Two Fingal entrepreneurs reach National Final of Ireland’s Best Young Entrepreneur Competition (IBYE)

Local Enterprise Office Fingal has confirmed that Kevin Kelleher from Ostoform in Malahide and Alan Hickey from WeBringg in Castleknock have both clinched places in the national final of Ireland’s Best Young Entrepreneur (IBYE) competition in Dublin this March.

The two entrepreneurs are competing in the “Best Business Idea” and “Best Start-Up Business” categories respectively, and are two of the three young entrepreneurs who will represent the Dublin region on March 4th. The local entrepreneurs now have the opportunity, along with 22 other national finalists, to become Ireland’s Best Young Entrepreneur and share in a €100,000 winners’ investment fund.

Attending the awards ceremony, Mayor of Fingal Cllr. Mary McCamley spoke of her delight with the Fingal success: “Having seen at close hand during the Fingal finals, the high calibre of businesses that our Fingal winners had to overcome to take their place at the regional finals, I am delighted to see that their hard work and dedication has been rewarded tonight. I would like to wish the three winners the very best of luck as they go forward to represent Dublin at the national finals in March. I have no doubt that their entrepreneurial capabilities will shine bright on a national stage”.

The category winners who will go forward to the National Final were announced by the Minister of State for Trade, Employment, Business, EU Digital Single Market and Data Protection, Mr. Pat Breen T.D. at the IBYE Regional Final in the Royal College of Physicians on Kildare Street yesterday evening (24th January). The other national finalist who was selected by the judging panel is: Conor O’Loughlin from Glofox of Sandyford in the Best Established category.

Oisin Geoghegan, the Head of Enterprise with Local Enterprise Office Fingal, congratulated the local entrepreneurs, saying: “Our search to find and support Ireland’s best young entrepreneurs, which started last September, has turned up some incredible business talent. Our local entrepreneurs are the business leaders of the future and the entrants in the competition have all shown innovation and drive. After a very successful bootcamp, County Final and now Regional Final, the county will be proudly represented in the ultimate stage of the competition by two local entrepreneurs – the IBYE National Final in March.”

The Chief Executive of Fingal County Council, Paul Reid, welcomed the success of the two Fingal entrepreneurs "I would like to congratulate the two Fingal entrepreneurs on their success at the IBYE Dublin regional finals. Fingal County Council is very keen to ensure that we have a strong enterprise culture that offers the perfect environment where Start-Ups can thrive and provide a sustainable stream of new employment opportunities in the county. In addition, I am delighted that in Fingal we have a very entrepreneurial young population that is continually looking for ways to develop business ideas. Our Local Enterprise Office in Fingal County Council is well equipped to provide a range of supports that can help turn these ideas into reality and the IBYE competition is just one of many ways where we assist young entrepreneurs".
Judging takes place in early March and each finalist will have the opportunity to pitch their business plan to the judging panel. They will be assessed on criteria such as the level of innovation in their business, the potential for future job creation and their leadership skills.

The Best Idea winner, Kevin Kelleher of "Ostoform", has developed a novel medical device that manages and effectively reduces skin complications caused by Colostomy bags. He has conducted two patient trials to date which saw a 45% improvement in patients’ skin conditions. Best StartUp Entrepreneur Alan Hickey of "WeBringg" has developed a crowd-sourced on-demand delivery platform that can deliver online purchases in minutes by sourcing drivers in the same way as Mytaxi sources taxis.

Aimed at 18 to 35-year-olds, the IBYE initiative is run by the 31 Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) nationwide, and supported by the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation and Enterprise Ireland. The investment awards will be used by the young entrepreneurs to help fund business start-ups, create new jobs locally and help develop new products for international markets.

Competition details and results are available from www.ibye.ie and information around the supports available to young entrepreneurs through the Local Enterprise Offices is available from www.localenterprise.ie

ENDS

For media queries, please contact Oisín Geoghegan, Head of Enterprise in Fingal, on: Tel: 01 8900 800 or 087-9884081. E-mail: oisin@leo.fingal.ie.

Picture: Left to Right
Helena Humphries, Director of Services in Fingal County Council - Ed Hearne, Alan Hickey - WeBringg, Mayor of Fingal – Cllr. Mary McCamley, Minister Pat Breen, T.D, Kevin Kelleher – Ostofrom, Chief Executive of Fingal County Council - Paul Reid, Head of Enterprise – Oisin Geoghegan, Martin Daly, Bryan Coughlan and Anne Donaldson.

