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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Saint-Gobain rewards three start-ups at the 2015 NOVA Innovation Competition**

Saint-Gobain, the world leader in sustainable habitat, announced the name of the prizewinners of the NOVA Innovation Competition 2015 at the Greenbuild International Conference & Expo in Washington, D.C. (United States). This competition, organized by the NOVA External Venturing group, recognizes start-ups offering innovative solutions in the fields of building materials, energy efficiency, clean technology, integrated lighting solutions, construction services, and innovative materials and technologies.

The grand finale of the NOVA Innovation Competition culminated a year-long search for the most innovative start-ups. Eight finalists were selected from among an all-time record of 270 applicants coming from 37 countries and six continents. They fast-pitched their innovations to a prestigious jury composed of twelve Saint-Gobain executives representing global business management, corporate strategy, marketing and research and development. At the end of the jury's deliberations, the results were announced during the Greenbuild Expo by John Crowe, Senior Vice President of Compagnie de Saint-Gobain, General Delegate for North America, and President and CEO of CertainTeed Corporation; and Didier Roux, Vice President R&D and Innovation of Saint-Gobain. The prizes were awarded to the winners before a large number of visitors, in the presence of Roger Platt, President of the U.S. Green Building Council.

**10x Technology** and **Ecovative Design** are the cowinners of the NOVA Innovation Competition, each receiving a \$37,500 cash prize (about €35,000).

**10x Technology** (Illinois, United States) has developed a manufacturing platform that transforms basic materials into micro and nanostructured products. Its roll-to-roll process uses polymers, metals, and ceramics to obtain high value-added products used in the energy, medical, electronics, transportation, defense, and habitat markets for the differentiating properties they get from the surface structure. The US-based start-up, founded in 2004, is constantly exploring with its customers new potential applications, and proposes numerous micro-structured products including infra-red optical lenses, drug delivery devices, microfluidic systems for medical diagnostics, or films which, when applied to windows, help provide more daylight in tertiary buildings such as offices, schools or hospitals. *"We are innovators in the manufacturing field,"* stated Robert Pricone, CEO of 10x Technology. *Winning this award gives us the exposure we need to build 10x Technology into a global organization that will continue to improve the way we live."*

**Ecovative Design** (New York, United States) creates innovative biocomposite materials from agricultural byproducts and mushroom mycelium – a filamentous tissue that acts as an adhesive. Ecovative Design proposes an environmentally-friendly process, which doesn't use petroleum, chemicals, or toxic resins, with an LCA-verified impact, using renewable and cheap raw materials. The Ecovative product range includes foams and rigid products included in the composition of protective packaging, furniture and insulation. Also composed of chitin (the



biopolymer found in crab shells!), mycelium is naturally water- and fire-resistant and thermally stable. Such properties make Ecovative's technology a credible alternative to traditional foams and other synthetic materials. *"As Saint-Gobain celebrates its 350 years in business, Ecovative could bring a new material platform. With Saint-Gobain's prestige and recognition, and thanks to this prize, we will be able to take our technology the next step further, grow it larger and introduce it onto a market requiring a scale change,"* explains Gavin McIntyre, cofounder and Chief Scientist of Ecovative Design.

The third place award, and \$15,000 (about €14,000), went to **US Bionics**.

**US Bionics** (California, United States) develops robotic exoskeletons for medical and industrial markets. In the industrial market, these exoskeletons, or robotic systems, assist workers while they perform repetitive physical tasks and help reduce the amount of muscle strain experienced by the wearers. By reducing the risk of musculoskeletal injuries, US Bionics' exoskeletons help businesses make significant savings, while improving productivity and the quality of life for operators. The US-based start-up, founded in 2013, proposes low cost, ergonomic, highly-advanced exoskeletons that are able to withstand harsh environments, such as the MAX exoskeleton (or Modeular Agile eXoskeleton). It is composed of three modules that can be worn together or separately, for the three most common areas of work-related injury: the trunk, legs, and arms. Simple to use and to put on, these exoskeletons are particularly designed for operators in construction sites, shipbuilding facilities, assembly lines, distribution centers and delivery services. *"Our big opportunity is to be the first to integrate exoskeletons into the industrial setting. I think we really have the expertise to come in and help workers increase productivity and reduce the risk of injury. We think our devices will completely change the way that workers work,"* stated Homayoon Kazerooni, cofounder and CEO of US Bionics.

New to this 2015 edition was a fourth prize, the Saint-Gobain Community Award, presented to the start-up who received the most number of votes during an internal campaign open to Saint-Gobain employees all over the world. This \$10,000 prize (about €9,000) was also awarded to **US Bionics**, topping the polls, in addition to the third prize awarded by the jury.

The process of evaluating the applications to the Competition to narrow to the finalists competing at Greenbuild involved an external panel of experts, including Rick Fedrizzi, CEO and Founding Chair, U.S. Green Building Council, and CEO, Green Business Certification, Inc. *"Saint-Gobain's NOVA Innovation Competition is the perfect example of how business is using sustainability as an innovation platform,"* said Rick Fedrizzi. *"The quality of the submissions was significant, and the breadth and creativity of the ideas that are being pursued by the applicants are astonishing. The competition and the broader Greenbuild environment are great platforms to showcase them and the potential value they hold for the entire world. I congratulate the winners and thank Saint-Gobain for holding the grand finale at Greenbuild, with the USGBC."*

In addition to these awards, all participants in the NOVA Innovation Competition will have the opportunity to establish potential partnerships with Saint-Gobain's businesses as part of co-development, licensing or collaboration agreements.

*"For 350 years, Saint-Gobain has grown through innovation, pushing back boundaries and inventing new solutions to transform the world we live in. Today, Saint-Gobain is one of the world's top 100 innovative businesses. In this anniversary year, with the NOVA Competition, we are well and truly focused on the future and delighted to honor these promising start-ups,"* stated Didier Roux, Vice President R&D and Innovation of Saint-Gobain.



### **ABOUT SAINT-GOBAIN**

*In 2015, Saint-Gobain is celebrating its 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary, 350 reasons to believe in the future. Backed by its experience and its capacity to continuously innovate, Saint-Gobain, the world leader in the habitat and construction market, designs, manufactures and distributes high-performance and building materials providing innovative solutions to the challenges of growth, energy efficiency and environmental protection. With 2014 sales of €38.3 billion\*, Saint-Gobain operates in 66 countries and has more than 170,000 employees. For more information about Saint-Gobain, visit [www.saint-gobain.com](http://www.saint-gobain.com) and the twitter account @saintgobain or download the “Saint-Gobain Shareholder” application for tablet and smartphone.*

*\*restated excluding Verallia*

### **ABOUT NOVA EXTERNAL VENTURING**

*NOVA External Venturing is the Saint-Gobain team in charge of identifying and evaluating start-ups with a view to making mutually beneficial, long-term development partnerships with the Group’s activities. They combine Saint-Gobain’s marketing, manufacturing and R&D resources with the freshest ideas in construction and advanced materials. Since NOVA was set up in 2006, over 2,900 start-ups have been screened and more than 70 partnerships signed. These partnerships can take various forms: co-development, licensing, manufacturing or commercial agreements, investments, joint-ventures. For more information about Saint-Gobain’s NOVA External Venturing team, please visit [www.nova-saint-gobain.com](http://www.nova-saint-gobain.com).*

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