10 brilliant student business ideas vie for Student Entrepreneur Awards

10 innovative student-led business ideas will compete for this year's 39th Student Entrepreneur Awards.

Enterprise Ireland has selected 10 finalists with an innovative business idea, technology or solution to compete for this year's 39th Student Entrepreneur Awards, which are co-sponsored by Cruickshank, Grant Thornton and the Local Enterprise Offices.

The overall winner will share in a €35,000 prize fund as well as receive mentoring from Enterprise Ireland to develop the commercial viability of their concept. The winners will also share in a €30,000 consultancy fund that will enable them to turn their ideas into a commercial reality.

This year's winners will be announced during a live virtual event on Friday 12 Jjune.

"For almost forty years, the Student Entrepreneur Awards have been recognising young innovators and helping to nurture their talent by extending access to the supports necessary to achieve entrepreneurial success," said Richard Murphy, manager of the LEO Support, Policy and Co-ordination Unit at Enterprise Ireland.

"We are so pleased with the quality of the applications that we received this year and to whittle it down to 10 finalists was a challenge. It is clear that students in Ireland are continuing to become more focused and ambitious. The Irish third level institutions are doing tremendous work to support these students abilities.

"A great number of this year's applicants have identified challenges across a range of sectors and provided solutions to overcome them. Nurturing this talent and helping to foster that entrepreneurship is essential not just to turn ideas into thriving businesses but to help drive Ireland's global reputation in business.

"I encourage all those that didn't reach the final this year and those that may be interested in coming forward for next year's awards to tune into the event on 12 June to get some valuable insights. It could be the first step on the way to becoming a business leader in 2021."

Bitherit

Lead by Harry Dunne from IT Carlow, Bitherit focuses on the issue of digital inheritance and the transfer of assets on electronic systems. Bitherit addresses the problems present in digital inheritance by providing a decentralised solution to the storage and transfer of digital assets. The

solution provided has been designed to give users full autonomy of their data while protecting it against both digital and physical attacks. Using Bitherit, an individual can create a highly secure digital inheritance solution within minutes.

Cotter Agritech

Cotter Agritech was set up by Jack and Nick Cotter who both study at LIT and UCC. The brothers have been entrepreneurs for nearly 10 years, starting Cotter Bros Firewood in 2011 and Cotter Organic Lamb in 2019, which won an Irish Quality Food Award in 2019. Cotter Agritech develop and commercialise smart, innovative, and accessible solutions for the Sheep Farming Sector, including the multi-award-winning Cotter Crate. This patent-pending solution makes lamb handling easy, 50pc faster vs. conventional methods, and takes the backache out of lamb handling. The brothers say this is significant as 46pc of Irish sheep farmers experience lower back pain. The crate works in tandem with the SmartWeight sheep weighing app. This uniquely allows the farmer to move from blanket treating their lambs to only dosing the ones that are performing poorly. This reduction in routine sheep dosing addresses resistance to these treatments which has been estimated to cost sheep farmers globally €1.1bn every year.

Enable-Aid

CIT team project Enable-Aid is a mobility device which will aid people with reduced mobility to manoeuvre around their gardens and easily access their flowerbeds. It significantly reduces the physical effort and upper body strength required to get down to/ and back up from ground level. However, the Enabl-aid is more than just a tool, it is a comfort. It has a fantastic positive effect on the user's quality of life and comfort when performing tasks at ground level. Members of the team include Eoghan O'Sullivan, James O'Riordan, Rhiannon Madigan, Jack McDonnell, Ryan Thomas, Michael Cronin, Padraig Dillane, Fionan Leahy and Kieran Velon.

Enso

Led by Vinh Truong from Technology University Dublin Enso focuses on a new and creative way to improve child learning. Enso is a toolkit that combines 3D printing education with guided play lessons, providing fully 3D printed collaborative tools that will operate alongside materials that are available within a classroom. Enso aims to allow children to create experiences by engaging in three design thinking tasks with their peers, enhancing their 21st-century skills and ready them for the changing nature of the workplace and the future.

Equine.app – Project Bellerophon

Led by Sean Fradl from DCU, Project Bellerophon is the first application developed by Equine.app. It aims to simplify the generation of equine nutrition reports. Project Bellerophon allows the user to collect data onsite and input this information offline, right next to the horse. The data input

generates graphics depicting the nutrient status of the horse accounting for the horses age, life stage, weight and exercise load. The application will then generate a branded PDF nutrition report ready to present to the client. This process will potentially reduce the time spent on each diet plan by 800% and is relevant to performance horses around the world.

Neurobell

Led by Mark O'Sullivan from UCC, the Neurobell project aims to develop a diagnostic medical device for the early detection and monitoring of brain injuries in newborn infants. Newborn brain injury results in the death or disability of over 1 million infants globally every year. It is very difficult to diagnose, requiring complex EEG monitoring equipment and expertise, which is not readily available. The Neurobell EEG Monitor is a pocket-sized and wireless device that can be easily applied within minutes by a wide range of medical staff, and offers the ability to provide real-time diagnostic decision support. This technology would enable medical staff to assess brain injury soon after birth in a routine manner so that at-risk babies can be quickly identified for treatment.

Nibblez

Led by Hannah McEvoy from St Angela's College in Sligo Nibblez is a range of plant powered party food which consists of finger food products that have a high nutritional value and are suitable for vegans, plant-based eaters and those pursuing a healthier and more environmentally friendly lifestyle. The two-current market, delicious and nutritious offerings include: scrumptious spring rolls with oriental sweet chilli sauce and crispy cauliflower wings with smoky barbecue sauce. The products are high in protein and a source of vitamin B12 which are important nutrients for all individuals especially for those following vegan diets.

PressiDect

Led by Siobhán Ryan from the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, PressiDect is a peri-operative pressure detection system utilised on the surface of an operating theatre table. It contains tactile pressure sensors that has the ability to actively map a patient's position during their surgical procedure; measuring pressure changes in real time. This is a unique feature in a theatre setting as it informs the user where anatomically each individual patient would be most 'at risk' to pressure injury, as a result of prolonged immobilisation.

Signal Optimiser by Torann

Led by Lewis Loane of Queen's University Belfast, Signal Optimiser by Torann is a unique solution to the historical problem of loss of sound quality encountered by millions of musicians playing amplified instruments across the globe. Despite the problem, technology has not moved forward … until now. Signal Optimiser is a fully compatible, plug and play device, positioned between any instrument and amplifier which continuously provides 100pc sound quality. Signal Optimiser is

designed, developed and manufactured in Ireland. Launching globally in 2021, Signal Optimiser's unique performance has the global potential to be a main stay for 70 million musicians.

Traumalert

Led by Simon Dring from CIT, TraumAlert has created a SmartGuard device which will aid the identification and diagnosis of concussion in real time. A sensor system placed in a mouthguard measures the acceleration of the head during a match and identifies if the acceleration exceeds a defined, dangerous threshold which could result in concussion. Concussion has long been a problem in both amateur and professional sports, with it gaining more and more awareness in recent years. TraumAlert SmartGuard provides invaluable information as it reduces the pressure on potentially underqualified coaching staff when making a critical decision regarding player health.

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