

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **KOIKI, Design by Pana, BLITAB and Marioway winners of the Social Innovation Tournament 2015**

**Koiki**, from Spain, and **Design by Pana**, from Albania, have been awarded the first and second prizes in the fourth edition of the Social Innovation Tournament, a competition organised by the European Investment Bank Institute to reward and promote innovative initiatives with an ethical or environmental impact in the fight against social exclusion.

This year's edition took place in Milan in cooperation with Fondazione Cariplo on 24 September.

**BLITAB** from Austria and **Marioway** from Italy, ex aequo, won the Special Category Prize on equal opportunities (with a special emphasis on people with disabilities).

**Koiki**, an initiative that enables people with intellectual or physical disabilities in Spanish neighbourhoods to work as its postmen/postwomen or messengers, delivering parcels to or picking them up from their neighbours, walking or biking very short distances from their homes or local stores, received EUR 25 000.

**BLITAB**, introducing the world's first tactile tablet for reading and writing for blind and visually impaired people and **Marioway**, an innovative hands-free, two-wheeled, self-balancing, verticalising, electric wheelchair for users with paraplegia, split equally the EUR 25 000 prize.

**Design by Pana**, a social business producing furniture from reclaimed wood and accessories from waste, employing people from marginalised communities, or people with mental disabilities or special needs, received EUR 10 000.

In addition, 4 projects, **Peppy Pals** (Sweden), **A Puntadas SL** (Spain), **Let's Get Sporty** (UK) and **RUFFBOARDS** (Austria) have received a voucher to benefit from subsequent mentoring services from practitioners in the field.

Dario Scannapieco, Vice-President of the European Investment Bank said: "This Tournament is about building people's capacities, leadership and confidence to find solutions to improve lives in their communities. The finalists are all innovative and they all show the incredible drive, endless energy and vast potential of Europe's best social innovators."

As President Giuseppe Guzzetti said: "Cariplo Foundation believes that modern philanthropy is not charity; its support of social innovation and social entrepreneurship is fundamental to resolving key societal problems in a sustainable manner."

The Social Innovation Tournament (SIT) was established in 2012 by the EIB Institute. It is organised every year in a different country to reward and sponsor European entrepreneurs whose primary purpose is to generate a social, ethical or environmental impact. Projects are typically related to combating unemployment and the marginalisation of disadvantaged communities and promoting access to education.

Sixteen finalists from 10 countries had initially been selected for the Tournament from 342 proposals submitted by applicants from 29 countries – the largest ever number for the SIT.

During the Tournament, the finalists had to present and defend their project before a Jury composed of six social innovation specialists chaired by Sophie Robin (Stone Soup Consulting) and also including Olivier de Guerre (PhiTrust), José Tomás Frade (former EIB staff member), Bernd Klosterkemper (Social Venture Fund), Meredith Niles (Impetus Trust) and Enrico Testi (Yunus Social Business Centre, University of Florence).

The next Social Innovation Tournament will take place in Ljubljana, Slovenia with the call for projects scheduled to be launched in February 2016.

**Background information:**

The EIB Institute was set up within the EIB Group (European Investment Bank and European Investment Fund) to promote initiatives for the common good in Europe, mostly in EU Member States. This includes reducing inequalities, enhancing knowledge, innovation and competitiveness and ensuring cohesion throughout Europe. This is implemented via three strategic programmes: the Knowledge Programme, the Social Programme and the Arts and Culture Programme.

<http://institute.eib.org>

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