

EIT AWARDS 2018:

## EIT Health wins 3 of 5 top European awards for innovations to treat cancer, predict Alzheimer's and detect stroke risk

The scientist-CEO behind a ground-breaking treatment for cancer, and start-ups that screen for stroke risk and the likelihood of developing Alzheimer's, were winners as EIT Health nominees took three of the five EIT Awards at the 4 October 2018 INNOVEIT conference in Budapest. In all, five EIT Health nominees were among the finalists for the coveted awards recognising Europe's top innovators.



*From left: Laura Soucek, Ioannis Tarnanas, Bieke Van Gorp.*

The winner of the €50 000 **EIT Venture Award** was **Bieke Van Gorp**, Co-Founder and COO at Qompium. The company's [FibriCheck](#) app remotely screens for atrial fibrillation simply by having patients put their finger on the camera of their smartphone. More than 10 million in Europe suffer from atrial fibrillation, which can lead to heart failure, kidney problems and heart disease, though the first symptom is often a stroke. "The EIT community - especially EIT Health - has contributed tremendously to the success of FibriCheck as they helped us in optimising our story, defining go-to-market strategies, networking opportunities and meeting with stakeholders in the landscape," said Van Gorp, after receiving the award.

The winner of the €50 000 **EIT Innovators Award** was **Ioannis Tarnanas**, CSO for [Altoida](#), whose Alzheimer's Disease Prediction Service uses an iPad and diagnostic tools to forecast with an accuracy of more than 90% whether a person will develop Alzheimer's disease within six years. It is estimated that someone in the world develops Alzheimer's every three seconds [but only around 35% of sufferers are diagnosed](#). Early diagnosis allows personalised treatment to improve prognosis and quality of life. "This is probably the most significant award I have received in my career to-date," Ioannis said. "I am grateful for the recognition of the many years of hard work, determination and sacrifice required in going against the status quo and striving to achieve excellence."

The winner of the **EIT Public Award**, chosen from 38 nominees by the majority of more than 8 000 online voters, was **Laura Soucek**, the multiple award-winning founder and CEO of Peptomyc, which will soon go into clinical trials with its revolutionary treatment to inhibit the Myc protein that is present in cancer cells. The innovation holds out the possibility of a safe, effective means for treating most types of cancer, if not all, without the significant side-effects of current approaches. "The Public Award for me has been an absolute surprise and quite emotional: knowing that there are so many people out there supporting our

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project.” Soucek said. “Thanks to EIT Health for being with us at every step of this journey. Your support has been key to reach such a wonderful audience.”

Soucek was also one of three finalists for the EIT Woman Award. Another finalist for the EIT Woman Award was EIT Health’s second nominee, **Montse Vendrell**, whose pioneering leadership in life-science innovation includes establishing Spain’s first science park, bioincubator and biocluster, as well as helping establish EIT Health and co-founding **Alta Life Sciences** VC fund. EIT Health nominee **Tim Kaufmann** was a finalist for the Venture award that Van Gorp won. Kaufmann is CEO of **Enmodes**, a German-based producer of a “lung in a backpack”, which offers a long-term, passive lung substitute that pulmonary disease patients can carry around – improving their prognosis and quality of life, while also cutting healthcare costs dramatically.

The EIT Awards 2018 continue EIT Health’s strong performance at INNOVEIT, one of Europe’s leading events to promote innovation. Last year, EIT Health-supported innovators won three of the four EIT awards given [at INNOVEIT 2017](#).

“This recognition underlines the great work being done in the various activities EIT Health is running. I’m very proud of the achievements of our winners and congratulate them on their success,” said Jan-Philipp Beck, EIT Health CEO.

## More about the EIT Health winners of the 2018 EIT Awards

**Bieke Van Gorp**, Co-Founder & COO at Belgium-based Qompium, won the EIT Venture Award, which recognises successful entrepreneurial start-ups. Her company’s app FibrCheck lets users measure heart rhythm simply by placing their finger on the camera of their smartphone. The medically approved application can detect atrial fibrillation – a key warning sign of potential stroke – and other common arrhythmias in only 60 seconds.

Qompium received extensive support from EIT Health in terms of funding and recognition:

- EIT Health Head Start Grant for €50 000 prepared FibrCheck for market entry.
- Support in the EIT Health Product/Market Fit programme (worth €25 000) allowed FibrCheck to exploit international markets.
- Winner of the Digital Health category of the EIT Health European Health Catapult contest, an award that comes with European healthcare market advice, access to the extensive, international EIT Health network and a €20 000 grant.

*EIT Health Partners involved in FibrCheck:* Cap Digital, IMEC - Interuniversity Microelectronics Centre, RISE Research Institutes of Sweden.

