



Biotopia, a project for the recovery of marine biodiversity, wins the sixth imaginPlanet Challenge

- ***The project develops fabricated marine biotopes partly made with recycled materials to promote the regeneration of coastal ecosystems and the recovery of marine biodiversity***
- ***Yiyan Zhou QI, Eric Lee and Yuren Zhou QI, of the IE Business School, UPC and University of Surrey, are promoting this initiative and will enjoy a stay in Silicon Valley working on their project and visiting companies such as Netflix, Google HQ, Instagram, HP, and IDEO among others***
- ***More than 6,500 students from all over Spain took part in the sixth edition of the programme, organized by imagin to promote entrepreneurial ideas capable of generating a positive impact on the planet and on people***

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Biotopia, the project by Yiyan Zhou QI, Eric Lee and Yuren Zhou QI, of the IE Business School, the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (UPC) and the University of Surrey, was the winner of the sixth imaginPlanet Challenge. The programme sponsored by imagin, CaixaBank's digital banking for young people, is aimed at university students or Vocational Training centre students from 16 years old interested in developing enterprise ideas with environmental or social impact.

Through this initiative, imagin offers training and tools to a young generation with an environmental and social conscience and entrepreneurial interests, so that they can develop projects capable of generating a positive impact on the planet and on people.

Biotopia develops fabricated marine biotopes partly made with recycled materials to promote the regeneration of coastal ecosystems and the recovery of marine biodiversity. Their proposal includes monitoring via artificial intelligence, which allows them to analyse the evolution of the environment, measure the environmental impact and optimize the management of these spaces in real-time. With this combination of circular economy, ecological restoration and advanced technology, Biotopia promotes more sustainable solutions for the protection and conservation of the marine environment.



Yiyan Zhou QI is a student of the double degree in Industrial Electronic and Automatic Engineering + Mechanics in the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya; Eric Lee is studying a BBA (Bachelor of Business Administration) in IE Business School in Madrid; and Yuren Zhou QI studied the double degree in Business Administration and International Business Management at the University of Surrey. The three will enjoy a stay in Silicon Valley, specifically in Imagine Creativity Center, the innovation centre directed by the entrepreneur Xavier Verdager. Members of the winning team will participate in a 10-day incubation programme for their project; will visit companies such as Netflix, Google HQ, Instagram, HP, IDEO and more; and will receive training from the universities of Stanford and Berkeley.

The promoters of Biotopia also will be part of the Alumni community, through which imagin continues to support the growth of the projects that have been part of the imaginPlanet Challenge, and which all the participating teams linked to the programme can follow. This alumni community allows imagin to continue supporting the development of the projects, promote participants' future careers and foster interaction between all players involved in the imaginPlanet Challenge.

More than 17,500 participants in the past five Challenges

Biotopia was chosen as the winner in this year's Challenge from the 925 participating teams, which included more than 6,500 young people. The projects in the finals were:

- **myMOF**, a team formed by students of the University of Seville, the Universidad Europea of Madrid, the Autonomous University of Madrid and the University of Málaga, which develops intelligent textile solutions for the security and management of uniforms in the health sector.
- **BioSoil**, from the Universitat Politècnica de València (UPV), contributes to the regeneration of land and to improvements in plant nutrition, offering a precise and sustainable alternative for agriculture.
- **BioMeat**, a project formed by students from the Juan Martín El Empecinado Secondary School in Aranda de Duero (Burgos), develops cultivated meat through the culture of muscular cells from animals as a sustainable alternative to conventional meat production.
- **Fun-Ghi**, a team from the Universidad Politécnica de Cartagena, transforms complex textile residues, such as postconsumer denim, into sustainable biomaterials with industrial applications using the controlled cultivation of fungi.
- **Eskalium**, an initiative by students from Nebrija Torre de Hércules (A Coruña),



creates and markets ecological tiles made from recycled fish scales, transforming residues from the fishing industry into sustainable building materials.

- **VOL**, a team of students from the Universidad de La Rioja, connects young people with opportunities to carry out voluntary work supported by associations and for their own communities, providing access to participatory social experience with positive impact.
- **UVE**, from the Venancio Blanco Secondary School (Salamanca), brings sustainability to football by transforming habits such as recycling inside stadiums or car sharing to go to the match into actual rewards for fans.
- **Modulact**, formed by students from the Complutense University of Madrid, transforms whey, a by-product of the food industry, into raw material for the production of PLA, a renewable bioplastic.
- **Bio-LOOP**, a team from the University of Navarra, looks to reduce the use of plastics in hospitals by substituting polypropylene materials for bioplastics in the PHA family, obtained from cultivated bacteria.

More than 17,500 young people have participated throughout the six editions of the programme while in this latest Challenge the number of teams grew by nearly 50%, with the volume of registrations increasing by 62.5%.

imagin, leading digital bank for young people

imagin is the leading digital bank for young people in Spain, developed by CaixaBank with a clear purpose to create positive impact in society. The bank offers digital, financial and non-financial services, that help its more than 4 million clients, mainly young people under 35 years old, in their daily life and in their future projects.

From a banking perspective, imagin offers a complete range of banking products and services, unique among neobanks, that meet and adapt to all the financial needs and decisions of young people. The catalogue includes accounts, payment services and fee-free cards that make young people's daily financial activities easier. In addition, imagin offers a wide range of financing products, such as mortgages and loans, as well as investment options like funds and a stock trading platform. All of this with *mobile-only* transactions that have characterized imagin since it launched in 2016 and which are complemented with CaixaBank's network of branches and ATMs.

In recent years, the platform has successfully connected, in an innovative way, with the concerns of its user community through its app, and has developed initiatives involving, for



example, financial education for young people and entrepreneurship.