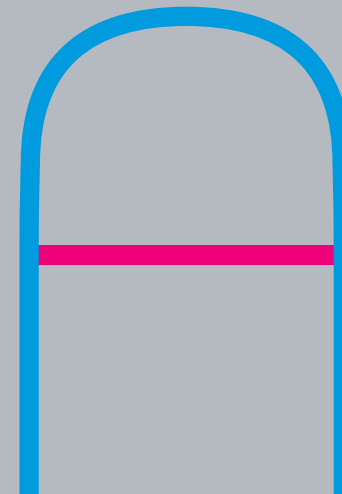
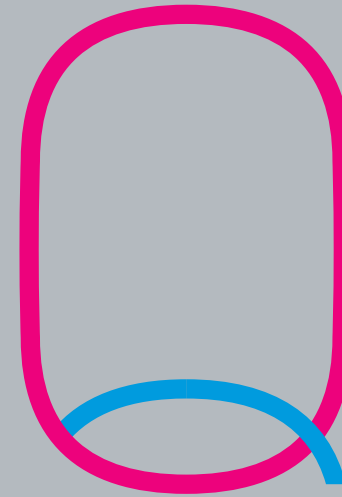


# KOKUYO DESIGN AWARD 2014

<http://www.kokuyo.co.jp/award/>



THEME

NEXT QUALITY

CATEGORY

(S) Stationery

(F) Furniture

GRAND PRIX

MERIT AWARD

1

GRAND PRIX:  
one from  
all entries.

4

MERIT AWARD:  
four from  
all entries.

# NEXT QUALITY

Throughout moments in working, learning, and living, good products can make these a more richer experience. Going beyond just quality, we want to bring more products that combine beauty and superior functionality to the world. They are products that provide ease of use. Products that inspire, and please the senses. Products with humor that bring smiles to our faces. Stunningly beautiful, yet subtle and elegant. Streamline your design and create a product that others will want to hold, and use. Think of designs that would help us rediscover our essence, to work, learn, and live with care. Consider the inherent nature of materials and how to bring it alive. How could design enhance the benefit of a product? What makes an unassuming but truly good product that will be used for years to come?

THEME	NEXT QUALITY
ELIGIBLE ENTRIES	Stationery, Furniture
PRIZES	Grand Prix (one from all entries) ¥2,000,000 Merit Award (four from all entries) ¥500,000 / winner ※Special Recognition prizes may also be awarded. ※Not all prizes may be awarded for all categories if there is no winner selected.
ELIGIBILITY	Corporations, organizations, individuals, and group are all welcome, regardless of age, sex, professional background, or nationality. Entry eligibility is limited to those designs never before shown publicly (in Japan, other countries).
NUMBER OF SUBMISSION ALLOWED	Unlimited
JUDGES	Yōko Kawashima (Itochu fashion system Co.,Ltd. ifs FUTURE LABORATORY HEAD CHIEF) Kashiwa Satō (SAMURAI INC. Representative / Art Director, Creative Director) Yasuhiro Suzuki (artist) Kinya Tagawa (takram design engineering Representative / Design Engineer) Akihiro Kuroda (KOKUYO Co., Ltd. Chief Executive Officer, President and Director)
JUDGING PROCESS	Initial Judging Based on the submitted [Presentation Sheet]. Final Judging Based on the submitted [Presentation Sheet] and [Model].
JUDGING CRITERIA	1. Design in harmony with function 2. Beauty 3. New, innovative 4. Embodies theme 5. Considers practical usage 6. Commercially viable



## Grand Prix

### sukeru hasami

Scissors

Product Designer

Naoki Ogishita Koichiro Oishi

When using scissors to cut paper along a line, sometimes the blade of the scissors makes it difficult to see the cut. These See-Through Scissors have clear blades, making for an evolved tool that reduces unnecessary stress. Making the entire tool handles and all from the same clear material provides beauty, productivity, and recyclability in one. These NEXT QUALITY scissors are a new approach to function and beauty.

