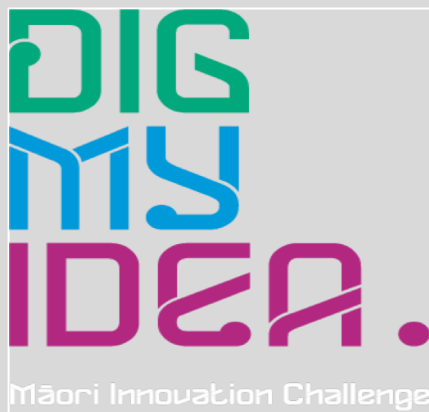


MEDIA RELEASE

8 May 2017

DIGMYIDEA Māori Innovation Challenge finalists announced



RELEASE SUMMARY

- Ten finalists have been announced in the DIGMYIDEA Māori Innovation Challenge which aims to encourage more Māori into the technology sector
- Finalists will compete at DIGIwānanga, a mentoring workshop on the weekend of 13-14 May as part of Techweek'17
- The winners of two categories will be announced at an awards ceremony on 14 May and will win \$10,000 of business support to take their ideas to the next level.

A group of budding Māori digital entrepreneurs have been selected as finalists in the DIGMYIDEA Māori Innovation Challenge which aims to stimulate interest and involvement of Māori in New Zealand's innovation ecosystem.

Ten ideas – submitted either by individuals or teams of up to five people – have been selected in two categories, mauri tū (26 years and over) and mauri oho (15-25 year olds). The finalists are:

Mauri tu: open category

<i>Name/Team Leader</i>	<i>Entry</i>	<i>Region</i>
Rawiri Pakinga (Team)	MaraEye	Rotorua
Adele Sauer (Team)	SeeCom	Hamilton
Ataria Sharman (Team)	Wā	Porirua
Lauren Graham (Team)	Aroha & Ako	Auckland
Louisa Browne (Individual)	BAC Face	Auckland

Mauri oho: youth category

<i>Name/Team Leader</i>	<i>Entry</i>	<i>Region</i>
Hone Douglas (Individual)	Drone Patrol	Whakatane
Madeleine de Young (Team)	Encounter	Ōtaki
Nicole Calderwood (Individual)	Scholar+	Hamilton
Perry Preston (Individual)	Critters	Tauranga
Renata Te Nana (Team)	Native BnB	Whangarei

Mike Taitoko – a DIGMYIDEA Māori Innovation Challenge judge, Managing Director of technology company Waiora Pacific, and an Auckland Tourism, Events and Economic Development (ATEED) board member – says finalists submitted a broad range of ideas.

“These ranged from tourism applications to tertiary education ideas, and gaming and language concepts. One thing many of the applications had in common was the use of technology to improve the lives of whanau, rather than just producing another app,” he says.

Mike Taitoko says: “It’s vital that we work to encourage more Māori into the thriving technology and innovation sector and build capacity by encouraging more involvement through initiatives such as the DIGMYIDEA Māori Innovation Challenge.”

Taitoko is one of four DIGMYIDEA Māori Innovation Challenge judges, Maru Nihoniho, founder and managing director of game development company, Metia Interactive, Robett Hollis, digital entrepreneur and founder of ColabNZ and Aranui Ventures, and Lillian Grace, founder and CEO of Figure.NZ, an organisation that empowers New Zealanders to make better decisions with the help of data.

Patrick McVeigh, ATEED General Manager Business Innovation and Skills, says finalists will take part in a weekend mentoring workshop, known as a DIGIwānanga, on 13-14 May, as part of Techweek’17.

“After mentoring sessions to further develop their entries, finalists will pitch their ideas to the judges. The overall winner in each category will be announced at an awards ceremony on Sunday, 14 May, with the prize being business start-up assistance to help commercialise their ideas, to the Value of \$10,000,” he says.

DIGMYIDEA is designed and delivered by ATEED with support from He Kai Kei Aku Ringa (HKAR); a Crown-Māori Economic Growth Partnership, Callaghan Innovation; the government’s business innovation agency; Te Wānanga o Aotearoa; a wānanga (an indigenous tertiary education provider) in New Zealand, New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE), the government’s international business development agency; and Poutama Trust; an independent charitable trust.

NOTES TO EDITOR

- ATEED is responsible for delivering the Whai Rawa – Māori economic wellbeing work stream of Auckland Council’s Te Toa Takitini initiative, which is a top-down approach to significantly lift Māori economic, social and cultural well-being across the region.
- DIGMYIDEA is open to all Māori residing in Aotearoa/New Zealand.
- The challenge can be entered by individuals, or as a team of up to five people. All entrants must reside in in Aotearoa/New Zealand.
- Teams are required to enter the age category based on the age of the oldest team member at the time of the competition launch date (20.02.2017). Teams with non-Māori can participate as long as the team lead is of Māori descent and resides in Aotearoa/New Zealand.
- Techweek’17 is a nationwide programme of events spanning next generation technology, designs and innovations. DIGMYDIEA forms part of the Techweek’17 programme with the two overall category winners announced on 14 May.
- For more details on Techweek’17 visit www.techweek.co.nz
- A short video of Māori entrepreneurs and mentors can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j1ZmgvuYef4>
- A series of DIGMYIDEA animated videos have been developed. You can access this footage via the links below:
 - Full animation video - <https://youtu.be/ZUKzEiERwxQ>
 - Teaser 1 (Innovation) - <https://youtu.be/3npHdfPZRmU>
 - Teaser 2 (Nurturing Ideas) - <https://youtu.be/9jZcfyPu6H0>
- Teaser 3 (Prizes) - https://youtu.be/DnORDq_WtAk
- For further information visit www.digmyidea.nz.





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About us: Auckland Tourism, Events and Economic Development (ATEED) is the economic growth agency for the Auckland region and is one of six Auckland Council-controlled organisations (CCOs). ATEED is tasked with driving innovation and transforming the local economy, so that Auckland is a desirable place to visit, live, work, play, invest and do business.