

THIRD HELLENIC ENTREPRENEURSHIP AWARD OPENS FOR ENTRIES

- ***Applications invited for Hellenic Entrepreneurship Award 2015***
- ***More Greek start-up businesses stand to win mentoring, business support and prize funding of up to 700,000 Euros***

ATHENS, 19 November 2014

The Hellenic Entrepreneurship Award (HEA) has announced that its third annual award is now open and invites Greek start-up businesses to submit entries for the 2015 programme. Based on a belief that entrepreneurship is key to Greece's future prosperity, the Hellenic Entrepreneurship Award was created in 2012 by the Libra Group in the midst of deep economic recession. Its aim was to stimulate entrepreneurial spirit through practical support and start-up funding for Greece's most promising businesses. Since then eight innovative new businesses across a variety of sectors have received the award. Together they have created hundreds of direct and indirect jobs and are making a contribution to the Greek economy.

The HEA, which is managed and funded by the Libra Group on behalf of The Hellenic Initiative, awards between one and five winners each year, providing them with all the necessary resources to realise new and innovative business ideas. In addition to interest-free start-up funding, the award programme provides winners with a wide range of business support services, as well as mentorship from highly experienced business professionals. Winners in 2015 will share a total prize fund of approximately €700,000 provided by the Libra Group and its award partners.

The Hellenic Entrepreneurship Award is open to both experienced and budding entrepreneurs in Greece, whose business plans exhibit sustainability, financial prudence and innovation, whilst creating jobs predominantly in Greece.

Entries are encouraged from individuals or groups with a business idea, whether or not they have prior business experience, as well as established unlisted companies which can prove that they have an all-new business concept which is not related to their core activities and cannot be funded through existing resources.

An essential requirement is that the contestants will establish their business in Greece and can prove that they and their company will operate predominantly in Greece, thus contributing to the economy and creating jobs locally.

During the first two years of the award, more than 2,000 entrants registered via the Hellenic Entrepreneurship Award website (www.hellenicaward.com), while approximately 800 business plans were submitted. All were thoroughly evaluated by the panel of judges before the eventual winners were declared.

In the past two years, the Hellenic Entrepreneurship Award has been won by:

2013 Winners:

1. **Stella Mare**, a seafood processing and trading business which is targeted at both domestic and global markets
2. **Casa Parlante**, a “Living Museum”, depicting the everyday life of a noble family in a historic 19th century mansion in Corfu
3. **Different & Different**, a culinary academy and innovative catering company
4. **rabt**, a platform and mobile/ tablet application which generates curated video sequences for every user

2014 Winners:

5. **Anassa Organics**, a producer of premium herbal teas and infusions, addressing Greek and global markets
6. **e-satisfaction**, an independent platform that records e-shoppers’ entire online shopping experience from browsing through ordering to delivery – set to become a comprehensive e-commerce rating tool
7. **Open Circle**, a web-based equity crowdfunding platform where visionary entrepreneurs present their business concepts and engage with investors who may wish to participate
8. **RTsafe**, a revolutionary approach to optimising the effectiveness of radiotherapy for cancer patients while minimizing the likelihood of harmful side effects

All of the 2013 winners are now actively trading and are on target with their business plans while the 2014 winners’ launch plans are well under way. It is estimated that over 500 direct and indirect jobs have been created by HEA winners. In addition to the mentors dedicated to each winner, a number of - mostly Greek - companies have come forward to provide pro bono support to winners. These span providers of legal, accounting, marketing, IT, communication and HR services. Award partners and supporters include Piraeus Bank, SAP, Jalouise Pty of Australia and Mr Dimitri Goulandris.

“Following two successful competitions, hundreds of business plans and eight winners, the Hellenic Entrepreneurship Award has now matured, maintaining its initial goal of stimulating entrepreneurship in Greece and supporting those with the vision and will to create sustainable businesses for our country. We are delighted to be launching a third Hellenic Entrepreneurship Award and look forward to rewarding the creativity and hard work that can be a force for change in Greece”, stated Jimmy Athanasopoulos, Director of the Hellenic Entrepreneurship Award.

The Hellenic Entrepreneurship Award website is now accepting applications at www.hellenicaward.com.

The application submission deadline is 4th March 2015.

The names of the finalists will be announced at the beginning of May 2015.

The winners will be announced at the end of May 2015.

- Ends -

About the Hellenic Entrepreneurship Award:

The Hellenic Entrepreneurship Award was founded in 2012, aiming to support established and budding entrepreneurs to materialise their new business ideas, by providing funding, support services and mentorship. The Libra Group has committed over €7 million to the programme which will help entrepreneurs in Greece to generate economic growth in their homeland. The award partners are Piraeus Bank Group which has contributed to the training and education of participants since 2014, through its subsidiary, Excelixi Center of Sustainable Entrepreneurship; the Australian based property investment and development company, Jalouise Pty Ltd., and Mr Dimitri Goulandris. Amongst the winners' supporters are Antidote, Lykourezos Law Offices, People for Business, Reed Smith, S&Team and SAP Hellas.

www.hellenicaward.com

About the Libra Group:

The Libra Group is an international business group comprising 30 subsidiaries operating across five continents. The group has principal operations in shipping, aviation, real estate, hospitality and energy as well as a range of diversified investments. Developed from a shipping business founded in 1976 and owned by the Logothetis family, Libra is distinguished by a combination of traditional values, new ideas and an agile mindset that allows it to take advantage of opportunities. For more information please visit www.libra.com

About the Hellenic Initiative:

The Hellenic Initiative (THI) was founded in 2012 and is a global, non-profit, secular institution whose vision is to mobilize the Greek diaspora and philhellene community to develop sustainable financial programmes and businesses improvement programmes in order to lead Greeks to long term prosperity.

<http://www.thehellenicinitiative.org>