

STEM project of the Year Award

I-Rugby

Pupils' at St. Vincent's school for the visually impairment (VI) have an 'enriched' curriculum enabling them to connect their creativity into designing access technologies to support their own needs and that of their peers. Starting from a 'service-learning' volunteer project with Head of PE Mr Swanston and LJMU design engineer student Jake Patterson, the world's first 'i-Rugby' ball has been researched and developed over the last four years.

The prototype was first revealed during the Police Disability Awareness Day 'Purple Light Up' when St. Vincent's pupils taught blindfolded Police Officers and Blind Veterans UK how they were developing the game in front of the Chief Constable Andy Cooke QPM. The aim moving forwards is to use the schools significant VI network to generate an awareness of i-Rugby and work towards having it as part of the Disability Games in 2021 which is in Liverpool. A fantastic innovation conceptualised and generated out of Liverpool with the chance of sharing our STEM innovation for and with VI on a Global platform.



(left) i-Rugby being presented to Chief Constable Andy Cooke.



(right) Stage 1 prototype which incorporates sound, touch and mobility as an alternative to the traditional game of rugby for the blind player.