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## P R E S S   R E L E A S E

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October 28, 2015

### **Saint-Gobain announces the eight finalists of NOVA Innovation Competition 2015**

*The Competition final will be held on November 18, 2015 during the Greenbuild International Conference & Expo in Washington, D.C. (United States)*

Saint-Gobain, the world leader in sustainable habitat, announced yesterday the names of the eight start-up companies selected as the finalists of the 2015 NOVA Innovation Competition. Launched this January and sponsored by the NOVA External Venturing group, the Competition offers winners prizes totaling \$100,000.

Out of 270 applications from 37 countries, spanning six continents, the eight finalists were announced by Minas Apelian, Director of NOVA and Vice President R&D for the North-American subsidiary CertainTeed, at an event dedicated to Innovation and organized by Saint-Gobain in Paris, Place de la Concorde, as part of its 350th anniversary celebrations.

Established in 2008 by NOVA External Venturing, Saint-Gobain's international team dedicated to facilitating partnerships between Group Activities and innovative young companies, the Innovation Competition is designed to reward start-ups from all over the world proposing innovative solutions with applications in the markets served by Saint-Gobain.

The eight finalists are start-ups at varying stages of development, founded between 2004 and 2013, and span diverse segments of the building construction, high-performance materials, energy efficiency and sustainable development market segments.

**10x Technology (Libertyville, Illinois, USA)** – Production of high value-added micro-structured and nanostructured materials, notably polymers, for medical, energy, electronics, transportation, defense or habitat markets.

**Alumina Energy (Santa Monica, California, USA)** – Modular, reliable and cost-efficient packed bed thermal energy storage (PB-TES) technology, compatible with renewable or fossil fuel-based energy systems.

**Bitfinder (San Francisco, California, USA)** – Smart home air quality monitor, which provides customized recommendations and can be connected to other objects in the house to create an optimum indoor environment.

**Ecovative Design (Green Island, New York, USA)** – Processing agricultural and biological products into biocomposite foam materials used especially for packaging and insulation.



**In'Air Solutions (Strasbourg, France)** – Solution for analyzing air quality and material emissions via a precise, reliable and fast tool for measuring chemical indoor air pollutants, particularly formaldehyde or VOCs.

**Melodea (Rehovot, Israel)** – Process for the extraction of NCC (Nano Crystalline Cellulose) from industrial or agricultural waste and assembling into composites materials, in particular foams and films, for a wide variety of industrial applications.

**Q-Bot (London, UK)** – Design and manufacturing of robots that apply insulation to floors and walls, upgrading buildings and enhancing the thermal comfort of their occupants.

**U.S. Bionics (Berkeley, California, USA)** – Modular exoskeleton systems which help operators to perform physical tasks, particularly designed for construction industries.

These eight finalists were selected through a multiple-phased judging process. The evaluators consisted of internal experts from the NOVA team together with representatives of the Group's different businesses, as well as five external industry experts: Rick Fedrizzi (USA), CEO and Founding Chairman of US Green Building Council; Cheryl Martin (USA), CEO of Harwich Partners and former Director of the Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (US Department of Energy); Emily Reichert (USA), CEO of Greentown Labs; Patrick Sheehan (UK), Managing Partner and Co-founder of Environmental Technologies Fund; and Lei Yang (China), Managing Director of Northern Light Venture Capital.

The finalists will present their innovations in the form of a "fast pitch" session at the Greenbuild International Conference & Expo in Washington, D.C. (United States) on November 18 before a panel of judges composed of Saint-Gobain senior executives. The three winners will be awarded cash prizes of \$50,000, \$25,000 and \$15,000, respectively, in prize money. A new feature of this year's competition is the "Saint-Gobain Community Award," a fourth prize worth \$10,000 that will be awarded to the finalist winning the most votes during an internal Saint-Gobain worldwide employee campaign. This campaign will run from today until November 13, 2015. In addition to the cash prizes and publicity, the NOVA team will evaluate all finalists and, more broadly, all applicants for potential partnerships, based on development and R&D, commercial, distribution and manufacturing agreements, or for taking equity interests.

*"NOVA organised an excellent global competition, which I enjoyed helping with as a judge. The number and quality of entrants was impressive, and I expect a number of them to do well, not just the winners!"* said Patrick Sheehan of Environmental Technologies Fund.

*"The success of the NOVA Competition illustrates our ability to detect innovative start-ups in the world of construction, advanced materials and sustainable development, and proves how well Saint-Gobain is perceived in the start-up ecosystem all over the world. We look forward to working together with these promising entrepreneurs,"* concludes Pierre-André de Chalendar, Chairman & Chief Executive Officer of Saint-Gobain.

To see videos about the eight finalists and obtain more information about the NOVA Innovation Competition, visit [www.nova-saint-gobain.com](http://www.nova-saint-gobain.com).



### **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 €41 billion, Saint-Gobain operates in 66 countries and has over 180,000 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.*

### **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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