



PRESS RELEASE
Innovation and Entrepreneurship Healthcare Competition
“SFEE Innovation Project”

Applications accepted until November 1, 2013

Tuesday, 1 October 2013 – With the motto **“Rewarding Innovation, Promoting Health”**, the **Hellenic Association of Pharmaceutical Companies (SFEE)**, in collaboration with the **Industry Disruptors – Game Changers (ID-GC)**, held a Press Conference to launch its competition **“SFEE Innovation Project”** aimed to identify innovative proposals in the field of the healthcare sector. More specifically, **SFEE will reward the most mature and innovative business plans that will be judged as the most likely to succeed.** Awards include a financial prize of **EUR 50,000 for the first three winners** and a programme involving strategic and business development mentoring and consulting, access to education/training and R&D centers and networking for the transfer of know-how and skills. This will become possible through close cooperation with SFEE’s member companies, as well as through the entrepreneurial ecosystem tools available from the ID-GC.

The event was attended by the **Deputy Minister of Development and Competitiveness, Mr. Thanasis Skordas**, who stated: *“The two notions, Innovation and Healthcare, are virtually synonyms. Efforts to ensure high-quality healthcare services are pointless without scientific breakthroughs as a result of innovative methods and without the diffusion of such achievements to the market so that all of our fellow citizens can reap the benefits. In my view, this initiative of SFEE proves that the industry has now realized in what direction it should search for its future. Investment in innovation and technology will enable medicinal products and healthcare services in general to compete for a significant share in the international market, which is something the country needs badly”*. The **Deputy Minister of Health, Mr Antonis Bezas**, stated: *“This is a new approach to entrepreneurship in the healthcare sector. Economic growth will come about through improvements in productivity, which cannot be achieved without promoting innovation. We, at the Ministry of Health, have finalized our strategy under the new NSRF, including a programme to promote smart specialisation and innovation”*.

The competition is open to natural persons or teams of natural persons, or legal persons of any form. Some possible areas of focus for the proposals to be submitted are the following: prognostic and diagnostic tools; regenerative medicine; evaluation and utilization of new therapeutic substances; technologies, methodologies and measurements; medicine administration systems; biotechnology; bio-electronic systems; computer-aided imaging and robotic devices; identification of molecular mechanisms of pathogenesis and new therapeutic



targets; bio-informatics; telemedicine (e-/m-health), artificial organs; nanomedicine; geriatrics, etc. **The closing date is November 1.** The detailed terms and conditions of the competition are available at: <http://innovationproject.gr/site/>.

Representing a sector which is a key driver of growth for the Greek economy and with innovation lying at its heart, SFEE seeks to actively support ground-breaking ideas and ensure that applied research and innovative solutions can translate into viable start-ups in the Greek healthcare sector.

This initiative is part of SFEE's Corporate Social Responsibility Programme. In a period of crisis for the Greek economy and society, the healthcare sector is not only a crucial factor of social cohesion but also an area of opportunities to implement to a "new growth model", one that will rely on innovation, export orientation, focus on sectors having competitive advantages, high added value, tapping into domestic research and highly-qualified human capital.

"Greece's current effort to bring about the recovery of its economy poses a major challenge to us all, in particular the pharmaceutical sector. We respond to this challenge by actively helping to support innovative proposals coming from young and talented people; in so doing, we also convey the message that our country can and must utilize both its available pool of brilliant scientists and their innovative ideas, as a ground for tomorrow's business activity that will provide impetus to growth and boost competitiveness in our country", noted the President of SFEE, **Mr. Konstantinos Frouzis**, before going on to point out that *"Pharmaceutical companies know the importance of innovation for growth and added value, especially in the sensitive sector of healthcare, and we could not but actively support health researchers and scientists, helping them to put their ideas into practice in Greece. After all, innovation is our raison d'être; it is in the DNA of R&D-intensive companies and is the cornerstone of the pharmaceutical market. What we seek to do is reward innovation, while at the same time promoting health!"*

The **founding member of Industry Disruptors - Game Changers, Michalis Stangos**, added that, *"At a time when youth unemployment is soaring to unprecedented levels, the partnership between ID – GC and SFEE aspires to establish a new entrepreneurial ecosystem and thereby provide a new impetus and a vision for the young generation. We are very happy for SFEE's confidence in our work and we pledge to honor this confidence by fostering the economy's recovery, competitiveness and export orientation"*.

