

Country winner of the PowerUp! Competition

During the Country Final of the *PowerUp!* by EIT InnoEnergy Competition, the jury selected the best start-up working on energy and cleantech-related innovations in Czech Republic. The winner is Neuron Sound startup, which developed artificial intelligence technology, capable of understanding the sound and vibrational signals and subsequently revealing various machine defects and disturbances.

Innoconnect, the Pilsen software startup, which provides analysis of big data over the map, was second. The third place was the launch of SunnyCold, which manufactures modern heat pumps and hybrid photovoltaic systems usable for low energy houses.

The mission of the competition is to find the best solutions that can contribute to innovation in energy and improve the air quality in European cities and increase the cleanliness of the environment. The winning team meets a need that we see in the energy market. Global applicability was one of the most important criteria taken into account by the jury, says Christo Balinow, Director of Business Development of InnoEnergy.

299 start-ups from 24 countries in Central and Eastern Europe participated in the fourth edition of the biggest competition for cleantech start-ups, which is organised by EIT InnoEnergy. The Country Final was held in Prague and was preceded by intensive Bootcamps. The participants had the opportunity to verify their business models and improve their presentation skills. Top 22 start-ups from Czech Republic applied their innovative solutions the competition.

"We believe the competition will help us with attracting more investors, as our startup grows fast. Further product development and planned expansion to foreign markets will require investments that we could not afford without external capital. The bootcamp required hard work, yet there was a relaxed atmosphere. We are very pleased about that we became winners and we believe

that our presentation will be even better in the Grand Finals," says **Martin Kubáň, Project & Marketing Manager of the Neuron Sound.**

The participants were assessed not only in terms of the professional content of their project but also in the context of business awareness, and the potential of the team and product.

Agnieszka Wasilewska-Semail (CEO, RAFAKO – the PowerGold Partner of the Competition) sees the importance of the Competition in the following way:

- We are backing the mission of InnoEnergy to create an impact in terms of innovation in sustainable energy, which is very much aligned with the business motivation of RAFAKO, since our work is not only limited to the design and manufacture of equipment. Our ambitious goal is to make power generation as environmentally friendly as possible. The PowerUp! Competition fits into the goals of RAFAKO perfectly and we hope that the discovered start-ups will contribute to a cleaner environment.

On 19th of June winning team will face the winners of the other country editions of the Competition at the Žofín Palace in Prague, where they will compete for financial prizes (€30,000 EUR for first place) as well as participation in the prestigious Highway® accelerator, which helps transform start-ups at an early development stage into successful businesses.

InnoEnergy is supported by the EIT, the body of European Union