

Tamara Etmanski wins first Canadian Global Impact Competition

Idea for a digital archive to improve access to academic research findings wins entry to prestigious Singularity University program in Silicon Valley

April 4 (Guelph, Ont.) – Tamara Etmanski of Calgary, Alberta, is the winner of Singularity University's first Canadian Global Impact Competition (GIC), hosted by Innovation Guelph April 2 in Guelph, Ontario.

The inaugural Canadian event – one of 16 competitions taking place this spring in countries around the world – invited “big ideas” to improve the standard of living of one million Canadians through the use of technology.

Etmanski presented her idea for a digital thesis archive called Stackz, a mashup of open-access publishing and social media, designed to make the vast amount of new knowledge generated each year by PhD and Masters students easily searchable and accessible to people around the world.

She conceived the idea for Stackz while writing her PhD thesis at Oxford University. “Millions of pieces of new knowledge are forgotten on library shelves each year – information that could help solve larger problems. Why reinvent the wheel when we should be standing on each others' shoulders?”

Etmanski – one of six finalists, chosen from a field of 65 applicants from across Canada – wins tuition-free enrolment in Singularity University's 10-week Graduate Studies Program at the prestigious NASA Research Park in the heart of Silicon Valley, California, a prize with an estimated value of \$30,000 USD.

The other five finalists were:

- **Gavin Armstrong**, Guelph, Ont. – CEO of the Lucky Iron Fish™ Project, a simple, clinically proven, affordable solution to iron deficiency
- **Ruslan Dorfman**, Maple, Ont. – a molecular geneticist, founder and CEO of GeneYouIn Inc., developer of the personalized drug response database PillCheck
- **Oded Greemberg**, Montreal, Que. (currently residing in Haifa, Israel) – an innovation strategist with an IT solution to neutralize risks from asset-sharing transactions
- **Lily Jain**, Oakville, Ont. – a medical geneticist, integrative medicine practitioner and co-founder of the HealthBuddy medical device
- **Gord Stephen**, Ottawa, Ont. – a software developer with the goal of making energy efficiency investments easy, automatic and scalable

A panel of five distinguished judges evaluated each finalist for the ability to “think big,” unique use of technology, the scope of their idea and its ability to impact one million Canadians. The winning candidate was also required to show leadership qualities, tenacity, an ability to work with diverse teams, and be ready and eager to represent Canada at Singularity University.

The event was made possible with the support of the Ontario Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Employment; the University of Guelph; Miller Thomson; the City of Guelph; BDO Canada; Meridian Credit Union; Lumichrom; LifeLearn and other community partners.

“As Minister of Research and Innovation for the Province of Ontario, I applaud all participants and the winner of the Global Impact Competition hosted by Innovation Guelph,” said the Honourable Reza Moridi, Minister of Research and Innovation. “It's important to encourage the next generation of innovators and entrepreneurs to find solutions to real-world challenges. I would encourage this competition to continue on year after year so that not only Canada benefits but the world over as well. Congratulations!”

“Our inaugural Canadian competition was an inspiring showcase of innovative ideas and entrepreneurial energy,” said Dr. Adam Little, GIC Canada organizer and spokesperson, and an alumnus of Singularity University's 2013 Graduate Studies Program. “Congratulations to Tamara and all the finalists for sharing their ideas with us as a catalyst for the kind of game-changing innovation that is so necessary to drive prosperity and social wellbeing.”

“Innovation Guelph is proud to have hosted this transformative event in Canada for the first time,” said Dr. Jamie Doran, Chief Operating Officer of Innovation Guelph. “We thank the Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Employment and all our community partners for their generous support, and

look forward to building on the event's success in years to come.”

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The event winner and finalists will have the opportunity to participate at the OCE Discovery conference May 12-13 in Toronto.

The Global Impact Competition was created by Singularity University co-founders Dr. Ray Kurzweil and Dr. Peter Diamandis to address the grand challenges facing the world. The competitions serve as a platform to identify outstanding entrepreneurs, leaders, scientists and engineers who propose the most innovative project to positively impact one million people in their country or region in the next three to five years.

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