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*Student Designer of 2014*

  
**RE** | **CHARGE!**

## Caesarstone Student Design Competition Brief 2014

2020 marks the end of the fossil-fuel-burning car and heralds a new era in mobility. More motor vehicle companies will start phasing out the production of fossil-fuel-burning cars and ramp up production of both electric and hybrid vehicles as the predominant vehicles for motorists of the future.

Yet, like lemmings to the cliff avoiding the inevitable, today's service stations continue to pump only fossil fuels into cars, without offering alternatives. Service stations have not adapted much since the original service stations of 1905. Where are the service stations of the future?

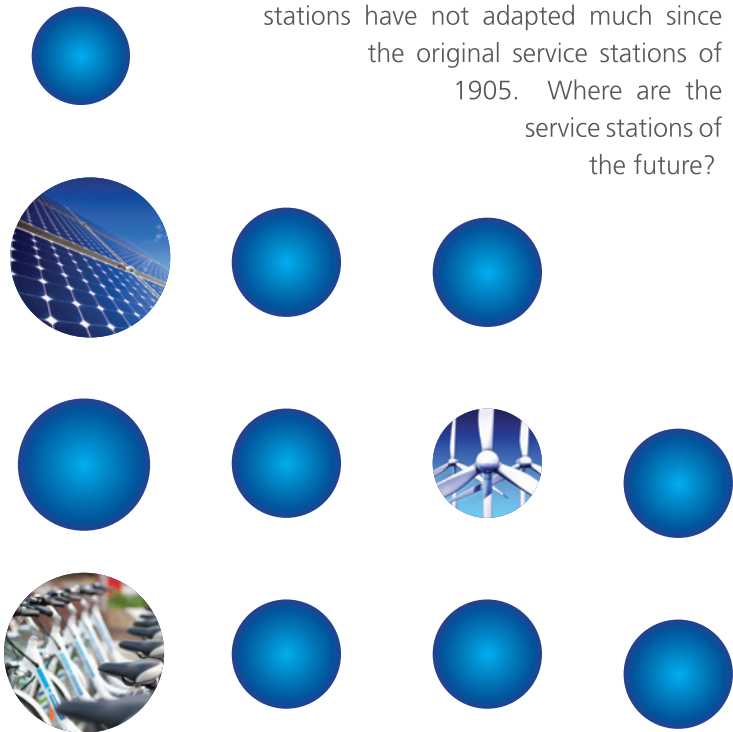
This brief is a unique one for South Africans to once again become visionaries of change, anticipate the inevitable and free motorists and the planet from expensive, carbon-based fuels. It is time to embrace the future of clean, renewable, cheap, solar-powered energy for the vast, new array of efficient electric vehicles finding their way onto our roads.

Imagine 2020 is now upon us... Electric and hybrid cars dominate the roads. Except for the odd fossil fuel filling station with queues of cars desperately trying to refill their tanks with the ever-diminishing supply of fuel that is unreliable in supply, the landscape of service stations has been transformed by new charging facilities for all electric vehicles – some good, some inevitably bad. Yet none have really identified the needs of the new electric vehicle owners and considered a whole new experience that potentially awaits all drivers and passengers of electric vehicles, except for one innovative agency – **RE\_Charge!**

**RE\_Charge!** have decided to pioneer the way ahead with their vision of what they anticipate the future electric vehicle traveller will be seeking; recognising an opportunity for the both the vehicle and the vehicle occupants to literally **RE\_Charge!**, and create new "service-nodes". With the depth of creative, innovative talent that typifies this country, the call to all designers is to be bold, courageous, innovative and relevant and start designing the only real option for future motorists.... **RE\_Charge!** "service-nodes".

**RE\_Charge!** "service-nodes" will be the alternative for electric commuters of the future: design and production needs to start in earnest to meet the expected demands of 2020. This will not be limited to electric cars and could include electric motorbikes, electric bicycles, electric skateboarders, electric Segways or electric Solowheels etcetera – and perhaps many transport modes that we have not imagined yet...

**RE\_Charge!** needs you to give form and shape to their vision of what the new "service-nodes" for the electric commuters of the future will need. The call is to you, our young and talented creative minds, to rise to the challenge and deliver innovative solutions to meet the anticipated needs of future electric commuters.



