

THE INNOVATION HUB LAUNCHES THREE NEW GAP INNOVATION COMPETITIONS FOR THE ICT, GREEN AND MEDICAL SECTORS

Pretoria, Thursday 12 September 2012 - The Gauteng Accelerator Programme (GAP), a portfolio of high profile innovation competitions, launched three new initiatives for researchers and entrepreneurs in the information and communication technology (ICT), green economy and medical sectors on 9 September 2013.

The competitions are being hosted by The Innovation Hub Management Company, a subsidiary of the Gauteng Growth and Development Agency (GGDA), which is an agency of the Gauteng Department of Economic Development (DED).

GAP is an expanded version of what previously used to be called the Gauteng Innovation Competition and GAP Biosciences programme which, over the past three years, attracted more than 300 entries. Over R3 million has also been invested in the past in seed funding and incubation support into 13 startups in the ICT, green economy and biotechnology sectors. This year, The Innovation Hub has launched four competitions under the GAP umbrella targeted at the green economy, ICT, medical and biosciences sectors.

The GGDA's CEO Mr Sipiwe Ngwenya says *"the GAP competitions are a key element of our provincial economic and innovation strategies which aim to improve the lives of the majority of our citizens by addressing social challenges in more efficient and cost effective ways. At the same time the GAP initiatives and incubation services provided by The Innovation Hub are supporting the identification and development of new technology companies and innovations as important job creators for the region."*

According to McLean Sibanda, The Innovation Hub CEO, *"by consolidating our innovation competitions under the GAP brand we aim to expand their impact and reach new researchers and entrepreneurs across the Gauteng province. GAP is designed with sustainability in commercialization and implementation in mind through close links to our incubators and the involvement of our industry and government partners in the campaign and adjudication process. In this way, we are able to effectively close the 'gap' between idea and market. The winning*

entries will be chosen based on the innovativeness of their approach, commercial prospects, and potential for positive social impact including prospects for improved service delivery by government.”

GAP-Green is run in collaboration with the Gauteng Climate Innovation Centre, an initiative of The Innovation Hub modeled on the World Bank clean technology incubator programme. It seeks emerging entrepreneurs developing green technology solutions related to energy security, water management, waste and sanitation, sustainable mobility and food security.

GAP-ICT aims to identify researchers and entrepreneurs working on ICT-based solutions to our country's biggest challenges, from mobile applications used in classrooms to geo-spatial technologies for environmental and disaster management. GAP-ICT is a joint initiative with mLab Southern Africa, a leading mobile applications laboratory also based at The Innovation Hub, who will host a competition hackathon in November 2013.

The GAP-Medical: Health Innovation Challenge is a partnership with the organisers of the World Innovation Day to be held in Geneva in 2014 and is focused on identifying and nurturing health innovations that will contribute to the improvement of health service delivery within public hospitals.

The final competition, GAP-Biosciences, which was launched earlier this year in April is run in collaboration with Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia and is a unique programme that assists scientists and entrepreneurs to pursue commercially viable opportunities for their cutting edge biosciences technologies.

GAP-Green, GAP-ICT and GAP-Medical all opened on 9 September and close on 13 October 2013. GAP Biosciences opened in April and closed for entries in June 2013. The combined GAP awards ceremony for the four competitions will be held on 6 December 2013 in Tshwane to announce at least 12 new innovators to join The Innovation Hub's specialised product and business incubation programmes, with services valued at more than R1 million and financial support in the form of cash awards and seed funding totalling more than R2 million.

For competition details visit www.theinnovationhub.com/gap

Issued by The Innovation Hub Management Company. For more information, please contact Linah Nematandani, Communication and Marketing Manager on lnematandani@theinnovationhub.com, alternatively call 012 844 0030 or 076 717 9878, follow us on twitter @InnovHub and please like us on Facebook InnovHubZA.

About the GGDA

The Gauteng Growth and Development Agency (GGDA), previously known as Blue IQ and GEDA, is a merged entity by the Gauteng Department of Economic Development (GDED). GGDA is the implementation arm of the GDED and assists the department in leading, facilitating and managing sustainable job creation and inclusive economic growth and development in the Gauteng City Region. For more information on GGDA, please contact Mr Stephen Watson, Executive: Group Marketing, Communications and Strategic Promotions on + (27) 83 380 3359.

About The Innovation Hub

The Innovation Hub, a subsidiary of the Gauteng Growth and Development Agency (GGDA) is Africa's first internationally accredited Science Park and a full member of the International Association of Science Parks (IASP). It is strategically located in Tshwane, South Africa's executive capital in the 'smart' province of Gauteng. As the leading knowledge-intensive business cluster in South Africa, The Innovation Hub implements initiatives identified in the Gauteng Innovation and Knowledge Economy Strategy and Green Economy strategy to advance the economic development and growth of the province through innovation. The Innovation Hub has created a unique space for high-tech entrepreneurs, world-class businesses, academics, researchers and venture capitalists to meet, network and prosper.

For more information visit www.theinnovationhub.com
