

Ozone is Business of the Year at annual Napier University 'Bright Red Sparks' awards

An initiative of Edinburgh Napier's Bright Red Triangle enterprise hub, the annual Bright Red Sparks Awards saw students, staff and alumni within five years of graduation compete across five categories for business coaching and more than £20,000 in cash prizes.

Ozone, founded by Edinburgh Napier Business School student James Bruce, won first prize in the Business of the Year category. Its colourful apparel is developed with sustainability in mind, from initial resources to final products. This includes the sustainable sourcing of materials, carbon offsetting, fully compostable and recyclable packaging, and an ethically accredited supply chain.

Shortlisted enterprises across all five categories were assessed for everything from the viability of their ideas and clarity of planning to potential for growth. Business of the Year this year replaced the Going for Growth category, with 11 successful applicants participating in an intensive accelerator programme of three three-day sprints over a seven-week period. Each participant in the category received £1000, with judges Lindsey McArthur, Relationship Manager at Santander Universities UK, and Dr Rosemary Allford, Lecturer in Entrepreneurship at Edinburgh Napier, deciding how to split a further prize pool of £7000 following an online pitching session.

The big award for businesses or rigorously tested business ideas with global growth potential – 'Business of the Year' (£11,000 plus £7000 prize pool) – went to James Bruce's Ozone, which scooped £3000 from the prize pool, as well as the £1000

which went to all 11 ventures which successfully applied to participate in the category. The judges made further prize pool awards to second prize winner Matthew Porter's skate equipment enterprise Ogle Skate (£2000) and joint third prize winners Kat Kuritcina and Jason Shields' Top Trend Blend Coffee and Dr Abdelfateh Kerrouche's Autonomous Robot for collecting data from underwater surveys. (£1000 each from the prize pool)

Other category winners were Product design graduate Kat Pohorecka came top in 'Bright Ideas' (£1000), School of Computing graduate Viana Maya won 'Business for Good' (£1000), School of Engineering graduate Adam Al-khateb came top in the category 'Freelancer of the Year' (£1000) and the 'Enterprising Educators' (£1000) award went to Maggie Anderson, for Edinburgh Napier staff who get students involved in enterprise activities





Nick Fannin, Head of Enterprise at Edinburgh Napier, said: "Bright Red Sparks shines a light on all of the enterprising students, staff, and alumni from Edinburgh Napier University and recognises their hard work, determination, and outstanding achievements."

“This year we wanted to provide more guided support for as many entrepreneurs as possible, and so we put them through three deep-dive bootcamps to find our Business of the Year.

“The remaining four categories saw impressive early-stage business ideas, ambitious freelancers, social entrepreneurs, and our very own Edinburgh Napier educators who support our students to develop their enterprise skills.

“We couldn’t have done it without the amazing support from Santander Universities. From all of us at Edinburgh Napier and our entrepreneurs, thank you.”

Lindsey McArthur, Relationship Manager, Santander Universities UK, said: “Through the Universities programme, Santander is committed to supporting entrepreneurs and student start-ups.

“We have supported the Bright Red Triangle at Edinburgh Napier for a number of years and I am always impressed by the standard of the businesses taking part as well as the commitment, passion and hard work demonstrated by the students involved.

“A huge well done to the winners this year, a fantastic achievement. I look forward to hearing updates as your businesses grow and wish you all the very best for the future.”