A clean, carbon-neutral experience awaits the electric travellers of the future, but what does this really mean? The new **RE\_Charge!** "service-nodes" will be living examples of self-sustaining, self-energising entities that harness energy from the sun or wind and convert this energy to electric power for their customers and their vehicles. Resources will also be recycled – like water, organic and inorganic waste. A zero carbon footprint is characteristic of all **RE\_Charge!** "service-nodes".

**RE\_Charge!** will provide a healthy, alternative experience for the future traveller who has become accustomed to a lifestyle characterised by an increasingly faster pace, rapidly expanding choices driven by our technology-driven societies and information clutter. They will provide travellers of the future a place of re\_fuge, an opportunity to **RE\_Lax** and **RE\_Juvenate** whilst their cars are **RE\_Charge**. The experience is one characterised by **RE\_Fuge**, **RE\_Generation** and **RE\_Newal**, where for a brief moment time expands, pace slows and calm pervades for the fast-paced travellers of the future.

## The Project

You have arrived in 2020: the future is here and as predicted, the vehicle landscape is dominated by the electric vehicles of all types. Remnants of fossil fuel service stations remain, but increasingly are few and far between, and there is a sense of desperation amongst the remaining fossil-fuel-burning vehicle owners. The pace of life is frenetic and information is all-pervading.

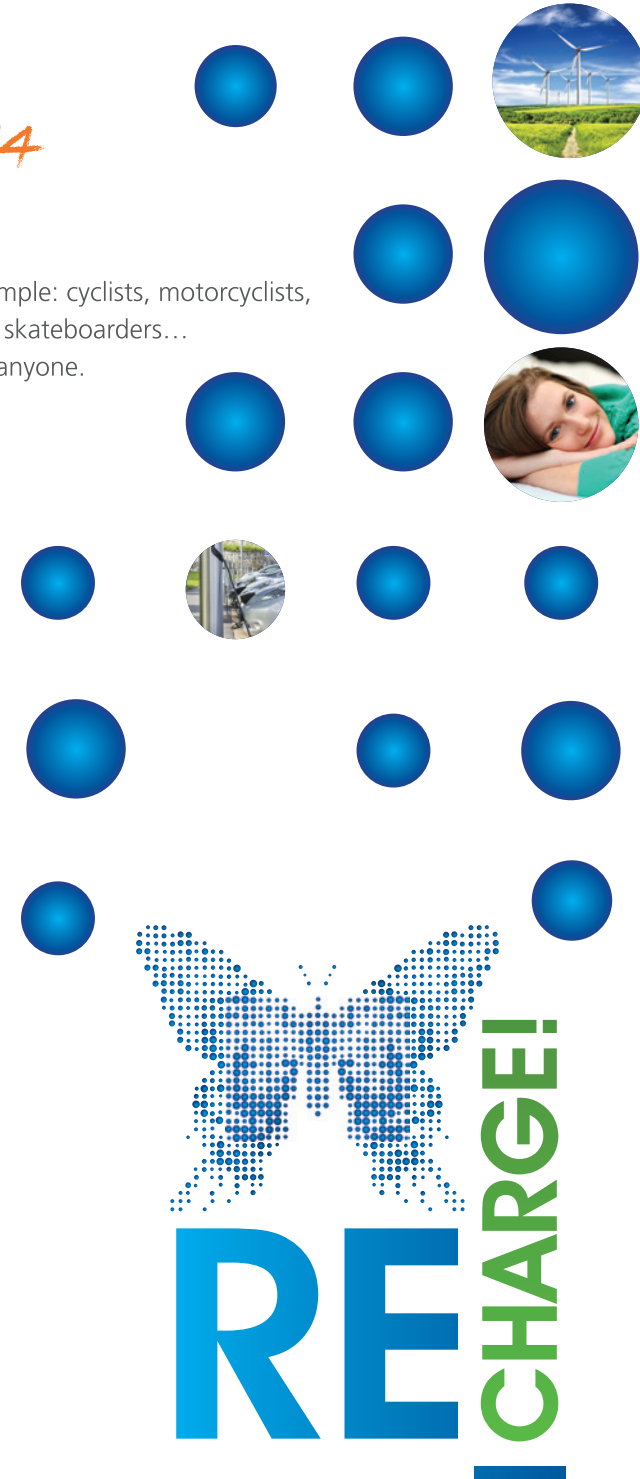
**RE\_Charge!** have been successfully rolling out their "service-nodes" but did not anticipate the rapid transition to electrical vehicles. They are struggling to meet the demands of the new electric travellers. Time has become the ultimate luxury, and the "service-nodes" offer vehicle owners and travellers the invaluable opportunity to enjoy the downtime whilst waiting for their vehicles to recharge to maximum positive benefit. Time slows down in the "service-nodes".

