UK innovator wins Expo Live grant to reduce loss of vital vaccines in remote environments

- Innovative cooling system ensures vaccines survive the last mile
- Ideabatic may get opportunity to showcase solutions at Expo 2020
- Third cycle of the grant open for submission until 2 December 2017

DUBAI, 2 October, 2017 – A London start-up that has developed an innovative cooling system to help prevent vaccines being spoiled in harsh environments has won an Expo Live grant from the organisers of the next World Expo, being held in Dubai in 2020.

Ideabatic tackles a critical problem health agencies face in transporting vaccines, which require a constantly cool environment to remain effective. Exposure to heat or humidity during the last stages of travel to remote locations often renders vaccines ineffective.

Using Ideabatic’s ‘smart box’, vaccines can be kept in ideal conditions for up to a week. It allows medical staff to extract vials individually without warm air affecting the others.

Expo Live’s grant will help Ideabatic to fine-tune prototypes and test them in the field.

Expo 2020 Dubai’s Expo Live programme has an allocation of USD 100 million to back projects that offer creative solutions to pressing challenges that impact people’s lives, or help preserve the world – or both. Organisers are looking for projects that would not reach their full potential without its support such as Ideabatic.

The programme will grant up to USD 100,000 per initiative for its Innovation Impact Grant Programme – to be made available incrementally depending on progress and results.

Kitty Liao, CEO and Founder of Ideabatic, said: “Currently, vaccines are mostly transported inside a simple ice box. But sometimes ice packs freeze and damage vaccines, while everytime you open the box to take out a vial, warm air floods in, exposing vaccines to damaging heat.

“This leads to between 20 and 50 percent of vaccines being spoiled during their journey.
“Our low-cost, smart alternative brings down the vaccine spoilage rate close to zero. This increases the effectiveness of vaccination programmes, leading to better quality health outcomes.

“Despite the potential for our solution, it has been challenging to raise money from investors to take it to the next level, mostly because we were at the pre-production stage. So I’m really excited that Ideabatic has won the grant and the support from Expo Live. I am even more excited for the chance to exhibit a proven product at the next World Expo in Dubai.”

World Expos, which trace their origins back to the 1851 Great Exhibition in London, have always celebrated the latest in innovation and technology.

The Expo Live programme was launched in January 2017, following a pilot phase last year. It aims to stimulate innovation that has a social benefit, by supporting winning projects with funding, business guidance and promotion. Successful applicants will also have the chance to showcase their work to many millions of visitors to Expo 2020 Dubai.

To date, the programme has attracted more than 1,100 applicants from 107 countries around the world. Following a rigorous evaluation process, which included live presentations in Dubai in August, 16 grantees from 14 countries have joined Expo Live’s community of Global Innovators. With these new members from the second cycle, the community now comprises 45 Expo Live Global Innovators from 30 countries.

Yousuf Caires, Vice President of Expo Live, said: "With between two and three million people each year succumbing to diseases that could have been prevented by vaccines, Ideabatic’s solution has the potential to impact millions of lives.

“They tackle a very specific but critical problem in the distribution of vaccines, which requires a much more effective but inexpensive alternative.

“We see innovation not as the process of generating ideas, but as the relentless commitment to solving a problem worth solving. It is the global innovators’ character, their drive and their reasons for choosing this path – the path of a change-maker – that earns them a place in our Expo Live family and the opportunity to inspire millions at Expo 2020 Dubai.”

The third cycle of the Innovation Impact Grant Programme is now open and will receive creative and innovative solutions to real life challenges by 2 December. Interested applicants with projects that generate social and environmental value and are in line with Expo 2020 Dubai’s subthemes of Opportunity, Mobility and Sustainability can find out more and apply at www.expo2020dubai.ae/expo-live.

Caires added: “We want to prove that innovation can come from anywhere, to everyone. If you have a solution that improves lives, we are here to listen and we are here to welcome you to our community of innovators.”

To find out more about the winning project visit: http://www.ideabatic.com/

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About Expo 2020
Expo 2020 Dubai is guided by the belief that innovation and progress are the result of people and ideas combining in new ways. Over the course of six months from October 2020, Expo aims to bring together hundreds of countries and millions of people to celebrate human ingenuity: ‘Connecting Minds; Creating the Future’.
• Between its opening day on 20 October 2020, and its close on 10 April 2021, we expect Expo to be visited by many millions of people.
• 70% of all visitors are expected to come from outside the UAE - the largest proportion of international visitors in Expo history.
• We aim to create and deliver an inclusive and global Expo with over 200 participants, including nations, multilateral organisations, businesses and educational institutions.
• Expo 2020 also has an ambitious volunteer programme, which aims to include more than 30,000 volunteers from a wide range of ages, nationalities and cultures and backgrounds.
• The Expo site covers a total of 4.38 sq. km, including a 2 sq. km gated area. It is located within the Dubai South District, adjacent to Al Maktoum International Airport.

Visit: www.expo2020dubai.ae

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About World Expos
In 1851 the Crystal Palace was the centrepiece of London’s Great Exhibition - the first World Expo. It celebrated the man-made industrial wonders of a rapidly changing world. Architecture, contents and a theme, ‘Industry of All Nations’, coalesced to create a big idea of nations meeting nations in shared technological and commercial progress. In more recent years, participants in World Expos, including governments, international organisations and companies, have gathered to promote their achievements, products, ideas, innovations, their national brand, and their nations as destinations for tourism, trade and investment.

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