I can really sense the scale and aspiration behind these high-quality scissors, made entirely from a uniform, clear material. The design reminiscent of a droplet of water was a particular pleasant surprise.

Yōko Kawashima

I believe that the best tools are a natural extension of the human body. While this might be taking it a bit too far, it would be interesting to see scissors that are actually part of the hand. I think this design for scissors is very close to realizing this idea. There's something to the idea of describing the scissors as "see-through" rather than transparent.

Yasuhiro Suzuki

The prototype for this submission was very polished, conveying how nice the product will feel in the hand. The transparency of the material communicates both a stand-offish coolness as well as a translucency that begins to feel like a part of the body. I believe it was this latter factor that most influenced the judges. The design reflects nothing more than the pure function of cutting. I look forward to the potential of this as-yet unseen transparent ceramic, created through a type of sintering process.

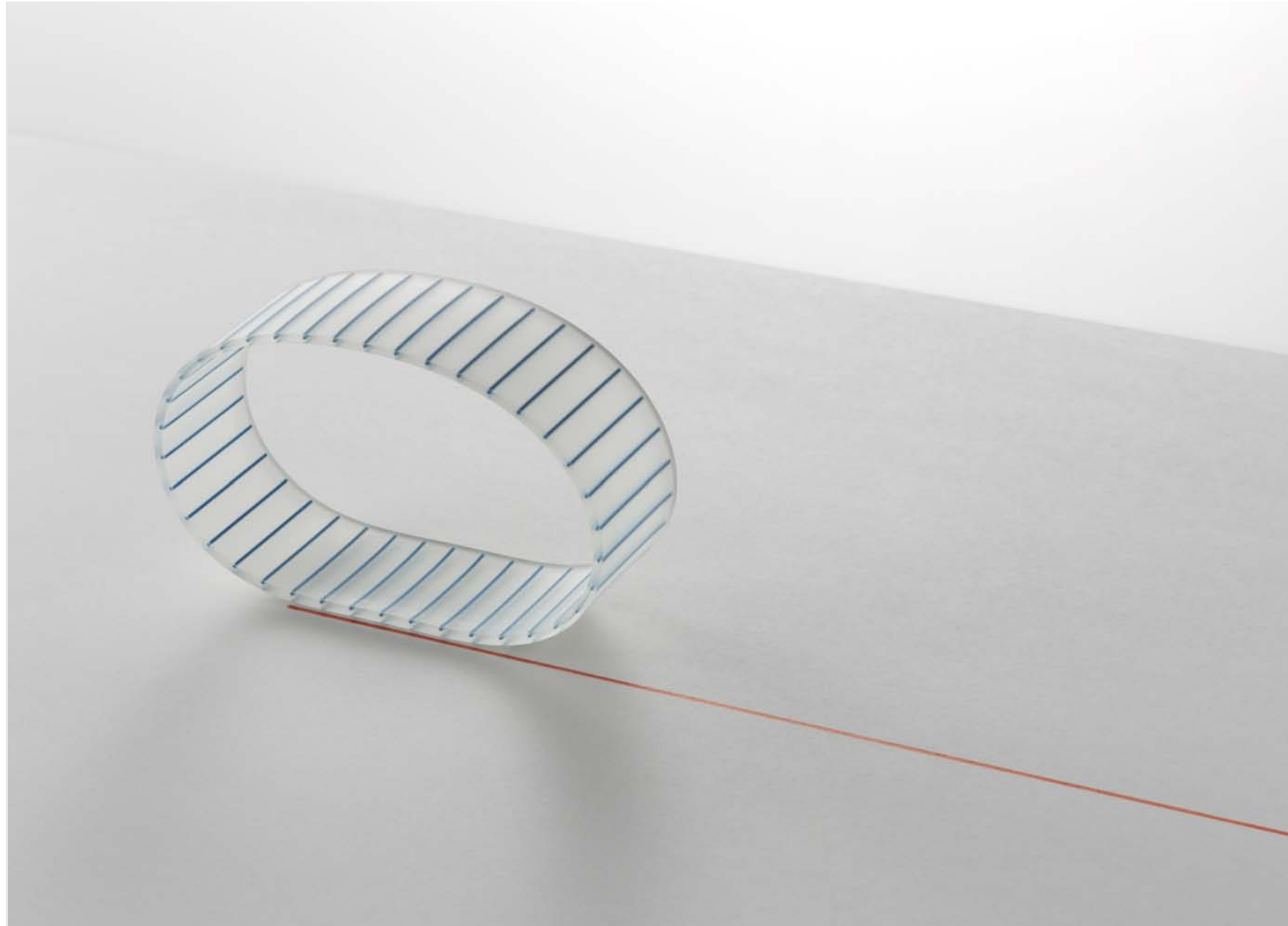
Kinya Tagawa

Every submission was an excellent imagining of this year's Awards concept. Among them all, I found the idea to improve the quality of the materials used in traditional scissors by replacing them with clear ceramics to be truly outstanding. This design was absolutely worthy as of the Grand Prix award.

Kashiwa Satō

KOKUYO already produces a number of different scissors that are popular on the market. Hit products include a model that can withstand cutting packing tape more than 100,000 times before dulling. Even so, we were impressed with this new concept in scissors. And while we recognize that this is an innovative concept, we are concerned as to whether this can be actually produced. However, the designer included a proposal for a new type of material, which really ignited our excitement. I think this design presents a challenge worth pursuing.

