

Innovation by young people, for young people: InnoApps winners named

[Brussels, Belgium, 25 November 2013] Innovative Apps created by young developers with the idea to improve the entrepreneurial environment in Europe were showcased at the final pitching session of the InnoApps competition on 21st of Nov. The first prize went to Tomaž Ščavničar (25) from Slovenia who developed START, an app enabling budding entrepreneurs to launch a start-up online and build and grow it with collaborators.

The START app earned accolades for not only representing a real added value for all those seeking an easy way to take their early-stage idea to the next level, but also creating opportunities for a wide pool of potential entrepreneurs to be empowered to work together collaboratively with concrete support tools.

“Our vision is to boost idea development,” Tomaž explained when pitching his idea to the jury. “With Start, you can create projects, choose a business model template for your idea, add images and assign activities, track expenses and go from zero to hero like a pro to create the next big thing.”

The five innovative apps which made it to the finals showcased the best in creative thinking with a focus on digital inclusion among the developers of tomorrow:

CanEat (female developer prize): developed by Elizabeth Cotton (19) from England, it empowers users with specific dietary requirements to search locally, in near real-time, for restaurants and outlets offering menus that match those needs and the specific menu items as well, allowing the user to make an informed choice on where to go.

TagTagCity (runner-up): developed by Natalia Vicente (24) from Spain, it brings cities alive, allowing attractions, service and businesses to showcase their value add to potential customers creating both on-line and offline interactions between users and the urbanity around them, through an innovative web-mobile-physical platform that uses QR codes and geo tagging.

WayUpTo (winner of the public vote): developed by Gregor Spagnolo (24) from Slovenia, this app re-poses the interaction and connectivity between audiences, speakers and organisers of conferences within an local area, allowing for meaningful near real time interactions, feedback, to enhance the conference experience.

The winners of the InnoApps competition challenging young developers to design mobile applications to foster social inclusion were announced at the “Learning by creating with social media and apps” event which took place in Brussels on 21 November 2013.

The InnoApps competition was a joint initiative of the global information and communications technology (ICT) solutions provider Huawei, the leading software maker Microsoft and the European Young Innovators Forum (EYIF).

The winner of the first prize was awarded €5 000 and will enjoy full commercialisation support to help them promote their app and to further foster youth entrepreneurship. The developers who came in first and second place, and the top female developer, will be taken by Huawei on a trip to China’s innovation centres.

These developers, along with the audience’s selected winner, will all have their apps promoted in Microsoft’s Windows store. The five finalists will receive technical and marketing mentoring at a Brussels workshop, as well as promotion on the organisers’ websites. They, and six runners-up, will also receive a Huawei phone each.

In order to retain talent in Europe, opportunities need to be created for the next generation of ICT leaders: it is expected that between now and 2015, the EU will be unable to fill approximately 900 000 IT job vacancies. The competition formed part of the organisers' efforts to address this challenge, in line with their commitment to the EU goal of creating a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy by 2020.

Find out more: www.innoapps.eu

About Huawei

Huawei is a leading global information and communications technology (ICT) solutions provider. We are committed to creating maximum value for telecom operators, enterprises and consumers by providing competitive solutions and services. Our products and solutions have been deployed in over 140 countries, serving more than one third of the world's population.

Huawei currently has over 7 300 staff based in Europe, of whom 790 are working in R&D. We run 14 R&D sites located in 8 European countries (Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Sweden and the UK) and operate numerous joint innovation centres in partnership with telecom and ICT partners.

Further information is available at: www.huawei.eu

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About Microsoft

Founded in 1975, Microsoft (Nasdaq "MSFT") is the worldwide leader in software, services and solutions that help people and businesses realise their full potential.

Microsoft has operated in EMEA (Europe, Middle East and Africa) since 1982. In this region, Microsoft employs more than 16 000 people in over 64 subsidiaries, delivering products and services to more than 139 countries and territories.

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About the European Young Innovators Forum (EYIF)

The European Young Innovators Forum is an independent, non-profit, pan-European, bottom-up association dedicated to promoting youth innovation. EYIF has rapidly become the leading foundation for youth innovation in Europe reaching more than 350 000 participants across all EU member states. EYIF gives a voice to a community of young innovators and experts who believe in taking risks, changing mindsets for innovation and valuing shared ideas and professional mentorship.

Further information is available at: www.eyif.eu

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