

Social Innovation Tournament's 2020 Results



The Social Innovation Tournament, the flagship initiative of the EIB Group Institute's Social Programme, recognises and supports the best European social entrepreneurs. [15 finalists](#) had been selected for the 2020 edition out of an outstanding group of 216 candidates in 31 countries. SIT is normally organised in a different country every year and rewards European entrepreneurs whose primary purpose is to generate a social, ethical or environmental impact. This year's tournament was scheduled to take place in Lisbon but – due to the COVID-19 pandemic spreading across the world – it had to be moved online.

EIB Vice-President [Emma Navarro](#), responsible for the EIB Institute and for the Bank's operations in [Portugal](#) stated: *"We are proud to reward Europe's best social entrepreneurs and, by doing so, to promote innovative startups in an early stage of development. The SIT tournament shows the EU bank's firm commitment to improving their competitiveness and access to finance with a view to turning good ideas into meaningful social and environmental projects. Moreover, at the EIB, the EU climate bank and world's largest multilateral provider of climate finance, we are particularly pleased to see so many amazing and disruptive ideas that aim to improve biodiversity and ecosystem conservation."*

General Category – Winners

[Navilens](#), from Spain, wants to make cities smarter and more inclusive by empowering visually impaired people with a cutting-edge technology based on a proprietary computer vision algorithm. It replicates the concept of using the camera of any mobile phone to read signage information for visually impaired people and its technology is much more powerful than a QR code. Available in 24 languages, it helps visually impaired users to be more independent in unknown spaces.

[Bee0monitoring](#) (Bee0diversity), from Belgium, combines nature (bees acting as drones to collect billions of environmental samples on large surfaces) and technology (software processing the data). Through the analysis of samples, Bee0monitoring can monitor industrial and agricultural pollution, assess the quality/diversity of plants, make targeted improvement decisions and involve local communities to enhance biodiversity.

Special Category – Winners

[Sponsh](#), from the Netherlands, developed a temperature-sensitive smart material that produces water from air, using the natural cycles of day and night. Launched in 2018, Sponsh's first products are water-producing tree guards for reforestation projects, to help young trees survive their first harsh summers. After 10 years, Sponsh will have planted 80 million trees, turned 174 000 ha of degraded land into forests and absorbed 68 million tonnes of CO₂ from the atmosphere.

[PlasticFri](#), from Sweden, is a CleanTech startup with the vision to end the plastic pollution catastrophe. PlasticFri's mission is to change that reality

by transforming renewable resources (agricultural waste and specific non-edible plants) into a biomaterial that looks and works like conventional plastics, but it is 100% biodegradable, compostable and non-toxic. PlasticFri's impact is not limited to saving CO₂, but also contributes to reducing the impact of climate change, ocean toxicity, ecosystem disruption and habitat disruption while improving food chain quality and biodiversity.

Audience Choice Award – Winners

[HeraMobileApp](#), from Turkey, aims to increase access to preventative health services, related to vaccine-preventable diseases and maternal health among Syrian refugees in Turkey. Before using the application, women are given a tutorial on recommended services and are taught about the risks and conditions during and after the pregnancy, the importance of vaccination for children and the situations that will occur if a child is not vaccinated according to guidelines. HERA currently serves 300 women between the ages of 20 and 49.

Background information

About the Social Innovation Tournament

The Social Innovation Tournament recognises and supports the best European social entrepreneurs. It promotes innovative ideas and rewards initiatives that contribute to creating social, ethical or environmental impact. Typically, it covers projects in the areas of education, healthcare, the environment, the circular economy, inclusion, job creation, ageing and many more.

All projects compete for the General Category and Special Category first and second Prizes of €50 000 and €20 000 respectively, as well as the Audience Choice Award of €10 000 for the project with the most audience votes. In 2020, the Special Category Prizes will go to projects focusing on the environment (with a special emphasis on biodiversity and ecosystem conservation). Two projects will be selected to attend INSEAD's Social Entrepreneurship programme in Fontainebleau, France.

The prizes are awarded by a jury of specialists from the academic and business worlds. The Audience Choice is awarded by the audience, based on their votes.

About the EIB Institute

The EIB Institute was set up within the EIB Group (European Investment Bank and European Investment Fund) to promote and support social, cultural, and academic initiatives with European stakeholders and the public at large. It is a key pillar of the EIB Group's community and citizenship engagement.

The EIB Institute supports social innovation and entrepreneurs who target social, ethical or environmental goals or seek to create and sustain social value. This is typically related to unemployment, equal opportunities, the marginalisation of disadvantaged groups and access to education and other

basic social services.