

Future Planet Capital press release: Tuesday 23rd May 2017



Ethical venture capital firm channels investment to the world's best minds to help solve the biggest issues facing the planet

- *Future Planet Capital, a university venture fund, is connecting some of the world's biggest investors to start-ups who are tackling our most entrenched problems.*
- *The investment platform works with institutional investors, like sovereign wealth funds and pension funds, and directs it into innovative start-ups in top universities.*
- *The firm's network includes world-leading university funds, such as Oxford, Cambridge, Harvard, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and Tsinghua University, one of China's biggest higher education establishments.*
- *Founded less than two years ago, Future Planet Capital has already worked with major investors Oman Investment Fund and the Royal Berkshire Pensions Fund to help raise £100million in investment.*
- *All of Future Planet Capital's investments have to be both commercially viable and address one of the world's five biggest challenges: climate change, health, sustainability, education, or security.*

Today, Future Planet Capital hosted an inaugural awards ceremony honouring the best start-ups across five categories at the Global Corporate Venturing Symposium.

The overall winner, PragmatIC, was picked by a judging panel chaired by world-renowned architect Lord Foster, with other panel members including education reformer Lord Nat Wei, Patrick Chung, founding partner of Xfund, Nick Greenwood, Fund Manager, Royal County of Berkshire Pension Fund and Jim Wilkinson, CEO, Oxford Sciences Innovation.

Future Planet Capital's ambition is to bring together the brightest and the best into one community – connecting investors, start-ups and academics – with the end goal of proving that impact investing can still deliver good returns, both commercially and ethically.

At today's ceremony, five shortlisted winners pitched to win the overall Future Planet Capital Award in front of a premier audience of leading influencers and investors. The prize includes substantial publicity, potential investment and introductions to investors, mentors and the wider Future Planet Capital global network.

Cardiff-based Sure Chill – winner of the ‘Health’ award – is a new cooling technology capable of running for 10 hours off the mains electricity grid, which has benefits both in helping transport vaccines in the developing world and for use by supermarkets.

Alphabet Energy – winner of the ‘Climate Change’ award – traps wasted heat energy, saving money and reducing emissions. The San Francisco-based start-up already has contracts with car giant General Motors and global oil firms Saudi Aramco and Schlumberger.

Bluepha – winner of the ‘Sustainability’ award – is a synthetic biological and biomaterial company, producing eco-friendly plastic. With global plastics production standing at over 300 million tons a year and more than 99% of plastics made from non-renewable fossil fuels, the market for Bluepha to tap into is vast.

SAM Labs – winner of the ‘Education’ award – produces app-enabled construction kits that let kids use the power of technology to build their own inventions. The start-up is already an official partner of Microsoft Education and Lego of the Future.

PragmatIC – winner of the ‘Security’ award – develops ultra-low cost flexible electronics: interactive ‘smart objects’ that are thinner than a human hair. These can have a massive impact on the packaging of FMCG products and tracing of security documents.

Future Planet Capital is now looking to forge new links with investors and innovators from Asia and North America, capitalising on Britain’s unique position as a technology and start-up hub and as a fantastic example of the government’s ‘Global Britain’ narrative.

Douglas Hansen-Luke, executive chairman at Future Planet Capital, said:

“As arguably the world’s first global university venture fund, our strategic partnerships with seven leading universities across three continents ensure broad access to exciting and innovative new businesses. Given our stellar network of start-ups at this year’s inaugural awards, we can prove that impact drives returns.

“I’m excited about the potential of Bluepha, SureChill, Alphabet, PragmatIC and SAM Labs, who are all providing clever and commercial solutions to some of the greatest global challenges. I’m delighted to announce PragmatIC as the overall winner – we will undoubtedly hear more about them in the months to come.”

Lord Norman Foster, chair of the Future Planet Capital Awards, said:

“Today’s Future Planet Awards demonstrate that ethical and commercial success are not mutually exclusive. Whilst today’s winners are all trying to solve different problems, from climate change to plastic waste, they are united by one thing: all are trying to solve tomorrow’s problems today.

“I am proud to support those companies offering smart solutions to some of our greatest global challenges. What today’s awards demonstrate is the potential for an ecosystem of research, investment and innovation that we will all ultimately benefit from.”

Scott White, CEO of PragmatIC said:

“PragmatIC is delighted to be named as the overall winner of the Future Planet Awards. Our ultra-low-cost, thin and flexible integrated circuits (ICs) are the ideal solution for embedding intelligence into everyday items, enhancing the security of everything from consumer goods to banknotes. We see this award as a recognition of the uniqueness and broad applicability of our technology.”

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Notes to Editor:

About Future Planet Capital / <https://futureplanetcapital.com/>

Future Planet Capital is the world's foremost global innovation investment platform. Through a unique series of partnerships with top-tier university funds in Asia, Europe and the US, the firm possesses an unrivalled level of access to technology and life science companies from academic institutions and the "clusters of innovation" that surround them.

Their mission is not simply to deliver excellent returns but to create a lasting impact: by connecting the world's largest investors with its best minds, they believe they can address the greatest challenges that humanity faces today across climate change, education, health, security and sustainable growth.

The Future Planet Fund has been designed in close conjunction with sophisticated investors in order to provide multi-stage access to start-ups, spin-outs and growing companies, at a scale large enough to suit major sovereign wealth funds and similar institutions.

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