



**AMERICAN
UNIVERSITY
OF BEIRUT**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

10 Startups compete at the 4th American University of Beirut “President’s Innovation Challenge”

The American University of Beirut hosted the fourth edition of its highly anticipated President’s Innovation Challenge at the Beirut Digital District. The event showcased groundbreaking ideas and solutions developed by some of the brightest minds, all vying for the prestigious awards.

“This forum not only showcases groundbreaking ideas, but is a rallying call; it is urging talents to surface, creativity to unfold, optimism to grow, and transformative research to take center stage in ways that can be practically impactful,” said Dr. Fadlo Khuri, president of the American University of Beirut.

The challenge yearly gathers startups from the AUB community – including students, staff, faculty members, and alumni – with innovative ideas that can be developed into a scalable and financially sustainable business model, which in turn can have a considerable impact on people’s lives and well-being.

“The President's Innovation Challenge is not just a competition; it's a call to action, an invitation to our community’s brilliant minds to contribute transformative solutions to the world's most pressing challenges,” said Dr. Yousif Asfour, American University of Beirut’s chief innovation and transformation officer.

119 applicants with great ideas competed, which were narrowed down to the 10 finalists who pitched on the final day. The process was made up of two selection stages, involving expert judges, as well as the help of L2C Partners, AUB's innovation partner in the US. Since June, the participating startups had gone through a rigorous capacity-building process and extensive mentorship before arriving at this final stage.

The startups competed in 4 areas this year: Healthtech, social innovation, artificial intelligence, and Web3. The drill consisted of the usual 3-minute pitch, followed by a Q&A session with the jury.

The Advanced Stage Award, worth \$30,000, went to DOODA Solutions, a woman-led earthworm farm dedicated revolutionizing sustainable agriculture by harnessing the power of earthworms. The Early-Stage Award, worth \$15,000, went to LUXEED, who offer a herbicide-free approach to weed control.

The Chinyeh Hostler Award for Social Innovation worth \$10,000, went to Parency, a platform that consolidates professionals in the fields of perinatal and parental care.

As for The People's Choice Award, where the public got to vote for their favorite team, the award went to Dekenet AI Ness: a concept that redefines grocery shopping for a sustainable future

All winners will benefit from incubation as well as mentorship support at the Talal and Madiha Zein AUB Innovation Park.

Other finalists included HeatechsLB, an eco-friendly heating and cooling product; Spreadly, a producer of all-natural nut-based sweet spreads; Dona Leb, seamlessly blending fitness, employee engagement, and social impact; Dox, a battery test planning platform; Optomate, an A.I. powered solution for early detection of eye disease; and Sense BNP, for accurate and rapid detection of heart failure.

ENDS

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Note to Editors

About AUB

Founded in 1866, the American University of Beirut bases its educational philosophy, standards, and practices on the American liberal arts model of higher education. A teaching-centered research university, AUB has more than 800 full-time faculty members and a student body of over 8000 students. AUB currently offers more than 120 programs leading to bachelor's, master's, MD, and PhD degrees. It provides medical education and training to students from throughout the region at its Medical Center that includes a full-service 365-bed hospital.

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