*More information:* [www.eithealth.eu/awards-nominee-videos#FibrcheckVideo](http://www.eithealth.eu/awards-nominee-videos#FibrcheckVideo) (video) • [www.fibrcheck.com](http://www.fibrcheck.com) • [https://www.eithealth.eu/en\\_US/-/fibrcheck](https://www.eithealth.eu/en_US/-/fibrcheck)

**Ioannis Tarnanas**, CSO for Altoida, makers of the Alzheimer’s Disease Prediction Service (ADPS), won the EIT Innovators Award, which recognises developers of a product, service or process with a high potential for societal and economic impact. After a 10-minute test using an iPad, ADPS can tell if someone will develop Alzheimer’s disease within six years, with an accuracy of 94%. Early detection is important because it improves effectiveness of preventive measures. EIT Health support for ADPS has included:

- The extensive financial support and mentoring given to all EIT Health Innovation Projects.
- Networking and connecting to relevant ventures.

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- Pitching and material preparation support.
- Training to assist in administration and project management.

*EIT Health Partners involved in ADPS:* Consorci Institut d'Investigacions Biomèdiques August Pi i Sunyer (IDIBAPS), GMV Innovating Solutions, Trinity College Dublin and University of Barcelona.

*More information:* [www.eithealth.eu/awards-nominee-videos#ADPSVideo](http://www.eithealth.eu/awards-nominee-videos#ADPSVideo) (video) • <http://www.altoida.com/> • [https://www.eithealth.eu/en\\_US/-/alzheimer-s-disease-prediction-service](https://www.eithealth.eu/en_US/-/alzheimer-s-disease-prediction-service)

**Laura Soucek**, winner of the EIT Public Award, given on the basis of voting online and from the INNOVEIT audience, is founder and CEO of Peptomyc, a cancer treatment start-up supported by EIT Health. The treatment is scheduled for clinical trials that could mean the innovation will soon be available on the market. She raised €4 million in venture capital from within the EIT Health community and mentors women entrepreneurs under EIT Health's [WE Health programme](#). Soucek describes her company's innovation, which is based on her own innovative research: "Our peptides can inhibit a non-redundant, central engine for tumour progression and maintenance in most, if not all types of cancer. In contrast to standard therapies, inhibiting Myc selectively kills cancer cells without side effects in normal tissues."

*More information:* [www.eithealth.eu/awards-nominee-videos#LauraVideo](http://www.eithealth.eu/awards-nominee-videos#LauraVideo) (video) • <http://www.peptomyc.com/> • [https://www.eithealth.eu/en\\_US/-/peptomyc-s-l-](https://www.eithealth.eu/en_US/-/peptomyc-s-l-)

## About EIT and INNOVEIT

The EIT was created in 2008 to strengthen Europe's ability to innovate. The EIT is a unique EU initiative, the only one to fully integrate business, education and research. The Institute supports the development of dynamic pan-European partnerships between leading universities, research labs and companies. These are called Innovation Communities and each focuses on a specific global challenge.

[See an infographic with more information here.](#)

The first six Innovation Communities work to mitigate and adapt to climate change (EIT Climate-KIC), create sustainable sources of energy and increase its supply (EIT InnoEnergy), accelerate the digital transformation (EIT Digital), support healthier and longer living (EIT Health), provide sustainable and healthier food (EIT Food), and manage our planet's raw materials in an efficient, secure and sustainable way (EIT RawMaterials). Together with their leading partners, they offer a wide range of innovation and entrepreneurship activities. This includes education courses that combine technical skills with entrepreneurial ones, business creation and acceleration services, and running innovation driven research projects.

In December 2018, the EIT will select new Innovation Communities in the areas of urban mobility and added value manufacturing.

For more information visit [eit.europa.eu](http://eit.europa.eu)

### INNOVEIT

The EIT Awards are held during [INNOVEIT](#), the EIT's annual Innovation Forum, which celebrated the entrepreneurial and social achievements made by the EIT Community in its first 10 years by highlighting successful innovations and the teams that created them. INNOVEIT 2018 is designed to inspire a new generation of young professionals by facilitating personal contact with entrepreneurial role models and showcasing how the EIT can help develop entrepreneurial careers.

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## About EIT Health

EIT Health is a network of best-in-class health innovators backed by the EU. We collaborate across borders to deliver new solutions that can enable European citizens to live longer, healthier lives.

As Europeans tackle the challenge of increasing chronic diseases and multi-morbidity, and seek to realise the opportunities that technology offers to move beyond conventional approaches to treatment, prevention and healthy lifestyles, we need thought leaders, innovators and efficient ways to bring innovative healthcare solutions to market.

EIT Health addresses these needs. We connect all relevant healthcare players across European borders – making sure to include all sides of the “knowledge triangle”, so that innovation can happen at the intersection of research, education and business for the benefit of citizens.

*EIT Health: Together for healthy lives in Europe.*

For more information visit: <http://www.eithealth.eu/>

[Find out more about all the EIT Health nominees for the EIT Awards here.](#)

For photos from the INNNOVEIT event, visit: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/eiteu/albums>

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