



TALENT UNLEASHED AWARDS REGIONAL WINNERS ANNOUNCED

24 June 2014

Talent International is thrilled to announce the regional winners of the Talent Unleashed Awards 2014. Our regional judges have worked hard to assess the best technology talent from the Asia Pacific Region. We thank them for their insights and support in taking these awards to the next level. Each region showed a different take on the awards but across the board we saw many nominations developing projects and ideas in the social change space.

Founder and Managing Director of Talent International, Richard Earl said that the Awards spoke loudly about the increasing amount of resourcefulness, participation and imagination in the APAC startups and new technologies scene.

"There is a clear and overwhelming message from that has emanated from the massive response generated by the Talent Unleashed Awards. This message is that innovation, great ideas and passion for change are more alive than ever. Especially pleasing is that a high proportion of these ideas relate to addressing social change and dealing with social inequity," he said.

"Thanks to the exponential growth in the availability of information everyone has developed a greater awareness of the many issues our world faces and governments and politicians have fewer places to hide. The technology professionals and entrepreneurs of Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, and Hong Kong have well and truly spoken through an amazing spread of brilliant ideas and in the process provided great hope in terms of what can be achieved. This is enormously exciting!" he added.

Speaking as a regional judge for Australia, Richard Earl said, "The Australian submissions were as strong as those from more developed tech startup cities in the region. It's a positive sign that this important industry is not giving up as a result of the recent government changes to investment in technology and innovation in this country."

"In each category, many of the Australian entries were from startups, another encouraging sign that the local ecosystem, while struggling, is not short of ideas," he added.

Hong Kong Regional judge and local tech-titan Yat Siu said the awards showed that Hong Kong's tech startup scene was succeeding even with limited government investment and financial support. Although new tech enterprises in Hong Kong often have to rely on the private sector for financial support, innovation and creativity were abundant in the award entries.

"Startups have only recently started to show up on the radar of the Hong Kong government. Hong Kong is producing a growing number of technology entrepreneurs and examples of business innovation, demonstrating the ingenuity and never-give-up character of local innovators," Yat Siu said.

Catcha Group's CEO and Founder Patrick Grove said from the process of shortlisting the entrants to the eventual selection of the regional winners; it is clear that the tech scene is incredibly diverse and demonstrates the kind of trajectory that you would expect of a startup ecosystem that is expanding.

"So many of the ideas were mission and future-focused. It's exciting to see participants leveraging on the expertise already present in the region, and putting their own creative spin on it in order to identify and bridge gaps in information and create meaningful solutions for people whose needs are either not being met or have until now been overlooked," he said.

New Zealand regional judges Candace Kinser, CEO of The New Zealand Technology Industry Association, and Kalman Bekesi, CTO of Auckland based movie marketing company, Movio, said the award entries were "full of potential". Both judges maintained New Zealand is uniquely poised to catapult its rich technology development concepts and projects into a global arena.

"I think New Zealanders are well placed to innovate in niche areas of technology, particularly in education and learning, and the country's increasing commitment to investment and infrastructure in technology," said Ms Kinser.

Mr Bekesi added, "New Zealand has the ability to compete on the world stage when it comes to technology and innovation. Kiwi ingenuity is definitively alive in the technology space. The trick for our startups is to understand how to commercialise their ideas at the earliest stages of the business, and then strengthen their skill set with good mentorship and advisors."

All Regional Winners will now be judged by global judges, Sir Richard Branson, Founder of the Virgin Group and Steve Wozniak, Apple Co Founder, to win the global prize; a five day business mentoring workshop at the Branson Centre for Entrepreneurship in South Africa during Global Entrepreneurs Week in November

AUSTRALIA REGIONAL WINNERS

BEST START UP

FILIP ELDIC & EMIL DAVITYAN

Co-founders & Executive Directors, Bluedot Innovation

Bluedot Innovation specialises in high precision location-based services and payments, setting new standards for geolocation services by developing mobile technologies that provide high precision without incurring significant battery drain.

Digital Content (DRAW)

KEN TAGGART

Founder, Chatty Kidz

Chatty Kidz is family learning app; combining Skype's real-time engagement in a safe environment with educational content.

DIGITAL CONTENT (DRAW)

PHILIP ANDREWS

Director and Co-founder, Liquid State

Liquid State claims to be the fastest and simplest digital publishing process in the world, publishing documents to a custom branded app for tablets and phones.

INSPIRATIONAL LEADERSHIP

SEBASTIEN ECKERSLEY-MASLIN

Founder, BlueChilli

BlueChilli is a venture tech company that builds and invests in digital Start Ups. Sebastien supports the launch of two new online businesses every month and aims to build and invest in 100 new businesses by 2016.

RISING STAR
AMBER BLUMANIS
App Creator of Stopover

The Stopover App allows users to engage through; expanding business networking, airport dating, learn languages or meet other travelers while on stop over at an airport.

COMMUNITY IMPACT
JAMES NATHAN
Founder & CEO, Food Orbit

Food Orbit is an online platform that enables wholesale buyers; such as chefs and restaurateurs, to connect and trade directly with local farmers and producers online. Food Orbit is shortening the supply chain and cutting out the middleman to ensure farmers get a fair price.

- See more at: <http://talentunleashed.co/talent-unleashed-awards-regional-winners-decided/#sthash.8MsF8P9P.dpuf>