



PRESS-KIT 2024

10 years of supporting circular startups

One of the biggest challenges humanity is facing today is the drain on natural resources by conventional consumer industries – and the immense amount of waste caused by disposable items.

Therefore, in 2014, Landbell Group CEO Jan Patrick Schulz started an experiment: The Green Alley Award, an annual prize promoting startups in the circular economy, was born.

This experiment became the first startup prize of its kind, attracting more than 1600 applications from over 30 different countries facilitating numerous circular economy innovations for a more sustainable world without waste.

What inspired Landbell Group to dare this venture was an urge to find alternatives and new solutions for the waste challenges the company was dealing with every day.

Diving into the world of startups and entrepreneurship seemed to be a great way to help realise ideas that make the most efficient use of resources and reduce waste drastically.

On this mission, Landbell Group came across the startup TerraCycle, a US-based company that offered a whole new way of collecting and recycling difficult waste streams, and brought their business model to the German market.

Here is why Landbell Group invests in startups: to establish an economy that uses resources in a sustainable way needs true innovators and lateral thinkers – like Tom Szaky, CEO of TerraCycle – who dare challenge established processes, offer sustainable alternatives, and convince consumers to follow suit.



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Key Facts

The Green Alley Award's mission is to turn the linear into a circular economy, 'where the value of products, materials and resources is maintained in the economy for as long as possible, and the generation of waste minimised' (EU Action Plan for the Circular Economy).

Prize



Expert coaching



Networking



25,000 € cash for the winner

Topics



Recycling



Waste prevention



Digital Circular Economy

Figures

54

successful finalists

>30

countries

>1600

applications

>1,2m

€ investment

9

years of experience

Partners

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Questions & Answers

Which criteria are considered by the jury in the selection process?

The business idea must contribute to a circular economy and present an innovative and convincing solution; the startup must have a clear and valid revenue model; the team should have the expertise or be aware of where they can get the knowledge needed to grow the business; and the business must stand out from competitors.

The winner of the Green Alley Award will be chosen by a jury on the basis of two different aspects: the business idea and the live pitch on stage. In addition to the criteria mentioned above, the jury will consider the overall presentation: was it convincing? Could the team transport the entrepreneurial spirit? Were they confident while presenting and could they explain their idea well?

Who can apply?

All circular economy startups based in Europe are welcome to apply. Their product, service or technology should contribute to building a circular economy by using digital circular economy solutions, recycling solutions or ideas for waste prevention. Landbell Group is looking for startups with a developed product, service or technology preparing their market entrance or starting to grow their customer base in Europe. The business should not be older than five years.

What does the application have to contain?

Applying for the Green Alley Award is a two-step process: First, startups have to fill out an application form with various questions concerning their business model. Second, applicants have to upload a customized pitch deck presenting their business idea. To increase chances, startups should follow the application guidelines.

We recommend not to send a standardized pitch deck, but to tailor it based on our guidelines instead. Information should be kept short and simple, including facts, figures and clear examples. Applications need to be submitted in English.



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The Partners

The Initiator

In 1995, Landbell Group began as a waste management service provider in Germany. Today, we're an international one-stop shop for takeback and recycling services. Landbell Group is the leading provider of services and consulting for environmental and chemical compliance. From national or international takeback schemes to consulting services or software solutions all under one roof.

www.landbell-group.com



The Partner

Positive News is the magazine for good journalism about the good things that are happening. When much of the media is full of doom and gloom, instead Positive News is the first media organisation in the world that is dedicated to quality, independent reporting about what's going right. As a magazine and a movement, it is changing the news for good.

www.positive.news

Seedmatch is the first platform for equity-based crowd-funding in businesses in Germany. Starting with investments as low as 250 euros, both private and institutional investors can invest in companies online free of charge and reap the benefits from their economic success. Seedmatch is always looking for new, exciting and trendsetting businesses with financial needs.

www.seedmatch.de

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SEEDMATCH

Since 2014, more partners have joined, who all share our vision of a circular economy. Their expertise in turning small businesses into successful ventures helps us create a great learning experience for all.



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Past Winners



Winner 2023: S.Lab

The Ukrainian startup developed an alternative to EPS material and a truly green packaging solution. Made from agricultural waste - mycelium roots - and hemp stems, their packaging is therefore 100% biodegradable and waterproof. Their plan for a green planet is to build small factories with a closed-loop automated.



Winner 2022: Voltfang

The startup developed an environmentally-friendly and cost-efficient energy storage system made of used electric vehicle batteries. The batteries are thus given a second life and provide companies with a sustainable, affordable, and long-term solution to saving their energy.



Winner 2021: traceless materials

Using a special technology, the Startup founded by two women transforms waste from the agricultural industry into a sustainable alternative to single-use plastics. The all-natural material is not only completely bio-based, but can also be composted within two to six weeks in your organic waste at home.



Winner 2019: Gelatex Technologies

In 2019, Gelatex Technologies won the Green Alley Award for their sustainable leather alternative. Today, the Estonian startup is renowned for a patented novel high-capacity solution-spinning method and device for nanofiber manufacturing to innovate cultured meat, tissue engineering, and many other industries. The material comes in rolls, is easily scalable, and is up to 90% cheaper than current nanofibrous materials.



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Winner 2018: Aeropowder

Feathers are natural miracles. But their obvious beauty and lightness are accompanied by useful properties: They are strong, lightweight and thermally insulating. British startup Aeropowder harnessed these properties to create a sustainable alternative to conventional insulation materials like polystyrene used for the huge amount of deliveries every day.



Winner 2017: Sulapac

In 2014, over 160 kilograms of packaging waste was generated per inhabitant in the EU, most of which was plastic. As an alternative, the Finnish startup Sulapac has invented a premium eco-packaging made from wood and natural adhesives. This packaging is 100 % biodegradable, while still maintaining the waterproof and impermeable advantages of plastic.



Winner 2016: Green City Solutions

Green City Solutions invented CityTree, a solar powered installation consisting of moss cultures that filters the air in cities. Their solution is based on the idea of combining nature with digital technology. The natural ability of living moss to filter fine dust, bind climate-damaging greenhouse gases and cool the ambient air is utilised. The interaction of sensors, intelligent ventilation, irrigation and software increases the natural purification capacity of moss and makes it usable and measurable.



Winner 2015: Adaptavate

Adaptavate is an UK based company which developed a product called Breathaboard, an eco-friendly alternative to plasterboard. The Breathaboard paneling is made of 75 percent agricultural waste and regulates moisture in buildings. This innovative company is rethinking and redesigning the way building materials are produced, used and disposed of by innovating and designing low-carbon construction products for healthy buildings and inhabitants.



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Winner 2014: RePack

The Finnish startup Repack offers an easy way for online retailers to reduce the amount of packaging waste: They can use RePack's returnable packaging service including a customer reward system and swap any disposable shipping box for a reusable packaging solution. These shipping bags are made of recycled materials and can be reused up to 20 times. The empty packaging can then be return free of charge by mail and the customer receives a reward for returning the packaging.

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