KOKUYO



## Merit Award

### eienjogi

Rulers

University Student  
Manako Kawaguchi

Different sizes and shapes of rulers accomplish different tasks. The Circular Ruler is a tool that lets you draw a single, continuous, endless line. Now, you're never limited by the length of the ruler. This is NEXT QUALITY in a ruler, unlocking the potential of the tool.

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Drawing a line using a round, rotating ruler is just plain fun. I think the ability to draw a line without limits or measures is a completely unique approach.

Yōko Kawashima

Consumers tend to like rulers that fit into a pencil case. This design is about the size of a hand, but I think the effort put into the size and shape has improved the function. It would be interesting to see this ruler on the shelf next to traditional rulers.

KOKUYO

According to Tadataka Ino, who created the map of Japan, the outline of the Japanese archipelago is almost the same distance as the circumference of the planet. And, perhaps the invention of the unit of distance called the meter is a reflection of our innate desire to measure this world. A ruler has a beginning and end, but lines have no end. I think it's a majestic achievement to express this eternal idea in a ruler.

Yasuhiro Suzuki



## Merit Award

### marukezuri

Pencil sharpeners

University Student  
Takuma Kawamoto

Pencil tips tend to break immediately after sharpening. This inspired the idea to create a new standard in pencil sharpener that produces a point that makes it easier to write. This isn't just a tool to sharpen writing instruments. It can also be used to sharpen eyeliner pencils, etc.

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The idea that this design isn't just for writing instruments but can also be used for eyeliner pencils and other cosmetic applicators demonstrated a bigger vision. I think this is a superb concept.