The challenge you are presented with is to find sites for **RE\_Charge!** and present a considered design solution motivating the reasons why your site is best suited to meet their needs. Your concept should be based on a careful assessment of the site and observations of opportunities offered.

Your design concept must take note of the key elements characteristic of all **RE\_Charge!** "service-nodes". The arrival experience, typically exemplified by the forecourt that receives both drivers and electric vehicles, must exemplify the clean, energising qualities that are being offered to both vehicle, driver and their passengers – but not exclusively so.

This must also appeal and be of value to the general mobile public,

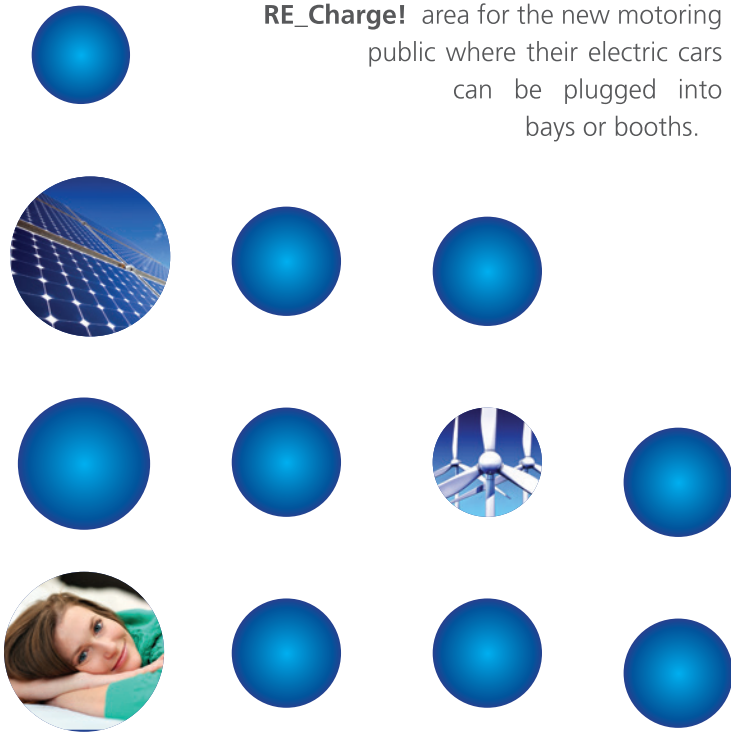
for example: cyclists, motorcyclists, electric skateboarders... in fact anyone.



## The Project

This must not be alienating to the urban edge or the environment as is typical of current fossil fuel service stations. Quite the contrary, **RE\_Charge!** want their service nodes to be positive contributions to the urban infrastructure or the peri-urban spaces between our cities and towns. The urban interface becomes a key component of the **RE\_Charge!** vision for their "service-nodes". They must embody, reflect and project to their customers their vision that every "service-node" contributes both to the environment and the human condition.

Typical of these new stations will be the all-important **RE\_Charge!** area for the new motoring public where their electric cars can be plugged into bays or booths.



This can be dealt with in a number of ways and is not limited to what we know today: cars could disappear whilst being recharged, they could be cleverly stacked and returned to their owners once charged where space is a premium, recharging pods could be containers that run diagnostics, reporting back on the health of the car and returning it back to the owners clean and with updated software... The context chosen should offer clues to how this could take form.

Equally important are the **RE\_Juvenate** areas that will offer facilities that may be in the form of a mini-spa where one can get a massage, or a soak in one of the flotation areas, or provide a calm meditative space as an adjunct to the typical ablution facilities. This could be connected to an outdoor / courtyard space or open garden where the calming effect of plants and greenery are integrated into the experience. At the same time the plants grown could be life enhancing, offering cleansing, healing, medicinal qualities. They could be purposefully selected for visual or sensory stimulation by way of smell, colour and grown in clever innovative ways if the context is a limiting one.

