

## PRESS RELEASE

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### European Investment Bank celebrates social entrepreneur start-ups in Copenhagen

- **7<sup>th</sup> edition of Social Innovation Tournament – organised by the EIB Institute – awards prizes to European social entrepreneurs with ground-breaking ideas to improve people’s lives.**
- **Special category prize for the circular economy, with a view to the international conference on the topic in Copenhagen on 25 October.**

The 2018 edition of the Social Innovation Tournament (SIT), organised by the European Investment Bank Institute, has been won by **Glowee** from France, and **Speak Social** from Portugal. The competition designed to reward and promote innovative initiatives working to create societal and environmental impact, was held in Copenhagen at Matrikel1, yesterday.

With a view to the international conference on the circular economy to be held on 25 October in Copenhagen’s Black Diamond Library, special prizes in this category were awarded to **iNex Circular**, from France, and **Chrysalix Technologies– BioFlex**, from United Kingdom.

“Glowee”, offers a sustainable living light source powered by waste products and producing reusable biomass, in order to illuminate our world by harnessing the natural power of bioluminescence (natural properties of animals to produce light – fireflies, glow-worms, jellyfish, squid, fish, etc.). Glowee also won a voucher to receive subsequent advice from EY Transaction Advisory Services in Brussels.

“Speak Social”, is a social tech start-up that promotes the social inclusion of migrants and refugees by connecting them with locals through a language and culture exchange programme to which everyone can apply in order to share their language and learn a new one.

“iNex Circular”, the “Tinder of Waste” is a platform that enables one company’s waste to become the raw material of others.

“Chrysalix Technologies – BioFlex” is a solvent process that uses unwanted waste wood as a very cheap raw material to produce clean and low-cost chemicals, fuels and materials.

For three consecutive years the EIB Institute will partner with INSEAD Business School to offer **Trigger Systems** from Portugal and **iNex** from France the opportunity to attend the INSEAD Social Entrepreneurship programme.

“Trigger Systems”, is an integrated solution using big data for water and energy efficiency.

For the second time in 2018 the EIB Institute will finance two residencies for up to two members of the selected project team(s) to implement their projects at [IRIS Social Incubator](#) in northern Portugal. In 2018, **Sensovida** from Spain and **QTrobot** from Luxembourg were the two winners. IRIS is a Regional Social Innovation Incubator fostering regional development through social innovation.

“Sensovida”, is an advanced telecare solution that enables elderly people to live independently and enjoy life in their own homes.

“QTrobot Autism Therapy”, is an expressive humanoid robot with an intuitive user interface and therapeutic application to address the economic and social challenges of autism.

**Francisco de Paula Coelho**, Dean of the European Investment Bank Institute, said: “The projects presented today reveal the great social innovation potential in Europe, with projects ranging from supporting the inclusion of autistic individuals by using robotics, to empowering refugees through digital

learning. I was amazed by the diversity and creativity of the 15 ventures, which share an innovative approach to meeting social needs, fighting social exclusion and creating environmental impact.“

Elena Casolari, President of the Jury, said “The 2018 SIT finalists express the urgency for impactful solutions and transformative business models. Again, we are/I am overwhelmed by their robust narrative, translating into outstanding ideas and proposals, all addressing entrenched problems and looking for deep and wide impact.

The social element was a strong driver for Danish entrepreneur Lise Pape, first prize winner at the 2017 edition of the SIT. After having seen her own father struggling with Parkinson’s, she founded “WalkWithPath”, which has developed a technology to help patients with Parkinson’s walk better. For **Lise Pape**, “Winning such a great prize was a stamp of approval that gave us great advantages in terms of networking and finding investors”, she says.

## **Background information:**

The Social Innovation Tournament was established in 2012 by the EIB Institute. Held every year in a different country, it rewards and sponsors 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. SIT finalists constitute a growing community of social entrepreneurs from 21 different countries who have already made a difference through more than 100 projects.

Fifteen finalists from seven countries had initially been selected for the Tournament from 212 proposals submitted by applicants from 31 countries.

During the Tournament, the finalists had to present and defend their project before a Jury composed of six social innovation specialists chaired by Elena Casolari (Opes Impact Fund) and also including Hans Wahl (INSEAD), Olivier de Guerre (PhiTrust), Kaat Peeters (Sociale Innovatiefabriek), Kai Hockerts (Copenhagen Business School), and Olivier de Jamblinne (Fondation Roger de Spoelberch).

The call for projects for the next Social Innovation Tournament will start in February 2019. In 2019, the Special Category Prizes will go to projects focusing on sustainable consumption and sustainable production.

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. For more information, go to [institute.eib.org](http://institute.eib.org)

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