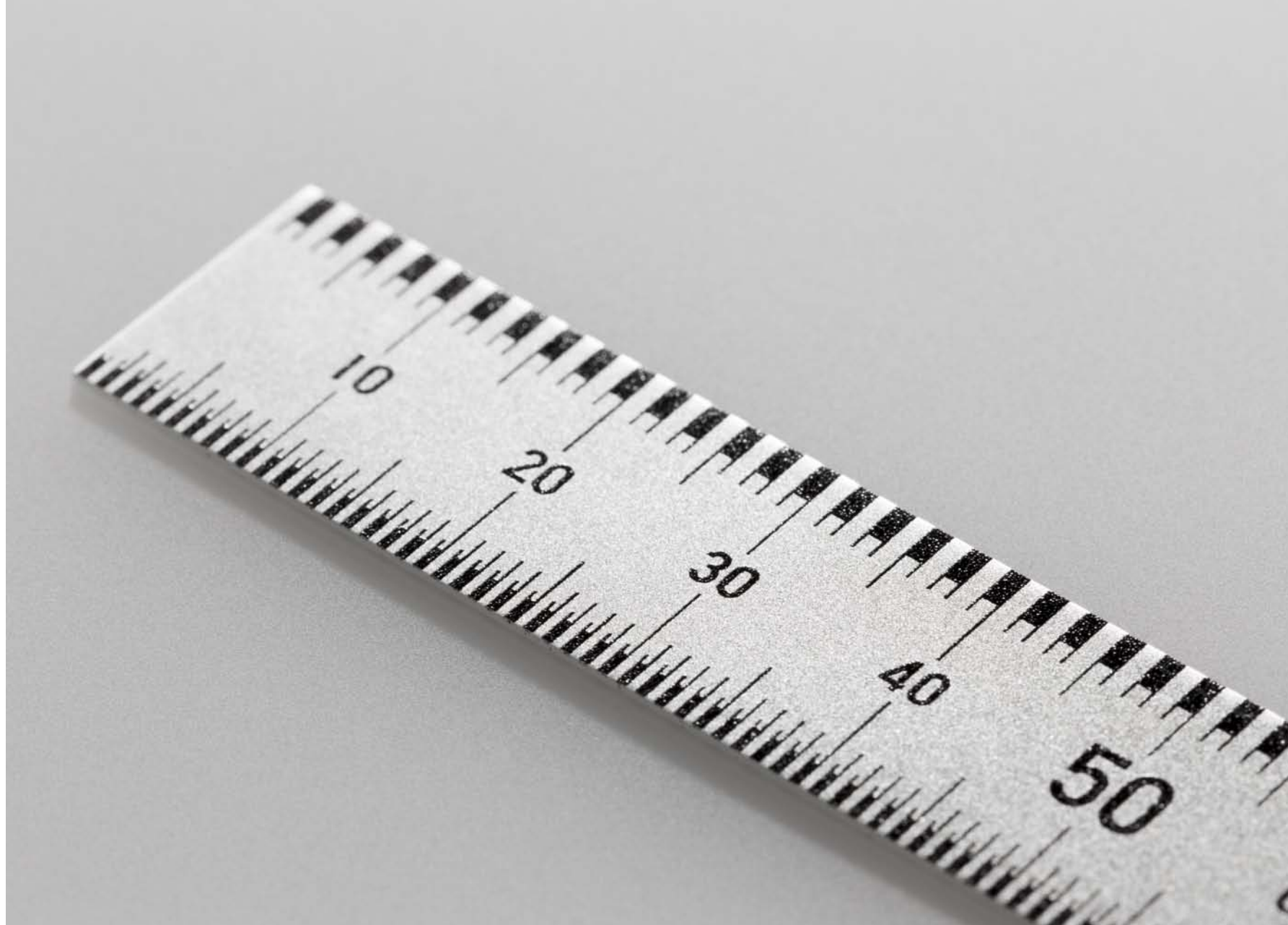
Yōko Kawashima

We were delighted by the fact that this idea came out of a common experience. If the technical issues can be solved, then we believe there are a lot of possibilities here. If the blade could be modified to cut in a more rounded shape, it would be a unique and appealing product. The current design looks a bit too much like other products in terms of shape and color. We'd like to see the designer work on altering the look of the design.

KOKUYO

I think that it was interesting that the designer convinced me that a pencil is better without a sharply pointed end. Unfortunately, the design of this submission wasn't particularly intriguing. I would have liked to have seen the product designed with the ability to choose different shapes for the pencil tip. I think with that addition, this design could have been the Grand Prix winner.