About Local Enterprise Office, Fingal

The Local Enterprise Office (LEO) in Fingal is part of a network of 31 Local Enterprise Offices nationwide, located within the Local Authority structure. The Fingal office is one of the largest and most active LEOs in the country. The role of the LEO is to support and provide assistance to existing and potential small business promoters located in Fingal, North County Dublin. In addition the Fingal LEO aims to foster the development of an enterprise culture. The LEOs operate under a Service level Agreement with Enterprise Ireland. Local Enterprise Office Fingal is funded by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation and is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund.
Dublin Regional Winners

BEST IDEA CATEGORY: WINNER

Name: Kevin Kelleher
Location: Malahide
Email: kevin.kelleher@ostoform.com
Product: Ostoform
Kevin has developed a novel medical device that manages and effectively reduces skin complications caused by Colostomy bags. He has conducted two patient trials to date which saw a 45% improvement in patients’ skin conditions.

BEST START-UP CATEGORY: WINNER

Name: Alan Hickey
Website: www.webringg.com
Location: Castleknock
Email: sean@webringg.com
Company: WeBringg
WeBringg is a crowd-sourced on-demand delivery platform. They deliver online purchases in minutes by sourcing drivers in the same way as Mytaxi sources taxis.

BEST ESTABLISHED CATEGORY: Winner

Name: Conor O’Loughlin
Website: www.glofox.com
Location: Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown
Company: Glofox
Glofox is the complete management software for gym, yoga and fitness studio owners who want to save time, increase revenue and drive member retention. We want to power the fitness industry, partnering with fitness professional as they turn their passion into profession.

Background:

About www.IBYE.ie Ireland’s Best Young Entrepreneur:

- Ireland’s Best Young Entrepreneur is an enterprise initiative run by the 31 Local Enterprise Offices (LEO) around the country and funded by the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation and Enterprise Ireland. A €2 million investment fund is available through IBYE which supports young entrepreneurs through training, mentoring and direct financial investments.

- IBYE was open to people between the ages of 18 (at date of application) and 35 (at 31st December 2017) with an innovative business idea, new start-up or established business, including: individuals, venture teams, partnerships, existing businesses with a new idea, or people overseas (including Irish emigrants) who will headquarter in Ireland.

- Each LEO will have a total fund of up to €50,000 to invest in six businesses (three category winners and three runners-up) according to criteria including businesses’ investment needs. The three categories are as follows:
• **Best Business Idea** (pre-trading) – up to €10,000 investment fund through every LEO (€7,000 for category winner and €3,000 for runner-up, through every LEO)

• **Best Start-Up Business** (up to 18 months), with up to €20,000 investment fund through every LEO (€15,000 for category winner and €5,000 for runner-up, through every LEO)

• **Best Established Business** (over 18 months) with up to €20,000 investment fund through every LEO (€15,000 for category winner and €5,000 for runner-up, through every LEO)

• The county winners will proceed to eight regional finals in January and February 2018 from which 24 contenders (three from each region – one in each category) will be selected to compete for the national title of Ireland’s Best Young Entrepreneur. A further €100,000 investment fund will be available to invest in the winners of the three categories at the national final, one of which will also be named with the prestigious title of Ireland’s Best Young Entrepreneur.

**Local Enterprise Offices**

• The Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) are the ‘first-stop-shop’ for providing advice and guidance, financial assistance and ‘soft’ supports in the form of training and mentoring to anyone wishing to start or grow a business.

• The LEOs provide a ‘signposting’ service in relation to all relevant state supports available through agencies such as Revenue, the Department of Social Protection, Education and Training Boards, the Credit Review Office and Microfinance Ireland.

• The LEOs can offer direct grant aid to microenterprises (10 employees or fewer) in the manufacturing and internationally traded services sector which, over time, have the potential to develop into strong export entities. Subject to certain eligibility criteria, the LEOs can provide financial assistance within three main categories, i.e., Feasibility Grants (investigating the potential of a business idea) Priming Grants (to part-fund a start-up) and Business Development Grants for existing businesses that want to expand.

• The LEOs also offer advice and guidance in areas such as Local Authority rates, Public Procurement and other regulations affecting business.