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News from the LIFE Incubator
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South Yorkshire's LIFE Incubator Is The Prize As Powergen Challenges Britain's Garden Shed Inventors To Invent Next Big Energy Innovation

- £50,000 worth of business assistance is prize to help energy efficient invention into production

South Yorkshire's LIFE Incubator, the world's first business cluster programme dedicated to the development of low carbon and renewable energy technology, is the top prize in a major new search for Britain's next big thing in energy efficiency.

The competition, launched on Tuesday 18 July by Powergen along with inventor Trevor Baylis and TV recycling expert Dick Strawbridge, will see the winner work with the LIFE incubator – a state-of-the-art support service for the development of clean energy technologies – and receive a package worth up to £50,000 of support and advice to help get their idea into production.

The LIFE team has already worked on the development of new energy businesses valued at £300+ million.

The initiative, brainchild of energy company Powergen, part of E.ON, hopes to draw entries from all corners of the country, from potting shed inventors to entrepreneurs, from pensioners to students.

Dave Clarke from E.ON's Power Technology centre of innovation and research, said: "We know there's an army of amateur inventors in Britain - we already get hundreds of them writing into us with clever ideas on energy saving devices – and now we want to tap into that.

"Powergen EnergyLab will give them a chance to be judged by some of the best people in the business and to potentially see their big idea become a reality."

Bright ideas can be submitted via www.powergenenergylab.co.uk.

Philip Johnson, chief executive of the LIFE incubator, said:

"This competition offers the winner the very best route to market for their new energy product.

“By working with the LIFE team the winner will have direct access to capital, to build a business that will be the future of the energy sector, and to a whole team of experts: the best engineers, designers, research establishments, marketing, legal and financial advisors.”

Regional heats will be held in Birmingham, Cambridge, Cardiff and Gateshead during November where entrants will have the opportunity to present their ideas and prototypes to a panel of experts. In early December regional winners will go head to head in the grand final in London.

Trevor Baylis said: “I’ve spent a large part of my life developing energy efficient inventions – from the wind up radio to the mobile phone charging shoe.

“Now it’s time for me to help find the next generation of great green inventors. I’m looking forward to seeing what the great British public comes up with – and to working with Powergen to see the idea in production.”

Dick Strawbridge said: “At our house we’re always trying to find ways to live greener – that’s why I’m working with Powergen to find the inventions that could change my life - and yours.”

The Powergen EnergyLab panel will be made up of a number of industry experts renowned for their commitment to energy efficiency and passion for finding innovative ways of reducing carbon emissions:

Trevor Baylis - Inventor of the wind-up radio;

Dick Strawbridge - BBC2 It’s Not Easy Being Green;

Philip Johnson from LIFE-IC - Europe’s only business incubator dedicated to early-stage clean technology businesses;

Dave Clarke from Power Technology, part of E.ON;

Helen Merrick from Powergen, part of E.ON - the world’s largest private electricity and gas company.

For further information and entry details go to www.powergenenergylab.co.uk

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