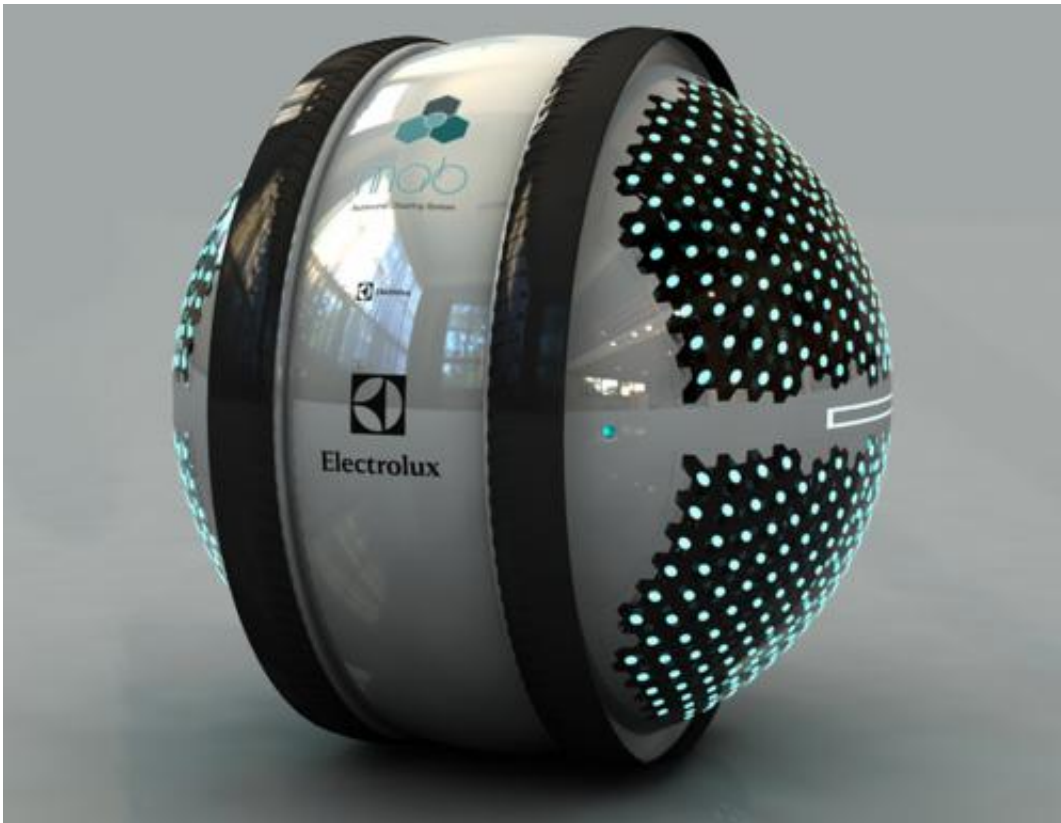


# Flying mini-robot cleaners wins Electrolux Design Lab competition

October 21 2013, by Bob Yirka

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(Phys.org) —The winners of the annual Electrolux Design Lab competition have been announced, and first place has gone to a young designer from Colombia, Adrian Perez Zapata. His design is of a ball shaped unit that houses sensing technology along with 908 independent

tiny flying miniature flying robots—upon command from the host unit, they fly off and clean up dust and dirt in someone's house. They can also deposit air freshening chemicals. Second place went to Brazilian designer Luiza Silva—she came up with a 3D food printer. Jeabyun Yeon, from Korea, came in third for a concept he calls a Breathing Wall.

The annual Electrolux Design Lab competition is held by the famous household appliance maker for the purpose of stimulating, and prodding to action, design students from around the world. The first prize winner this year gets 5,000 Euros and a chance to work with professionals in the field at Electrolux's main design center for six months.

Zapata's design was inspired by both nature and work being done at Harvard, he told those in attendance at the award ceremony. He noted the efficiency and cleanly beautiful way insects work together to pollinate flowers in his garden. Also, he mentioned that researchers at Harvard have built tiny flying robots that mimic bees. And since the theme for this year's competition was Inspired Urban Living (as it applies to social cooking, effortless cleaning or natural air) he combined the two concepts and came up with tiny bee-like robots that carry a capsule capable of depositing a drop of water onto a surface, (and presumably sucking it up again along with the dirt it holds) and then returning to the housing unit, for depositing—similar to bees returning with nectar. His idea also calls for the main unit to have the capability of scanning a house to note its layout and of course, to detect which parts of it need cleaning. That information would be conveyed to the flying bots and they would then go clean it.



Electrolux reports that over 1700 entries were received this year from 60 countries across the globe. The competition was conducted in five stages, each winnowing down the number of entrants. The final winners were chosen by a panel of experts.

**More information:** [electroluxdesignlab.com/en/](http://electroluxdesignlab.com/en/)

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