

# The power to innovate: winners of EIT Awards 2018 announced

Budapest, 05 October 2018 -The European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT) rewards Europe's top entrepreneurs Simone Accornero (Italy), Ioannis Tamas (Greece), Bieke Van Gorp (Belgium), Isabel Hoffmann (Canada) and Laura Soucek (Italy) for innovations in the fields of energy, health and food.

Budapest played host to the EIT Awards ceremony last night, celebrating Europe's most talented entrepreneurs and innovators during INNOVEIT, the EIT's annual innovation forum. The EIT has cause for double-celebration, this year marking its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary and its evolution into Europe's one-stop shop for innovation.

Speaking at the EIT Awards ceremony, [Tibor Navracsics](#), Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, responsible for the EIT, said: *'Through the EIT, the EU has invested in entrepreneurs all over Europe, building a unique network, helping to create an entrepreneurial culture and providing critical support as ventures expand globally. The EIT Awards are a celebration of this, and the nominees and winners ambassadors of Europe's innovative talent – my congratulations to them all!'*

*'The EIT Awards celebrate excellence in innovation. Promoting the outstanding achievements of our entrepreneurs here in Budapest shines a bright light on the talent powered by the EIT Community. In just 10 years, the EIT has grown from a start-up organisation to become Europe's strongest innovation network. This year's winners are not just proof that the EIT is on the right course, but that it is a mature organisation ready to advance further. Europe needs more ambition for its innovative economy; it has the skills, the EIT has the thriving network to make innovation happen,'* added [Dirk Jan van den Berg](#), Chairman of the EIT Governing Board.

## 2018 EIT AWARDS WINNERS

The **EIT CHANGE Award** recognises top graduates from EIT education programmes and the winner is awarded €20,000. This year's winner is [Simone Accornero](#) (supported by EIT InnoEnergy), CEO & co-founder of FlexiDAO (based in Barcelona, Spain), software that automates energy data processing and exchanges, while combining traceability and transparency for the first time.

*'Before joining EIT InnoEnergy, I had never even thought of becoming an entrepreneur. EIT InnoEnergy showed me how my work and research as an engineer has a real impact on the surrounding environment'* said Simone Accornero.

The **EIT Innovators Award** recognises teams with high impact products and services and is awarded €50,000. This year's winning team is led by [Ioannis Tamas](#) (supported by EIT Health), President and CSO of Altoida (based in San Diego and Lucerne). The Alzheimer's Disease Prediction Service (ADPS) is one of the first validated solutions able to predict the risk of Alzheimer's for people over 50.

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*'My goal is to fight and ultimately cure Alzheimer's; a disease that remains one of the greatest challenges to society. EIT Health heightened our visibility across Europe through its extensive network and accelerated the acceptance of ADPS on the European market'* said Ioannis Tamas.

The **EIT Venture Award** recognises successful entrepreneurial start-ups and scale-ups and is awarded €50,000. This year's winner is **Bieke Van Gorp**, Chief Business Development Officer and co-founder at Qompium NV (supported by EIT Health). Qompium (based in Hasselt, Belgium) developed FibriCheck, a mobile application that enables users to detect atrial fibrillation and take preventive action.

*'Implementation of our innovative way of saving lives did not come without a struggle and I am very proud to have fought for this. We received extensive support from EIT Health, not only for funding but also for networking'* said Bieke Van Gorp.

The **EIT Woman Award** recognises outstanding women innovators and is awarded €20,000. This year's winner is **Isabel Hoffman**, CEO of Telspec LTD (supported by EIT Food) that has developed a rapid, portable and affordable sensor to test for the quality and decay of raw white fish, and the fraudulent use of excess water in frozen fish.

*'I wanted to help my daughter and those who suffer from undiagnosed food-related illnesses. With my strong background in software and preventive medicine, and support from the EIT Community in the form of unique partnerships, I came up with a solution to save others from that long and difficult experience'* said Isabel Hoffman.

The **EIT Public Award** recognises the public's top innovation with thousands of votes cast across Europe.

This year's winner is **Laura Soucek**, Founder and CEO of Peptomyc S.L. (supported by EIT Health and based in Barcelona, Spain) a peptide-based solution that can serve as a new treatment option for cancer patients.

*'I recognise myself in EIT's motto 'making innovation happen'. I wanted to make a change, efficiently and in the smartest way possible. EIT Health provided partner organisations and gave me the opportunity to learn from my peers and predecessors'* said Laura Soucek.

The winners were chosen from among 38 nominees by an international jury. Each finalist was selected for driving European innovation through ground-breaking products, services and processes that address global challenges in the fields of energy, food, health and raw materials.

The full list and profiles of the 2018 EIT Awards winners can be found [here](#).

**EIT BACKGROUND: Europe's future is connected to its power to innovate!**

### **What is the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)?**

The EIT was created in 2008 to strengthen Europe's ability to innovate. The EIT is a unique EU initiative, the only one to fully integrate business, education and research. The Institute supports the development of dynamic pan-European partnerships between leading universities, research labs and companies. These are called Innovation Communities and each focuses on a specific global challenge.

**More information:** [EIT in a nutshell Infographic](#)

### **What challenges do the EIT's Innovation Communities focus on?**

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The first six Innovation Communities work to mitigate and adapt to climate change (*EIT Climate-KIC*), create sustainable sources of energy and increase its supply (*EIT InnoEnergy*), accelerate the digital transformation (*EIT Digital*), support healthier and longer living (*EIT Health*), provide sustainable and healthier food (*EIT Food*), and manage our planet's raw materials in an efficient, secure and sustainable way (*EIT RawMaterials*). Together with their leading partners, they offer a wide range of innovation and entrepreneurship activities. This includes education courses that combine technical skills with entrepreneurial ones, business creation and acceleration services, run innovation driven research projects.

In December 2018, the EIT will select new Innovation Communities in the areas of urban mobility and added value manufacturing.

### What has the EIT Community achieved?



More information: [EIT Community Success Stories](#)

### The EIT – Making Innovation Happen!

For more information visit [eit.europa.eu](http://eit.europa.eu) & follow the EIT on Twitter @EITeu #EITAwards #INNOVEIT

For photos from the event: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/eiteu/albums>.

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