Kashiwa Satō



## Merit Award

### honto no jogi

Rulers

Designer

Hiroaki Sakai

By showing graduations on a ruler in terms of lines under a geometric definition, rather than by the thickness of the line, we create a ruler that is closer to the true definition of a tool to measure length. This ruler indicates the position of boundary lines created between two faces lined up a regular intervals, providing a more accurate measurement of length.

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Conceptually, I think this was an amazing idea. My concern is whether making these detailed graduation marks is technically feasible. I also wonder whether people can get used to the feeling of using this product. This might look like a rather plain design, but I believe that it's perfect conceptually.

Kashiwa Satō

The designer here focused on certain features and solutions for an everyday item. You can't help but be impressed by designer's approach to their work. While the item looks like an ordinary ruler, the ingenuity of the design provides the user with an intuitive grasp of how to use it.

KOKUYO

The designer was frequently frustrated by wondering which side of the line to cut when using cutting along a line. A discrepancy of even 0.01mm can be a fatal error for a designer, and this design intended to solve this problem is quite ingenious. Despite the fact that the designer only added filler marks in between the graduation lines, the approach was something completely new and apart from traditional rulers.

Kinya Tagawa



## Merit Award

### Matomeyasui Note

Notebooks

CG Designer

Hiroki Nishii

The Matomeyasui Note is a notebook divided by colored sections. The user can use these sections to summarize the main points of a lecture or study notes for an upcoming exam. This design improves learning by letting the user summarize the most important facts for easy reference later.

The notebook has been subject to all manner of design proposals throughout the years. This submission was the perfect reminder of the need for more specific demonstrations. I think putting this particular design out into the world would spark a generation of new and interesting ideas for the notebook, which is why I was so enamored with this design.

Yasuhiro Suzuki

This was a well-conceived, beautiful design. We were most impressed by the function achieved naturally through the design by sectioning the notebook by color. This is an idea that could be in stores tomorrow.

KOKUYO

Adding lightly shaded sections to a notebook is a simple idea, but it has the effect of making it easier for users to take good notes. I think this is an excellent example of changing the quality and nature of an action with a minimum of effort.

Kinya Tagawa



## FINALIST

### +Rest

Office Chair

Graduate Student

LLL / Saito Taiki Tachibana Atsuki  
Hisayama Itaru

A work chair with room to breathe. The "plus" of this chair is that it lets you enjoy natural office conversations or just a short, refreshing break when you need it.



## FINALIST

### Fu-ruits

Letter Set

Graphic Designer

Akitaka Sekine

An envelope that opens like peeling the skin of a fruit. Makes for more whimsical, more flavorful communication between the sender and the receiver.



## FINALIST

### human scale sansuke

Triangular Scale

University Student

Takuma Orikasa

A pair of scissors designed to be completely see-through. A beautiful design that is functional, too; see exactly where you're cutting. Made from the same material throughout for easy recyclability.



## FINALIST

### 150:5

Pens

University Student

Shiho Tanimura

Two pens, one 150g and the other 5g. The weight difference inspires and motivates the user to write, offering new value in the act of writing.





## FINALIST

### Time

Eraser

Design Unit

VOLO / Senichiro Watanabe  
Mihoko Fukami

An eraser that becomes more beautiful the more it is used. The patterns change through use, motivating the user to use the eraser in its entirety.



## FINALIST

### CO.PI.PE

Calculator

Product Designer

Yu Musashi

A new, modern approach to using the calculator. A clever tune-up for easier use by those familiar with PCs and smartphones.



## FINALIST

### Trash bags bin

Garbage Can

Package Designer

Kenro Matsui

A stand-alone wastebasket consisting of layered bags. Once full, you simply peel the top layer and throw it out. As bags are removed, they can be replaced with new ones for long term use.



## HELLO CHAIR

Chair

KOKUYO FURNITURE Co.,Ltd.

