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## CONNECT ANNOUNCES FINALISTS FOR 2017 MOST INNOVATIVE NEW PRODUCT AWARDS

*Thirty-three San Diego companies selected as finalists for 30th annual award*

**SAN DIEGO** (September 14, 2017) – Today, CONNECT, a premier innovation company accelerator in San Diego that creates and scales great companies in the technology and life sciences sectors, announced the 33 finalists for the 30th annual Most Innovative New Product Awards (<http://www.connect.org/events/MIP2017>). The prestigious awards ceremony is a CONNECT signature event, held annually, that honors San Diego's stars of innovation along with their newly launched groundbreaking products. As part of the 30th anniversary celebration CONNECT will present the 2017 Hall of Fame Award to Jay Flatley (<http://www.connect.org/blog/jay-flatley-executive-chairman-illumina-selected-2017-inductee-connect-entrepreneur-hall-fame>), Executive Chairman of Illumina, the Duane Roth Distinguished Contribution Awards for Life Science and Technology, and the CONNECT Founders' Award.

"We're thrilled to be celebrating our 30th year of celebrating the life-altering products and services that are being created in San Diego," said Greg McKee, President & CEO of CONNECT. "These companies are raising the bar of our flourishing innovation economy and continuing to grow San Diego's presence on the international stage as a hub of successful life science and tech companies."

There were nearly 100 submissions into this year's Most Innovative New Product Awards across 10 categories: Cleantech, Sustainability, and Energy; Defense, Aerospace, and Transportation; Information Communications Technologies; Life Science Diagnostics and Research Tools; Life Science Products, Clinical Stage; Medical Devices; Robotics and Unmanned Vehicles; Software and Digital Media; Mobile Apps; and Sport and Active Lifestyle Technologies. The field was evaluated by a series of expert judging panels in late August, from which 33 were selected as finalists.

Listed below, in their respective categories and alphabetized by company name, are the 2017 Most Innovative New Product Award finalists:

### **Cleantech, Sustainability, and Energy**

- Amionx (<http://www.amionx.com>) - **SafeCore**. SafeCore prevents a lithium-ion battery from being the source of fire or an explosion; adds minimal cost to the bill of materials of a battery and requires no increased capital cost or cycle time in a factory. Amionx is licensing SafeCore for use in lithium-ion batteries globally.
- Grolltex (<http://www.grolltex.com>) - **Grolltex Graphene**. Graphene is a next generation electronic material that will enable many amazing use cases such as flexible electronics, instant charging batteries and salt water desalination.

- Orison (<http://www.orison.com>) - **Orison Tower and Panel**. Orison energy storage is the first self-installable, lightweight, low cost, scalable, indoor home battery system. It is designed to provide all electricity consumers with control and security over their energy, savings and backup power, while contributing to a self-healing, efficient energy grid.

## Defense, Aerospace, and Transportation

- Cubic (<http://www.cubic.com>) - **Immersive Virtual Shipboard Environment (IVSE)**. The IVSE is a high-fidelity, physics-based, 3D replica of two fully functional ships. It contains spaces, systems, equipment, technical documents, instructions and tools necessary to familiarize sailors with their prospective watch-stations. The IVSE trains to qualify and certify sailors by replicating on-the-job training in a structured and repeatable process.
- Cubic (<http://www.cubic.com>) - **Virtual Ticket Agent**. The Cubic Virtual Ticket Agent is an innovative hybrid of a virtual walk-up ticket office, video-linked call center and ticket vending machine, which helps public transit agencies decrease or eliminate the need for a full-ticket office.
- Fabric8Labs (<http://www.Fabric8Labs.com>) - **ECAM**. Fabric8Labs' Electrochemical Additive Manufacturing (ECAM) process produces metal parts atom-by-atom, leading to high-quality parts with ideal surface finishes at a 10x lower cost compared to other 3D printing technologies, making ECAM the first metal additive manufacturing process capable of production volumes.
- Fuse Integration (<http://www.fuseintegration.com>) - **CORE**. CORE is a miniaturized networking system with embedded encryption and advanced cybersecurity. Ruggedized for military airworthiness, CORE provides tactical platforms with secure data communications across multiple domains. CORE enables flexible Command and Control (C2) and Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) functionality over IP networks.

