

PININFARINA PARTNERS WITH VUZAIR TO DESIGN AN INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE COVID SHIELD MASK

Designed to protect against the virus without hiding facial expressions, this mask is durable, air-conditioned, and can connect to phones



Turin, 10 September 2020 – Award-winning global design firm **Pininfarina** has partnered with Paris Saclay-based startup **VUZAIR** to design an **innovative COVID shield mask** in coordination with and support from the Secretariat Generale of the French Interministerial Committee for Disability (CIH).

The mask is designed to respond to communications situations where facial and lip reading is essential, such as experienced by deaf and hard of hearing people. VUZAIR's assets will make this protective mask unique and ideal for nearly any situation in any industry where social distancing rules have impacted their business.

The goal of the partnership is to create a comfortable and safer solution to help people quickly and easily adjust to the "new normal" created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

VUZAIR worked with Pininfarina to design the mask concept, with a deep focus on creating a product that merges safety, inclusivity, and aesthetics. The firms believe that the mask, once produced, will become a pleasant to wear everyday accessory, like a key ring, a wallet, or purse.

A fully transparent face shield allows non-verbal communication precluded to all by the standard masks available today. Key safety and comfort features also include a fan, which allows the extraction of CO2 and therefore a fluid and fog-free breathing, and a filter cloth, which provides an active protective barrier against the virus because it receive an anti-bacterial treatment. Being equipped with a battery that can be recharged via cable, the mask can also connect to smartphones for phone calls or other uses. The mask is durable, washable, and it can be refurbished after its useful life.▶



The combination of these elements makes it a unique, yet integral protection device. Its pending certification will allow its use in restricted and regulated areas that must meet disability requirements, as well as in shops, museums, concert halls, restaurants, educational settings, paramedical settings, and individual and collective transportation.

Pininfarina designers focused their efforts on making the mask comfortable to wear all day and being compatible with the gestures and routines wearers have on a daily basis to ensure its efficiency, such as being able to raise and lower the visor to drink an espresso or eat, all without altering the properties of the mask and reducing the risk linked to manipulating the mask at different times of the day. Not having the necessity to remove it avoids placing it in a potentially contaminated area.

“The world is facing a serious health concern and innovative designs need to be incorporated into the global response,” said **Silvio Angori, Pininfarina CEO**. “Our challenge is to make this equipment socially acceptable to ensure no one is excluded in this new world, and to quickly, but safely, revive the entire economy. VUZAIR understood that health and safety need to be the primary concerns in any design of this type, of course, but there’s no reason why the solution can’t be elegant and attractive.”

“The quality of Pininfarina’s design makes you forget you’re wearing a mask. Adherence to the product is the primary objective in controlling the spread of the virus. Aesthetics are particularly important, for example, for young people, who are now singled



out as important players in the spread of the virus. The youth must be able to wear this mask with conviction and pleasure, and not simply by obligation,” declared **Nathalie SÉJOURNÉ, President of VUZAIR**.

The mask design is inspired and contoured by the human physique, providing a natural feeling of movement and higher level of visual communication, while also revealing and focusing on the most attractive part of the design – the wearer’s face with their full emotional expression capabilities.

Once the design phase is fully completed, VUZAIR will pursue laboratory testing and European certification steps to ensure safety and health compliance in the coming weeks. VUZAIR will then brand and manufacture the mask in France, and distribute it worldwide starting from October 2020.▲



About Pininfarina

Pininfarina, founded in 1930, is an internationally recognized design firm. With offices in Italy, Germany, China and the United States, it is a unique global emblem of Italian design. Pininfarina is not only the world leader in automotive design. It has also

carried out more than 600 projects in diverse areas over nine decades, and has received multiple international Design awards.

www.pininfarina.com

About Vuzair

VUZAIR is a startup created in the middle of the confinement period to respond to the urgent need to design a complete protection system against COVID for the deaf and hard of hearing as quickly as possible. Created by two entrepreneurs with more than 20 years of experience at the head of several companies, Nathalie SÉJOURNÉ and Alain MOINAT on the Paris SACLAY set. Nathalie SÉJOURNÉ and Alain MOINAT, president of

Paris Saclay Hardware Accelerator (PSHA), the first French accelerator located in PARIS SACLAY, and Simon BERNARD, Designer engineer from PSHA, have combined their interests for innovation and inclusion by creating a unique product in the world. VUZAIR is located at the heart of PARIS SACLAY ecosystem, a famous French innovation place. VUZAIR's vocation is to offer inclusive, ecological and economical products for the new coming world.

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