Members of the Jury

The Jury brings together distinguished personalities with expertise in the fields of innovation, development and entrepreneurship, from various sectors of activity such as business, healthcare, technology and applications, investment, start-ups, etc. The Jury will be chaired by the President of SFEE, **Mr Konstantinos Frouzis**, while its members include: **Mr Simos Anastasopoulos**, President of the American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce; **Prof. Georgios**

Doukidis, Director of the E-Business Research Center (ELTRUN), Athens University of Economics and Business; **Mr Konstantinos Evripidis**, President of the Hellenic Entrepreneurship Club, Vice-President of SFEE and Managing Director of Genesis; **Mr Vasileios Katsos**, Secretary-General of the Panhellenic Union of Pharmaceutical Industries (PEF), Managing Director of Pharmathen; **Mr Haris Kyriazis**, Executive Vice-President of the Federation of Enterprises (SEV); **Mr Odysseas Kyriakopoulos**, President of the Foundation for Economic and Industrial Research (IOBE/FEIR); **Mr Antonis Kyrkos**, Senior Partner of McKinsey & Company; **Mr Konstantinos Lambrinopoulos**, Chairman of the Board of the Hellenic Management Association and 1st Vice-President of the Entrepreneurship Club; **Ms Varvara Baroutsou**, Coordinator of SFEE's Medical Directors Committee, Medical Director of Sanofi; **Mr Konstantinos Panagoulas**, Vice-President of SFEE, Chairman of the Development and Added Value Committee of SFEE and Vice-Chairman of the Board of Vianex; **Mr Sotiris Symakezis**, General Manager of the Piraeus Bank Group; **Mr Nikos Tripodis**, Corporate Strategy Director of Novartis Group Switzerland, **Mr Mikhail Karim** Vice-Chairman of the Board and Managing Director of MSD Greece, Cyprus and Malta; **Mr Erik Nordkamp**, Chairman of the Pharma Innovation Forum (PIF), President and Managing Director of Pfizer; and **Mr Alexander Zehnder**, General Manager of Roche.

Key points of the competition

- The “SFEE Innovation Project” is designed to identify the best innovative ideas, already formulated as concrete business plans in the individual categories of the healthcare sector.
- The competition is open to natural persons or teams of natural persons, or newly-established legal persons of any form. Participants will be required to have legal ownership of the proposal, i.e. the business plan, they submit.
- A Jury composed of distinguished personalities with international experience in key sectors of the economy (Business, Health, Technology and Applications, Investment and Start-ups) will evaluate all the proposals after the closing of the application period. The final winners will be announced in a public awards ceremony, as part of activities in the context of the Global Entrepreneurship Week in late November 2013.

As a priority under the “SFEE Innovation Project”, the proposals and ideas to be selected will benefit from cooperation and networking opportunities, in Greece and abroad, among researchers, young entrepreneurs, innovation centers, large enterprises and members of the investment community.

The competition is **under the auspices** of the Ministry of Development and Competitiveness and the Ministry of Health.

Statements by the Jury Members

Simos Anastasopoulos, President of the American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce:

“This competition is SFEE’s response and participation to the national call upon the business world to join forces in the effort to foster economic recovery and growth, competitiveness and export-orientation and to effectively implement the new growth model that the country has chosen for itself. It is also a concrete answer to all those who rush to undermine the country’s and the healthcare sector’s attempt for structural reform and fiscal consolidation, thereby hastily prejudging the country’s future.”

Konstantinos Evripidis, President of the Hellenic Entrepreneurship Club, Vice-President of SFEE and Managing Director of Genesis:

“By this initiative we aspire to actively support Greek entrepreneurship in the healthcare sector, as we firmly believe that this country does not lack ideas, but rather opportunities to translate these ideas into action. We therefore aim to support Greek scientists, helping them to apply their ground-breaking ideas and providing them with concrete solutions so that they can put their business plans into practice”.

Sotiris Syrmakazis, General Manager of the Piraeus Bank Group:

“We, at Piraeus Bank, place emphasis on innovation, as shown by our activity in e-banking. We have also invested in entrepreneurship through the funds PJ Jeremie Tech Catalyst and TANEQ.”

Vasileios Katsos, Secretary-General of the Panhellenic Union of Pharmaceutical Industries (PEF):

I personally believe that this competition is a golden opportunity for Greece to avoid a brain drain. In periods of disorientation and crisis like the one we are currently going through, we all need a compass to navigate by, that is a common vision, a shared commitment to specific goals and the means to achieve them. We need to adopt a forward-looking approach as an essential element of our existence and our actions. We need to work today for tomorrow.”

Erik Nordkamp, Chairman of the Pharma Innovation Forum (PIF), President and Managing Director of Pfizer:

“I hope that this initiative will act as a catalyst for us to start thinking of innovative opportunities and make innovation an integral part of our culture.”

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