

News: for immediate release

ETH Zurich and University of Cambridge top list of finalists for European spin-out awards

Four entrepreneurial groups each from Swiss and British universities chosen to go through to final awards in Zurich on 3 February, 2011

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LONDON – 8 December, 2010 – Groups from Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (ETH Zurich) and the University of Cambridge lead a list of 18 entrepreneurs and spin-out companies chosen to go through to the finals on 3 February in Zurich of the only pan-European awards for university researchers who start businesses.

A selection committee of leading industry officials and academics selected four groups of finalists from ETH Zurich and two from Cambridge University. From ETH Zurich, they include founders of four companies based on technologies developed at the university, including InSphero AG, Dybuster AG, Mirasense AG and Climeworks LLC. Cambridge University finalists include Enval LTD and Psynova Neurotech Ltd. Teri Willey, chief executive of Cambridge Enterprise, is among the finalists named for promoting enterprise at universities.

They join 12 other finalists from a broad range of European universities to compete for top prizes in the ACES Academic Enterprise Awards, the only pan-European programme to recognize entrepreneurship at academic institutions. Other institutions from which finalists were chosen are University of Oxford, Chalmers University of Technology, University of Milan, the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Bristol University, University of Antwerp, University of Wroclaw, Academy of Science in Bashkiristan, and Bar-Ilan University. The competition is open to entrepreneurs across the European Union and countries affiliated with the European Union's 7th Framework Program for research, including Israel and Russia.

Final judging will take place on 3 February at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in a conference and gala awards ceremony co-hosted by GE and ETH Zurich.

The prizes include the GE Smart Grid award for academic entrepreneurs speeding the development of intelligent electricity grids, and the Life Sciences prize, for top life-science entrepreneurs. Other prize categories: the ICT prize for top information and communications technology entrepreneurs at academic institutions, the 'Fast Start' award for most promising young start-up and the 'Bridge' Award for an individual who has done the most to create an environment favourable to enterprise and innovation at an institution or region.

The high quality of finalists underscores the abilities of Europe's research sector at finding creative ways to get their discoveries out of the lab and into the marketplace. The awards programme was created by Science|Business, a Brussels- and London-based media company, and is judged by its Innovation Board of leading European researchers, industrialists and policy makers.

The gold sponsor for this year's awards is GE, and the silver sponsor is ETH Zurich. Bronze sponsors include the Office for Economy and Labour of the Canton of Zurich and the Swiss Innovation Promotion Agency of the Swiss Confederation.

The full list of finalists chosen include founders and leaders of the following organisations (in alphabetical order, by prize category):

For the GE Energy/Smart Grid Award:

- Drzewoski Electric Sp, Wroclaw University (power pack based on new super capacitors to improve energy storage)
- GridOn, Bar-Ilan University, Israel (fault current limiter for electricity grids)
- Umpi R&D, University of Milan (technology to reduce energy use in public lighting systems)

For the Life Sciences Award:

- FluiDA nv, Belgium, University of Antwerp (medical imaging technology for respiratory medicine)
- InSphero AG, ETH Zurich (three-dimensional, biological microtissues for lab use in drug trials)
- Psynova Neurotech Ltd, from the University of Cambridge (biomarkers for neuropsychiatric and other mental illnesses)

For the ICT Award:

- DocCom™ (Doctor Communications Solutions Ltd), Bristol University (Enterprise social networking for healthcare; providing two-way communications between healthcare organizations and their professionals)
- Dybuster AG, ETH Zurich (therapy software for learning disabilities, including dyslexia)
- Time Critical Networks, Chalmers University of Technology (software allowing switched Ethernet networks without reduced data delivery reliability)

For the Materials/Chemistry Award

- Dynamic Rock Support AS, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim (rock bolts designed to increase the safety in deep underground mines)
- Enval LTD, University of Cambridge (technology to recycle laminates)
- Oxis Energy Limited, Academy of Science in Bashkiristan Russia (new generation lithium battery technology for autos)

For the Fast Start Award, for most promising young spin-outs:

- Climeworks LLC, ETH Zurich (new method for trapping CO2 in ambient air)
- Mirasense AG, ETH Zurich (barcode-based social shopping application for iPhones and Android smartphones)
- Zyoxel Ltd, University of Oxford (human tissue culture and testing technologies)

For the Bridge Award, for an individual who has promoted an environment of enterprise and innovation at an institution or region

- Kristo Ovaska, founder, Venture Garage, Aalto University, Finland
- Allyson Reed, director of strategy, Technology Strategy Board, UK
- Teri Willey, chief executive, Cambridge Enterprise, University of Cambridge.

For more information about the ACES Awards, and the full list of selection committee members and judges, visit www.sciencebusiness.net/aces.

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