

## HELLENIC ENTREPRENEURSHIP AWARD 2017

*The highly anticipated new cycle of submissions begins,  
with a new intensive business start-up education programme and three new  
supporters.*

**ATHENS, 14 November 2016** – Following the successful completion of four award cycles, the Hellenic Entrepreneurship Award (HEA), invites start-up businesses to submit their business plans to compete for the fifth annual award programme. Winners will share interest-free start-up funding of €1,250,000, along with mentoring and business support services provided by HEA's network of supporters. The HEA website, [www.hellenicaward.com](http://www.hellenicaward.com), will be open for applications from Greek start-up businesses until 16 February 2017.

Since the establishment of HEA more than 2,600 Greek businesses have participated in the award. It was founded in 2012 by the Libra Group on behalf of the Hellenic Initiative. A total of 14 winners have been declared and continue to enjoy support and advice from the HEA and its supporters. Former winners span multiple business sectors, from meteorology, culture and medical technology to innovative digital services. These companies have achieved consistent commercial growth despite Greece's prolonged economic downturn. They have created hundreds of direct and indirect jobs, actively combatting the "brain drain" by keeping resourceful young professionals in Greece as well as encouraging those who are now based abroad to return to their home country.

Libra Group has committed €10,000,000 to supporting entrepreneurship in Greece through the HEA. The Award has provided interest-free funding to 14 winners, while each of them has been provided with an expert mentor to guide them through the demanding early stages of business planning.

This year, HEA will intensify its educational support. HEA will provide comprehensive business start-up education events at ten different locations across Greece, comprising interactive seminars, workshops and webinars. The initiative seeks to stimulate entrepreneurial spirit among wider audiences than ever before and unlock the untapped potential in even more Greek entrepreneurs.

This year three more supporters have stepped forward to offer their support to the HEA. Atradius, will offer winners a wide range of subsidised credit insurance services. SATO will provide heavily discounted office furniture to HEA and its winners, while V+O, as a leading communication agency, will offer consultation and training seminars to HEA's winners, arming them with key marketing and communications skills.

Commenting on the launch of HEA 2017, Jimmy Athanasopoulos, Chairman of the Hellenic Entrepreneurship Award and Head of Social Responsibility at the Libra Group, stated: "In recent years we have been amazed by the quality of business ideas conceived by entrepreneurs in Greece and we have been profoundly inspired by all the brilliant minds that we have met. Our campaign is focused around the motto, *'It's not enough to have a good idea, you also need the right skills to implement it'*. In 2017, we remain dedicated to our dual goals of providing business education to those who are lacking the support they need to compete, and identifying those outstanding business plans from experienced or first-time entrepreneurs that have the best chance of making a contribution to the economic development of Greece."

The deadline for applications is 16 February 2017. Finalists will be announced in May 2017 and winners will be announced in June 2017.

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### Past HEA Winners

#### 2016 Winners:

1. **Blueground** ([www.theblueground.com](http://www.theblueground.com)) – A technology-enabled chain of serviced apartments, houses and villas created by transforming existing residential properties.
2. **Bubblz** ([www.bubblz.com](http://www.bubblz.com)) – A mobile application that rewards users' social media posts and, via a web marketing platform, enables brands and vendors to promote products and services through user-generated content.
3. **Raymetrics** ([www.raymetrics.com](http://www.raymetrics.com)) – A company that aims to create a new, advanced and powerful 3D ceilometer for the aviation industry, aimed at providing additional data, essential for airports and meteorological agencies.

#### 2015 Winners:

4. **Yoleni's** ([www.yolenis.com](http://www.yolenis.com)) – An online delicatessen that enables European and American customers to purchase authentic products from every corner of Greece. Soon to begin a chain of Greek gastronomy around the world.
5. **Smart Guide** – A wearable electronic mobility guide that senses nearby obstacles and obstructions for the blind and visually impaired. This innovative product will be produced in the facilities of "Lighthouse for the Blind of Greece" by employees who themselves have impaired vision.
6. **Heliix** ([www.heliixinc.com](http://www.heliixinc.com)) – A ground-breaking technology which converts thermal energy into electricity. The company's first implementation of the technology, Phaethon™, is a device that can reduce a household's annual electricity costs by up to 30%.

#### 2014 Winners:

7. **Anassa Organics** ([www.anassaorganics.com](http://www.anassaorganics.com)) – A company that produces and markets premium herbal teas and infusions, addressing Greek and global markets.
8. **e-satisfaction** ([www.e-satisfaction.gr](http://www.e-satisfaction.gr)) – 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.
9. **Open Circle** ([www.opencircleproject.com](http://www.opencircleproject.com)) – A web-based community/ platform, where visionary entrepreneurs present their business concepts in order to promote collaborations with prospective investors through equity crowdfunding.
10. **RTsafe** ([www.rt-safe.com](http://www.rt-safe.com)) – A medical technology company presenting a revolutionary approach to optimising the effectiveness of radiotherapy for cancer patients while minimizing the likelihood of harmful side effects.

## 2013 Winners:

11. **Stella Mare** ([www.stellamare.gr](http://www.stellamare.gr)) – A seafood processing and marketing business which is targeted at both domestic and global markets.
12. **Casa Parlante** ([www.casaparlante.gr](http://www.casaparlante.gr)) – A “Living Museum”, depicting the everyday life of a noble family in a historic 19th century mansion in Corfu.
13. **Different & Different** ([www.differentanddifferent.gr](http://www.differentanddifferent.gr)) – A innovative catering company and culinary academy.
14. **Rabt** ([www.rabt.co](http://www.rabt.co)) –A technology start-up that helps media companies to increase audience retention by automatically analysing preferences and recommending video and other content most likely to engage individual users.

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### **About The Hellenic Entrepreneurship Award:**

The Hellenic Entrepreneurship Award was founded in 2012, to support established and budding entrepreneurs by providing funding, support services and mentorship for start-up businesses. The Libra Group has committed €10 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, Jalouse Pty Ltd., and Mr. Dimitri Goulandris.

Amongst the winners' supporters are Antidote, Atradius, Intracom Telecom, Ioannis Vassardanis & Partners Law Firm, Lykourazos Law Offices, Microsoft, People for Business, Reed Smith, SAP Hellas, SATO, Onassis Cultural Centre, V+O and White Room.

[www.hellenicaward.com](http://www.hellenicaward.com)

### **About The Libra Group:**

The Libra Group is a privately-owned international business group that controls 30 subsidiaries active in 35 countries across six continents. It is focused on six core sectors: aviation, energy, finance and diversified, hospitality, real estate, and shipping. The group is wholly-owned by the Logothetis family.

For more information, visit the website: [www.libra.com](http://www.libra.com)

### **About The Hellenic Initiative:**

Our Mission: Investing in the future of Greece through direct philanthropy and economic revitalization. We empower people to provide crisis relief, encourage entrepreneurs, and create jobs.

We are The Hellenic Initiative (THI) - a global movement of the Greek Diaspora.

Visit our website: <http://www.TheHellenicInitiative.org/>

<http://ongreece.org>

Like us on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/thehellenicinitiative>

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