



Multi-purpose emergency furniture

MULTI-PURPOSE BENCH ALSO ACTS AS AN EMERGENCY LIFEBOAT



NONPROFIT & SOCIAL CAUSE

A clever folding design could save flood victims valuable time in emergency situations.

Paddles for use Safety-orientated innovations are naturally highly sought after by rescue workers and governments alike. This [handheld location tracker](#) that helps monitor the locations of at risk individuals is just one example of such an innovation spotted by Springwise already. Another is the [connected highway system](#) that seeks to increase driving safety. Now a multi-purpose pod could be a simple yet vital addition to flood defences in remote regions.

The [POD](#), designed by student [Kin Pan Lo](#) of [Hong Kong Polytechnic University](#), is at first glance a bench during everyday life. Yet when an emergency strikes and a flood is imminent, the multi-purpose furniture can turn into a life-saving boat. The transformation takes less than a minute, making it ideal for emergency use.

The POD aims to help lower/middle-income areas, where infrastructure is often not ideal for disaster situations. It could also be useful in remote areas where it can take rescue services sometime to reach those affected by floods. Having piece of life-saving equipment on hand and almost instantly ready to use could help save precious lives. Paddles for use by either one or two individuals make it fully equipped for use. There is also a storage space for first-aid supplies and food. The folding design also makes it lightweight and easy to manoeuvre. It can fit either one or two people.

Kin Pan Lo is currently looking to perfect his design in terms of the materials used and reinforcing the structure through further testing.

Takeaway:

Not only does the POD act as a useful emergency tool, but it integrates smoothly into everyday life. Being a non-intrusive common object the majority of the time as a bench means that people can be prepared for disaster situations without the need for expensive and bulky tools. What other household objects could become multi-purpose for use in extraordinary situations?