

Edinburgh students awarded grant for development of digital technology



A team of University of Edinburgh students has been awarded a £5000 grant to develop a team-sourcing technology platform to encourage students with differing skill levels to connect with each other across campus to collaborate on extra-curricular projects.

If successful, the resulting prototype will be rolled out to other universities and colleges across the UK.

Jisc, the UK's leading consultants for the use of digital technologies in education and research, awarded the grant as part of their 'Summer of Student Innovation' fund. This initiative challenged students to pitch "bottom-up", technology-based ideas aimed at improving education and innovation in universities. The programme was immensely popular, attracting 36 entries, 6,500 student votes and 550 tweets.

The winning University of Edinburgh team consists of Caroline Nguyen (MA Social Anthropology with Development), Ben Jeffrey (MA Informatics), Maria Alecu (Msc Informatics) and Anoushka Sivaraman (BA Architecture).

The students will spend the next three months building and In September, Jisc will require them to test the prototype amongst other universities and colleges across the UK involved in the pilot.

Caroline Nguyen, Team Member, said:- “We’re extremely excited and appreciative to have been chosen by Jisc to receive the grant. LAUNCH.ed has been stunning – they’ve delivered the support we needed to bring our idea from its initial conception back in November, to where it is today. Being recognised by Jisc’s fund is indicative of all the hard work put in by everyone who supported us.”

Paul Devlin, Student Company Formation Manager for LAUNCH.ed at Research and Innovation, commented; “We are delighted to see this problem being addressed, especially by such a cross disciplinary team. We were able to provide early stage support and look forward to seeing idea becoming a reality. The impact it could have on bringing together better teams is very promising for company formation at this university and hopefully across many other organisations.”

John Shemilt, director of ICT at Imperial College and “Summer of Student Innovation” Project Organiser, commented; “Improving the student experience is widely recognised as one of the most important strategic drivers for universities and colleges. We strongly believe that students should have a prime role in developing novel ways to improve their learning experience.”