



# Europe's top new innovators honoured at EIT Awards

## *Leading entrepreneurs recognised by jury at INNOVEIT 2016*

*Budapest, Hungary* – Europe's top new innovators, the EIT Awards winners, were honoured at a ceremony on Monday evening as part of INNOVEIT 2016.

INNOVEIT 2016 is a two-day innovation forum organised by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), which this year gathered more than 350 entrepreneurs and innovators from across Europe.

Three awards were presented, highlighting the most successful start-ups, the most innovative projects and the best young entrepreneurial talent that Europe has to offer.

Martin Kern, EIT Interim Director, said:

*"EIT Awards winners are Europe's top change makers. We are proud to empower these talents to turn their amazing ideas into products and services that create new companies and jobs for Europe."*

The EIT Venture Award, which celebrates breakthrough innovations and exciting start-ups, was given to Florian Schneider, a Netherlands-based entrepreneur who is co-founder of Nerdalize, which heats houses with computer power. He said:

*"I'm very proud that Nerdalize has been recognised in the EIT Awards, and would like to thank Climate-KIC for their support and coaching. As part of the project's accelerator programme, we have built a network, gained access to customers and potential partners, and seen our system piloted in five homes – now we're ready to scale-up production."*

Sweden-based entrepreneur Allen Ali Mohammadi won the EIT CHANGE Award, which recognises Europe's newest crop of entrepreneurs and the ideas they generate. Ali Mohammadi, whose company Hippogriff AB developed an accurate, non-invasive and inexpensive tool for the screening and early diagnosis of heart disease, said:

*"My grandmother died of a heart attack, but she didn't have any symptoms beforehand. Working through the EIT Master programmes and with the support of KIC InnoEnergy and the EIT Community, I have been able to use engineering to develop tools for doctors and screening methods that will help individuals become aware of, and involved in, their own health. I am proud that this work has been recognised at the EIT Awards."*

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Budapest, 26.04.2016

The Innovators Award, for developing an innovative product, service or process with an outstanding potential for positive societal and economic impact, was given to Norbert Kuipers, a Dutch national who worked with Climate-KIC to develop a system for using waste and renewable heat for clean water production and indoor air control. He said:

*“Waste heat plays a significant part in rising global temperatures. This project, called WE4CC-II, worked to find a way to harness this waste heat to produce high-quality water and humidity control, which can substantially reduce energy consumption and CO2 emissions. This EIT Award will bolster our credentials as we look to further develop and market the technology.”*

Commenting on the awards, Tibor Navracsics, European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport and responsible for the EIT said:

*“We send our congratulations to the three winners of the EIT Awards. Their achievements highlight Europe’s enormous potential for innovation, and I look forward to seeing their ideas and businesses grow and help boost Europe’s competitiveness. Florian, Allen and Norbert - and all the nominees - are role models and great examples of what makes the EIT unique: its focus on education, giving talent space to develop, and creating a culture of entrepreneurship in Europe.”*

INNOVEIT 2016 concludes on Tuesday with further discussions on how Europe’s entrepreneurs, researchers, academics and policy-makers can join forces to boost innovation in Europe.

## Find out more

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More information on the nominees and their ventures is available at:

<http://eit.europa.eu/innoveit#awards>

Press pictures are available at: <http://eit.europa.eu/innoveit#media>

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## About the EIT

The EIT is an independent body of the European Union set up in 2008 to spur innovation and entrepreneurship across Europe to overcome some of its greatest challenges.

It brings together business, education and research labs to form dynamic cross-border innovation partnerships that develop innovative products and services, start new companies, and train a new generation of entrepreneurs.

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The EIT Community has brought together 800 leading and committed partners from across Europe, bringing more than 140 new products and services introduced to the market. There are more than 1 000 students enrolled on EIT entrepreneurial degree courses, and almost 500 EIT degree graduates. The Community have incubated more than 900 business ideas and created 200 start-ups to date, in the fields of climate, energy, digitalisation, health and raw materials. New innovation communities in the areas of food and added-value manufacturing are joining the EIT Community this year.

## About the EIT Awards

The EIT Awards promote innovation and encourage entrepreneurship by putting the most innovative ventures, entrepreneurial graduates and innovation teams emerging from the EIT innovation communities in the spotlight and creating role models to drive future change.

- The **EIT Venture Award** highlights successful entrepreneurial start-ups that have been supported by the EIT innovation communities through a dedicated business creation or business development process.
- The **EIT CHANGE Award** celebrates graduates from EIT-labelled education programmes who spur innovation and entrepreneurship and bring about a change in the thematic areas addressed by the EIT and its innovation communities.
- The **EIT Innovators Award** recognises innovation teams composed of individuals from across business, higher education and research sectors that have developed a product, service or process with a high potential for societal and economic impact.

Within the EIT Community, the EIT Awards play an important role in celebrating achievements and success, identifying role models and increasing opportunities for the continued development of EIT Award winners.

**Previous EIT Awards winners** have achieved significant success.

**Govinda Upadhyay**, the winner of the EIT Change Award 2015, founded a social start-up, Ledsafari, and won US\$100 000 from *Forbes* as a finalist of *Forbes 30 Under 30* competition for most promising young entrepreneurs.

<http://eit.europa.eu/newsroom/then-no-one-can-stop-you-interview-govinda-upadhyay>

**Kate Hofman**, the winner of the EIT Change Award 2013, co-founded GrowUp Urban Farms and was selected as a *London Leader 2015* by the *London Sustainable Development Commission*.

<http://eit.europa.eu/newsroom/interview-kate-hofman-eit-change-award-winner-2013>

## The EIT – Making Innovation Happen

The EIT is a body of the European Union



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