

Design Health Barcelona celebrates first graduating class in healthcare innovation

- The program has identified nearly 1200 new ideas and business opportunities for hospitals, research centers and R+D companies in Catalonia
- Biocat will provide scholarships that cover up to 25% of tuition to the Fellows of the second edition of the program, which will begin next September
- An online platform to make Barcelona the first cardioprotected city in the world; a system to reduce the excessive noise in neonatal units and a device for combating constipation in patients with spinal cord injuries are the three innovations developed by the Fellows of the first edition of the program

Barcelona, May 30th 2014 -. The twelve students of the first class of [Design Health Barcelona](#) (**d-HEALTH Barcelona**), the program to promote healthcare innovation developed by [Biocat](#), graduated yesterday at a ceremony held at the [Parc Científic de Barcelona](#).

Montserrat Vendrell, CEO of **Biocat** and of the **Parc Científic de Barcelona** said during the inaugural speech that "*Design Health Barcelona is a program that was created a year ago to meet the current need of experts that can foster innovation and entrepreneurship in the biomedical field. Today we can say that we have succeeded because the first class of fellows has acquired the tools to be successful entrepreneurs.*"

d-HEALTH Barcelona is the first training course in biodesign taught in Spain. Rated by [Health StartUp Europe](#) as one of the most impressive accelerators emerged in Europe, at **d-HEALTH Barcelona**, unmet medical needs identified during a clinical immersion in top hospitals in Barcelona are the basis for innovations that respond to the demands of society.

"*Healthcare is, nowadays, the most attractive sector, the one that provides more business opportunities*" said **Jorge Juan Fernández**, Head of Academics and E-Health & Health 2.0 Director at Hospital Sant Joan de Déu at the beginning of his speech. He shared with the audience the results of the first edition of **d-HEALTH Barcelona**, in which fellows have identified nearly 1200 unmet needs in the [Hospital Clínic](#), [Hospital Sant Joan de Déu](#) and [Institut Guttmann](#), the three clinical settings that are collaborators of the program.

"15% of these needs represent improvement opportunities for hospitals. 25% require new scientific breakthrough prior to become real business opportunities, ie they

promote scientific research. 20% are ideas to improve already existing products and the remaining 40% are clinical needs that really provide new business opportunities” said **Jorge Juan Fernández**.

Afterwards, the three teams of Fellows presented their projects. The first one, formed by designer **Roger Benet**, engineer **Alfred Ramirez**, entrepreneurial background **Lalis Fontcuberta** and bioengineer **Mateu Pla** introduced ACTUA, an online platform to reduce the number of sudden deaths from cardiac arrest. The project aims to create a community of people capable of assisting patients who suffer a cardiac arrest before they arrive to the hospital. ACTUA, which will be implemented in Barcelona and later it will extend into other cities, will contribute to make Barcelona the first cardioprotected city in the world.

The second d-HEALTH Barcelona team, comprised by engineers **Mattia Bosio** and **Arnau Valls**, biologist **Marc Rabaza** and businesswoman **Susan Feitoza**, introduced KOCCON, a system to deal with the excessive noise in neonatal units that can damage preemies’ health. Babies at intensive care units can suffer up to eight times more noise than a term newborn.

Finally, the group formed by biologists **Markus Wilhelms** and **Inmaculada Herrero**, engineer **Àngel Calzada** and designer **Marc Benet** presented USMIMA, a device to reduce chronic constipation in people with spinal cord injuries. The intestinal dysfunction, as a result of the lack of propulsion in the colon, is a serious medical and social problem that affects many patients with spinal cord injuries and negatively impacts their quality of life. The tool developed by the Fellows is a non-drug, non-invasive and with no side-effects solution.

After the presentations and prior to the diplomas, serial entrepreneur **Julio Garcia**, who is the Director of [KSchool](#) in Catalonia, gave the last lecture of the program. He reminded the students that *"you are dealing with health, something vital but also very beautiful"* and advised them to, *"whatever you do in the future, do it with trespass, disruption and perseverance."*

Graduation Day marks the end of the academic program. However, over the next months, the three teams of Fellows will have to continue working on their projects and building prototypes to present them to an international panel of investors in September. Then they will start their own path and pass the baton to the second batch of Fellows.

Biocat is currently evaluating the applications received to join the next edition of **Design Health Barcelona**. Those students who are selected will also receive a scholarship that covers up to 25% of tuition.

d-HEALTH Barcelona is the flagship program of [Biocat](#)'s [Moebio](#) initiative to promote entrepreneurship and to respond to the current challenges in the healthcare sector. It is aligned with the Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs), a consortium of European research centers, enterprises and higher education institutions that work all together to develop innovative projects. The KIC is the instrument of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) to transform ideas and knowledge into value by developing new products and services that have an economic impact on society.

MORE INFORMATION

Biocat:

Press Office · press@moebio.org

Zuberoa Marcos · 686 575 178

Mònica López · 657 985 544

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