An area that was previously associated with quick convenience shops attached to the older fossil fuel service stations is now replaced with the slower paced **RE\_Plenish** area(s). This will offer a different kind of "convenience store" where food, drinks, healthy snacks are presented in imaginative ways and lighting, display and the check-out exemplify a cleaner, healthier alternative experience.



Lighting, materials and colour all contribute towards amplifying this aspect of the **RE\_Plenish** area(s). Consideration must be given to how everything is displayed, packaged and presented and offered to the customers.

This must include an area for simply relaxing, taking time to have something to eat or drink, where interactive surfaces reveal information when needed by the future commuters to ensure efficiency of travel. It must be a place where the mind can wander, disengage or simply observe and admire the surroundings offered, whilst their devices / phones / clothing can be recharged wirelessly. Bear in mind that the purpose of these areas is to minimise and not increase information, so careful thought needs to be given to how this would be revealed or accessed by a wide variety of customers.



Water is another element central to this experience and must be integrated both as a recycled element that contributes to the growth of plants, but equally important are the qualities offered by water as a meditative element, a visual element or an element with key aural qualities that contribute to the experience. Key natural elements typify the new **RE\_Charge!** "service-nodes" and must reveal the idea that perpetual **RE\_Juvenation** of increasingly scarce resources is possible when applied imaginatively. Accessibility is another important consideration and must accommodate both abled and disabled people.

**RE\_Charge!** "service-nodes" should purposefully enhance the experience of their customers, and ensure that that both vehicles and their leave recharged! Caesarstone is the obvious choice to partner with **RE\_Charge!**. Their vast array of materials suits the specific requirements of the new "service-nodes", which are to be applied in ways never contemplated before.

The area of your project should not exceed 500m<sup>2</sup> and cannot be less than 300m<sup>2</sup>, and must adhere to all the key areas described above. This does not have to be limited to a single level, but if multiple levels are incorporated in the design, total floor area must not exceed the prescribed areas above. There is no height restriction or restriction on number of floor levels.

The interweaving of natural elements into the design as described earlier will be of considerable import to a **RE\_Charge!** "service-node" in the meeting of customers' expectations.

## Deliverables

- **Context and motivation supporting the selection of the context** – must be clearly defined and illustrated. Supporting diagrams / hand drawn sketches should illustrate how the context was a generator of the concept.
- **Concept to be resolved** in sufficient detail where plans / sections / elevations explain the concept clearly.
- **1x perspective of your concept** ... this can be interlaced with hand drawn sketches describing both process & considerations.
- **1x internal perspective** (again this is a minimum and applicants are encouraged to supplement this with hand drawn sketches/ perspectives that assist in describing both process and considerations)
- **Materiality is to be described and inventive use of Caesarstone** is central to the success of **RE\_Charge!** service-nodes. Think of the contrasting opportunities when locating the design in an urban context or alternatively

in peri-urban contexts where the natural landscape dominates.

- **Be bold! & Be innovative!**



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## *The Prizes*

- **The winner and their lecturer will be sent on an all-expenses-paid trip to an international design fair, courtesy of Caesarstone worth R 50 000.00.** Flights, airport and hotel transfers, meals, accommodation and spending money are all included.
- **The second place winner will get R10,000.**
- **The third place prize is R5,000.**

## *Submission format*

Each institution is permitted to submit their top five entries from each department for final judging.

3 X A2 matt laminated drawing with accompanying disc with drawings in high res jpeg format.

Entrants must clearly mark the A2 matt laminated drawings with the following details on the reverse:

First Name and Surname  
Name of Institution  
Department of architecture or interior design  
Lecturer's name  
Lecturer's e-mail address and contact number  
Entrant's e-mail address and contact number

ONLY 3 X A2 STORY BOARDS / DRAWINGS WILL BE ACCEPTED

IF ADDITIONAL BOARDS ARE SUBMITTED THE ENTRY WILL IMMEDIATELY BE DISQUALIFIED. ANY UN-LAMINATED ENTRIES WILL ALSO BE DISQUALIFIED.

Submissions will not be returned and will remain the property of Caesarstone.

The brief has been prepared by:  
Greg Wright of Greg Wright Architects

## *The Deadlines*

**Deadline for submission of entries to Emporio:  
Thursday 4 September 2014**

**Awards Evening: Thursday 18 September 2014**

## *Contact*

For Further Information contact the facilitator:

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