

MEDIA RELEASE

Alexandrina Council celebrates the success of the inaugural Alexandrina Innovation Challenge

27 October 2021

There is so much to celebrate and admire about Alexandrina's inaugural Innovation Challenge, which was designed to showcase local community innovators.

On Wednesday 27 October, the Alexandrina Innovation Challenge Pitch Event held at Centenary Hall was a true showcase of the diverse opportunities and presence of talented, local innovators within the region. From a lifelong inventor; to an energetic high school student and seasoned business professionals presenting ideas ranging from tourism, retail, tech and health and wellbeing were presented in a 'shark tank' style pitch event.

Inspiring on all levels, from the quality pitches, to guest speaker Leigh Warren, General Manager, Bleasdale who shared his entrepreneurial journey to a captivated audience. Panellists Paul Daly of Wheelhouse Innovation Agency, Verity Kingsmill of Flinders New Venture Institute and serial entrepreneur and investor Geoff Rohrsheim provided their valuable and expert feedback following each pitch.

The enthusiasm for the 2022 program was expressed by participants, sponsors and industry partners. Alexandrina Council is leading the way in establishing a community led innovation ecosystem.

Award recipients include:

- Furthest, Fastest Award (selected by program facilitators Matt Anderson and Paul Daly)
Winner: **Chris Wilson, Stress Science**
- Community Choice Award (live audience vote)
Winner: **Kalani Bates, Activate Alexandrina**
- Pitch I'd Back Award (selected by the judging panel)
Winner: **Fiona Burrow, Local Food Co.**

Glenn Rappensberg was exciting to witness the initial idea via video submission in April that grew into exciting and promising business propositions.

“Some ideas changed completely, while others became stronger and more viable as the program progressed. I can’t wait to see these individuals gain momentum and thrive in the Alexandrina region,” he said.

Mayor Keith Parkes further commented it will be exciting to see what the 2022 program will bring. There really are no limits to the ideas, industries and individuals that can enter.

One of the Challenge participants, Chris Wilson said that “the Alexandrina Innovation Challenge has accelerated my business from an idea on paper to a ready to launch product within a few months. Having a group that you are accountable to and the real world experience of pitching your ideas to a panel motivates you to do better.”

Image:



2021 'First Wave' Alexandrina Innovation Challenge participants L-R: Fiona Burrow, Ruth Mitchell, Frances Rennell, Steph Wheaton, Vicki Mau, Kalani Bates, Ben Hewett, Will Miller, Tom Roder, Chris Wilson.

For enquires regarding the publication of this article contact;

Communications Adviser

Phone: 8555 7000

Email: communications@alexandrina.sa.gov.au