



STARPACK

STUDENTS

Competition 2027

BRIEF E

PACKAGING BEYOND EARTH: DESIGNERS FROM EARTH. PACKS FOR MARS.

LONDON PACKAGING WEEK 2027

Sponsored by London Packaging Week

London Packaging is London's home of packaging innovation and design.

The event brings together 6,000 packaging professionals, 220+ exhibitors and 2,600 brands from beauty, luxury, drinks, FMCG and design.

It's where brand owners, designers, packaging specialists, suppliers and innovators come together to discover new ideas, find inspiration and create the packaging of tomorrow.

Next edition takes place on 22-23 September 2027 at Excel London.

www.londonpackagingweek.com

Prize

Winner: £500.00 cash prize

Runner-up: £100.00 cash prize

IOM3 presents trophies to Gold, Silver and Bronze and certificates to Highly Commended entries.

Shortlisted entries will be showcased at London Packaging Week 2027,

giving students the chance to put their ideas in front of the people shaping the future of packaging. Your work could be seen by the very people who design, develop and bring packaging to life - offering a unique opportunity to build your profile, make industry connections and get your ideas noticed beyond the classroom. Your idea could go from the classroom to the show floor.

Enquiries

For enquiries or guidance on the brief, please contact Sema Tezel Basbug

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Introduction

What if there were no supermarket shelves? No bin collection. No excess materials. And barely any gravity. But people still wanted to eat, drink, celebrate, look after themselves and enjoy beautiful things.

Could you design the packaging for life on Mars?

Think lightweight. Smart. Sustainable. Reusable. Transformable. Unexpected.

Forget what packaging looks like today and imagine what it could become.

Packaging has always been shaped by the world around us. Shelves. Supermarkets. Delivery networks. Recycling systems. Gravity. Water. Abundant materials. But what happens when those assumptions disappear? Imagine a future where humans are living on Mars.

Resources are limited. Water is precious. Energy is expensive. Every gram transported from Earth matters. There are no supermarket shelves as we know them, no conventional waste collection and no guarantee that today's packaging materials and formats will make sense. So what will packaging look like?

The Brief

Design a packaging concept for life on Mars. Choose a product or category that you believe people might want or need on Mars:

- Beauty or skincare
- Fragrance
- Spirits or drinks
- Food
- Confectionery
- Personal care
- Health and wellbeing
- Household products
- Gifting or luxury products

Then rethink the packaging from the ground up.

What could packaging become if we were no longer constrained by the rules of Earth? We want to see ambitious ideas that challenge conventional packaging formats and explore how materials, functionality, technology, sustainability and user experience could come together to create something completely new.

Points to consider

The Mars Rules - Mars presents some very different challenges. Use these as inspiration for your concept.

There is no shelf

- If there is no conventional supermarket shelf, how does your packaging display, store, stack, hang, attach, travel?
- Could the packaging itself become part of the storage system?

Every gram matters

- Transporting materials to Mars is expensive and resource-intensive. Could your packaging use less material, be ultra-lightweight, arrive flat and transform when needed, contain a concentrated product, be refillable, eliminate unnecessary components?
- Think beyond simply making today's packaging lighter.

There is no conventional bin

- What happens when your product has been used? There may be limited infrastructure for waste collection and recycling.
- Could your packaging have another purpose, be reused, be refilled, be dismantled, be recycled locally, biodegrade or compost, become part of another product or system?
- If nothing can be thrown away, what does 'packaging waste' look like?

Gravity changes everything

- How does packaging work when gravity is no longer something you can take for granted? Think about dispensing, opening, pouring, storing, preventing spills, keeping products secure, attaching or anchoring packs.
- Could the packaging itself help the user interact with products in a low- or microgravity environment?

Technology can be part of the experience

- Smart packaging could have a completely different role in an extreme environment. Could your concept use technology to communicate product information, monitor freshness or condition, authenticate a product, guide the user, measure dosage, connect the physical and digital experience, adapt to the environment?
- Technology should have a purpose — don't add it simply because you can.

But Mars isn't just about survival...

People won't stop wanting luxury, beauty, indulgence and experiences just because they live on another planet. Imagine:

The first luxury fragrance on Mars.

The first cocktail bar on Mars.

The first beauty brand on Mars.

The first chocolate gift from Earth.

What would luxury mean when materials are scarce?

Would luxury still be about layers of packaging, heavy glass, elaborate decoration, oversized boxes? Or could luxury become about ingenuity, personalisation, technology, material innovation, craft and experience?

You don't have to design a luxury product but we encourage you to think about how your packaging creates desire and emotion as well as function

Materials to be used

Think Beyond the Familiar

Mars changes the rules - so don't feel limited to the materials used in packaging today. You are free to choose the materials that best support your concept, but consider how material innovation could help you solve the challenges of packaging beyond Earth.

For inspiration, you could explore:

- Lightweight materials – how could you reduce weight without compromising performance?
- Recycled or recyclable materials – how could materials be kept in use for as long as possible?
- Bio-based materials – could materials come from renewable or biological sources?
- Compostable or biodegradable materials – could packaging have an alternative end of life?
- Edible materials – could the packaging itself become part of the product or experience?
- Monomaterials – could simpler material structures make recovery easier?
- Smart materials – could packaging respond to temperature, light, pressure or its environment?
- Materials with a second life – could the pack transform into something useful after the product is consumed?
- Locally sourced materials – if materials cannot easily be transported from Earth, what could be made from resources available on Mars?
- Unexpected materials – challenge yourself to think beyond conventional paper, glass, plastic and metal.

You don't need to invent a new material. We want to see how creatively you use materials to solve a packaging problem. The best material isn't necessarily the most futuristic one — it's the one that makes your idea work.