THE UK'S BIGGEST AND OLDEST NATIONAL STUDENT AND GRADUATE BUSINESS PITCHING COMPETITION LAUNCHES FOR 2021

Wednesday 2 June, 2021

Under embargo until 11:59am Wednesday 2nd June 2021

A CELEBRATION OF STUDENT ENTERPRISE ACROSS THE UK

Noon, Wednesday 2nd June 2021 – Tata Varsity Pitch Competition 2021 will launch and open for applications, inviting innovative student and graduate business owners the chance to win £15,000 to help fund their early-stage businesses.

Tata Varsity Pitch Competition 2021, powered by NACUE (The National Association of College and University Entrepreneurs), is a national initiative dedicated to both current students and recent graduates (post 2016) celebrating high potential, early-stage ventures coming directly out of colleges and universities across the UK.

NACUE and the Tata Group have worked together over ten years through this competition and 'Powering the Enterprising Generation' to support talented and ambitious young people, committed to innovating their own career through enterprise and entrepreneurship.

The competition has grown dramatically over that time and Tata Group has become a well-known leader in the entrepreneurial eco-system across the UK as a supporter of the competition from its inception. Alongside the £15,000 prize fund, there will be other benefits too - finalists will have access to significant in-kind support such as expert advice on business plans, pitching skills and to how to professionally network.

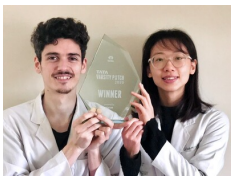
To date, the competition has received over 3,000 outstanding entries from ambitious and aspiring entrepreneurs from educational institutions throughout the UK with an increase in quality year-on-year. Exceptionally high caliber startups have been actively involved in social enterprise, from repurposing waste chicken feathers into sustainable housing materials, reducing the amount of injuries of cyclists through projecting laser lights to avoid blind spots, to the development of aids to improve water sanitation in under-served communities, to the creation of a revolutionary itch-management products that aid children suffering with Eczema, and pushing the perception of sustainable fashion further by offering sustainable textile microbial dyeing and coating services to designers and brands.

Tata Varsity Pitch Competition will release a national call for innovative business solutions to submit a 60 second video elevator pitch to all current students or recent graduates from any UK education institution. 30 startups will be invited to pitch to a panel of esteemed judges in October to compete for one of the seven finalist spots. The finalists will have the opportunity to attend a two-day bootcamp a couple of weeks before the Grand Final with a lineup of industry professionals who will ensure they are well prepped for the big day. The finalist entrepreneurs will compete at the Grand Final in November 2021 during Global Entrepreneurship Week for the opportunity to take home a national title and £15,000 equity free funding.

Tim Jones CBE, Executive Director at Tata Limited commented: *"Tata Varsity Pitch is a phenomenal opportunity for business-minded students and recent graduates to develop their potential. The global challenges we all continue to face have shown that we must be ready to adapt to our situation and champion innovative ideas. We are proud to continue our work with NACUE to support today's entrepreneurs as they strive to become the future of tomorrow's ever-changing world."*

Timothy Barnes, Chair of NACUE's Board of Trustees, welcomed the launch of the 2021 programme, saying *"The Tata Varsity Pitch Competition is now in it's twelfth year. You don't get to keep going in an*

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area as fast-changing as this without offering real value for participants and partners. It is the UK's leading inter-varsity programme for exceptional new business ideas - ideas we all need to see as we rebuild the post-covid economy. Each one is led by driven, talented students from across the country and we are here to recognise their achievements and celebrate their work.

The best new businesses among them will receive support from NACUE's network and Tata Group companies as they launch and grow. This will help create new jobs and new solutions for the post Covid-19 economy."

Tata Varsity Pitch Competition 2021 will showcase the phenomenal talent of young people amongst the UK's education system and raise the awareness and profile of this exceptional talent.

For more information, go to NACUE's website.

-ENDS-

For more information, contact the Events Team at NACUE

Email: events@nacue.com

About Tata group

Tata is one of the world's most dynamic business groups. In Europe, their operations span a diverse portfolio of 19 companies with over 60,000 employees. These companies include iconic brands such as Jaguar Land Rover and Tetley Tea as well as leading Tata businesses such as Tata Steel, Tata Consultancy Services, Tata Communications and the Indian Hotels Company. Tata businesses in the UK are fully committed to the group's global commitment to nurturing learning and skills and inspiring academic and technical excellence. Tata Limited is a wholly owned subsidiary of Tata Sons and was established in London in 1907 as a representative of Tata Sons in Europe. (www.tata.com)

About NACUE

NACUE (National Association of College and University Entrepreneurs) is committed to advancing education and supporting bespoke solutions in developing greater engagement with students, to encourage the knowledge building of enterprise and entrepreneurship, working with students from diverse backgrounds, providing unique opportunities to support them in developing the skills they need to succeed.

Launched in 2009, NACUE completed a national rollout focusing on the development and sustainability of over 200 enterprise societies driven by young people on a peer-to-peer basis, with the support from the UK Government and corporate backers.

NACUE runs some of the largest student enterprise events in Europe, such as the Student Enterprise Conference and has seen a total of over 20,000 people attend their events. Their community alone has generated over 1,700 businesses, creating hundreds of jobs and supporting the investment our country needs.

Company Contact:

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NACUE

T. 07903188447
E. events@nacue.com
W. https://www.nacue.com

Additional Contact(s):
For more information, contact Yani or Tim via the Events Team at NACUE
Email: events@nacue.com

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