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**EU INNOVATE & SEA LAUNCH PRESTIGIOUS NEW EUROPEAN PRIZE
FOR SUSTAINABILITY-INSPIRED USERS, INNOVATORS AND ENTREPRENEURS**

**A STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP TO REWARD GROUNDBREAKING START-UPS
THROUGH EUROPE'S HIGHEST PROFILE AWARD SCHEME**

Two of Europe's more ambitious platforms championing user innovation and entrepreneurship for sustainability have today announced a new collaboration to promote and advance practice in their field.

EU-InnovatE, one of the European Union's current flagship research projects, and the **Sustainable Entrepreneurship Award (SEA)** will combine forces in 2015 & 2016 to identify and reward leading examples of new business creation which hold significant potential for accelerating the transition towards a sustainable European economy and society.

EU-InnovatE is a three year interdisciplinary initiative, coordinated by Prof. Frank-Martin Belz at TUM School of Management in Germany, which addresses the obstacles and prospects for sustainable lifestyles and green economy in Europe. Harnessing the expertise of 14 leading academic, think tank and network partners, it seeks to provide scientific evidence and analysis to test the feasibility and potential impact of achieving sustainable living scenarios in 2050.

The Sustainable Entrepreneurship Award (SEA), launched in 2012, annually presents awards to enterprises, projects and ideas which address a social or ecological problem by combining innovative solutions with a profitable commercial strategy. More than 1,000 submissions have been received in the course of the past three years.

For the next two years, Professor Belz and his peers at SEA will convene an expert international jury of renowned figures like former EU Commissioner Franz Fischler, former Slovenian Prime Minister Alojz Peterle, Bertelsmann Stiftung Board Member Brigitte Mohn, and Transparency International founder Peter Eigen to evaluate submissions and award the best projects in eight different categories. The best project of all submissions gets a prize money of EUR 10,000. The 2015 winners will be invited to receive their prizes at an exclusive gala event in November in Vienna.

According to Prof. Belz *"Our strategic cooperation with SEA is a great opportunity to make a difference in the field of sustainable entrepreneurship in Europe and beyond. It is rare for large-scale research projects such as EU-InnovatE to have lasting impact on both science and society, but that is precisely what this partnership will allow us to do!"*

These sentiments were echoed by Christina Weidinger, initiator of SEA and Al Gore's European Climate Leader'. *"I am very happy about the strategic partnership with EU-InnovatE. With their scientific and our practical perspective we can create an absolutely new and comprehensive approach to support innovative & sustainable entrepreneurs in Europe. Within the last years we have established a huge initiative around the SEA. From now on we are not just awarding innovative & sustainable projects. We also support them to find an investor, get more public awareness through our media partners or provide know-how in the areas of financing, marketing/distribution, implementing a sustainability strategy and access to our network."*

ABOUT EU INNOVATE

The EU-InnovatE project leverages EUR 4.7M from the European Commission's 7th Framework Programme for Research to investigate the creative, innovate and entrepreneurial roles of users involved in developing sustainable and novel products, services and systems ("Sustainable Lifestyles 2.0"). EU-InnovatE focuses on their potential contribution to sustainability-driven open innovation processes, both within and outside of corporate value chains – and by extension which policy mechanisms and corporate approaches can best enable the creation of new enterprises which create jobs and enhance competitiveness in Europe.

ABOUT SEA

What began three years ago with a classical award, became meanwhile a many-sided and extensive initiative of funding and advancement possibilities around the SEA. The new responsible organization, future4you GmbH, combines all these actions and measurements. Independent from size, industry or country everybody is invited to submit a project, idea and business model focused on innovation and sustainability. Numerous partners such as Forbes Magazine (Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary), ProSiebenSat.1 PULS4, UEAPME, Fraunhofer Gesellschaft, Erste Group Bank AG, Wiener Städtische Versicherungsverein – Vienna Insurance Group, conwert-Gruppe, C-Quadrat, and Berufsförderungsinstitut Wien (BFI Wien) are already supporters of the SEA.

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