Hidekuni Kuroda Aki Kanai  
Taku Sasaki

A chair, shaped like a letter. You can "write" messages by combining chairs, creating an interaction between chair and person. These chairs will take on new meaning in a variety of situations.

※This submission is from a Kokuyo in-house designer. The submission passed the first level of anonymous judging, being selected as a finalist. While the design was not eligible to win an award, we are adding it to this list as an example of Kokuyo in-house design work.

## Genral comments



Itochu fashion system Co.,Ltd.  
ifs FUTURE LABORATORY HEAD CHIEF

### Yōko Kawashima

The theme of this year's Awards was NEXT QUALITY, pursuing the next step into the near future for products that have reached maturity. While the theme might seem simple at first glance, it actually involves a high degree of difficulty. I think many of this year's submissions revealed new levels of quality, taking on traditional concepts from a slightly different angle. There were more than a few designs that I would definitely buy if I saw them in the store. Design is giving a specific shape to a concept or idea for practical use and enjoyment. I hope every designer continues to challenge themselves to discover new design quality.



SAMURAI INC. Representative  
Art Director, Creative Director

### Kashiwa Satō

The award winners this year were all designs that I would love to use in the real world. Conceptually, they were all very innovative, and I found myself nodding my head in agreement with the ideas. The assumption of the Kokuyo Design Awards is that submissions will be taken to market as actual products. While I think the submissions were at a high level overall, there's no denying a degree of disappointment that the designs were a bit too practical. They lacked interest in terms of impact, scale, and newsworthiness. This is probably an issue on both sides of the equation: the judges and the designers. I recognize that this bargain this balance is difficult to achieve in one's work in the real world as well. Given all of these factors, this year's Grand Prix winner the sukeru hasami was a design that incorporated both function and beauty. I look forward to seeing this design go through the commercialization process. I think it will be a hit a product that one would have thought would already be on the market.



Artist

### Yasuhiro Suzuki

The theme NEXT QUALITY inspired design submissions offering new value and more than a few surprises. The transparency of the Grand Prix-winning the sukeru hasami creates an ideal in design where the scissors became less of a separate item and more of a connected whole between hand and tool. The mockup of this design presented a finely studied form balancing constructed beauty and ease of use. The presentation leads one to look forward to using this item in its function as a cutting tool. To me this was a presentation that inspired people look forward to a finished product, rather than merely demonstrating an iteration of item that already exists. I came to realize that NEXT QUALITY is something that leads people to imagine what comes next after seeing a design. I think one can use the medium of familiar stationery or furniture to communicate a new concept. I look forward to the Kokuyo Design Awards becoming a focus for not only designers, but for anyone who has a vision of a concept that could change society.



takram design engineering Representative  
Design Engineer

### Kinya Tagawa

The word NEXT in the concept of NEXT QUALITY implies something that hasn't been seen yet. Something unprecedented; quality at a higher level. That was the hope we had when we decided on NEXT QUALITY as the theme for the 2014 Awards. As a result, we received wonderful submissions that embodied NEXT QUALITY in a wide range of approaches. The Grand Prix winner offered an amazingly pure, detailed design based on a minimalist concept. This year was also notable for the large number of submissions we received from overseas. Unfortunately, none of the overseas submissions were selected as an award winner. But, we are confident that the grand sum of the time and energy devoted to NEXT QUALITY will generate a new approach to quality for future generations.



KOKUYO Co., Ltd.  
Chief Executive Officer, President and Director

### Akihiro Kuroda

Judging this year's submissions for NEXT QUALITY, we saw that designers went beyond quality, looking to create value through a better user experience as well. We saw quite a number of products with new points of focus. The submissions offered designs that solved traditional sore points in existing products, including fixing nuisances that even users didn't realize they were experiencing. During the final judging process, the designers directly addressed concepts and thoughts that we had never considered before. Obviously, not every submission could win an award, but every submission made a strong argument for the future shape of the nature of quality. This year's Awards emphasized how important a role design can play. We want to express our appreciation to everyone involved.