## Information Communication Technologies

- Independa (<https://independa.com/>) - **AnyTV Companion**. Enables remote engagement and care for aging adults by integrating Independa's software across the TV and other everyday devices. Friends, family, and caregivers can remain connected even when remote, and messages, video chat, medication reminders, and more are accessible via the viewer's TV, no tablets, passwords, or special equipment required.
- Nextivity (<http://www.cel-fi.com>) - **Cel-Fi GO**. Cel-Fi GO improves cellular voice and data service by eliminating dead zones and dropped calls. Cel-Fi GO is NEMA 4 rated, and can be deployed in harsh environments, indoors or outdoors, for mobile or stationary applications.
- Smart Alto (<http://www.smartalto.com>) - **Ethan**. Smart Alto makes a text messaging robot that helps real estate agents respond to leads. Realtors use our SMS short code as their main contact number on all marketing outlets, including Facebook and yard signs. When leads text the number, Ethan starts a conversation, shares property pics and books appointments.

## Life Science Diagnostics & Research Tools

- Biocept (<http://www.biocept.com>) - **Liquid Biopsy PD-L1 Protein Expression Test**. PD-L1, an immunotherapeutic target, is identified using Biocept's liquid biopsy assay for circulating tumor cells (CTCs). CTCs are enriched and detected, targeting numerous tumor expressed cell surface antigens, in a microfluidic device, and PD-L1 is stained with a PD-L1 specific antibody quantified by a fluorescently labeled detection antibody.
- Illumina (<https://www.illumina.com/>) - **NovaSeq Series**. NovaSeq is the most powerful sequencer Illumina has ever launched. It was designed from the ground up to allow a broad set of researchers to access next-generation

sequencing technology and more easily conduct large-scale genomics projects with greater sample volumes, or more breadth and depth in the genome.

- StemoniX (<http://www.stemonix.com>) – **microHeart**. microHeart are biologically accurate beating heart micro-organs derived from stem cells created from skin cells. microHeart is used by major pharma for screening drugs for heart toxicity and efficacy to discover new cures and personalized medicine.
- TEGA Therapeutics (<https://www.tegetherapeutics.com/>) - **Recombinant Heparan Sulfate**. Heparan sulfate is a complex carbohydrate that influences mammalian physiology during development, homeostasis and pathology through its interaction with hundreds of binding proteins. TEGA recombinant heparan sulfate is a product derived from genetically engineered mammalian cells that replaces the low quality heparan sulfate that is currently available for researchers.

### Life Science Products (Clinical Stage)

- Poiesis Therapeutics (<http://poiesistherapeutics.com>) – **Novel Nanoparticle-based Medicines**. Biotechnology for pets - using data from innovative human drugs to efficiently bring better quality healthcare to the veterinary market.
- ViaCyte (<http://www.viacyte.com>) - **PEC-Direct**. PEC-Direct is intended as a functional cure for patients with high-risk type 1 diabetes. PEC-Direct product candidate is composed of stem cell-derived pancreatic progenitor cells contained within a subcutaneous implantable device. After implantation, the cells are expected to mature into the full complement of islet cells, including insulin-producing beta cells.
- Xycrobe Therapeutics (<http://www.xycrobe.com>) - **Xycrobe™**

**Microbioforming Kit.** Our Xycrobe™ (pronounced 'zī,krōb) microbioforming kits address the need of patients with inflammatory skin disease through the development of a library of “superhero” bacteria strains designed to be used as vehicles for delivery of therapeutics.

## Medical Devices

- GreatDef (<http://www.greatdef.com>) – **GreatDef.** GreatDef, the future of medical image management, uniquely captures the highest quality surgical images in the simplest, most-secure process at a fraction of the competitor's price.
- Quidel (<http://www.quidel.com>) - **Sofia 2.** Sofia 2 is a compact, benchtop analyzer that uses advanced fluorescence detection to rapidly test for diseases such as influenza and respiratory syncytial virus. Sofia 2 combines an easy-to-use interface, customizable settings, and Virena wireless connectivity to provide accurate, objective and automated results in as few as three minutes.
- TereoPneuma (<http://www.tereopneuma.com>) - **ReDe Mask.** The ReDe Mask is an oxygen facemask that provides a visual signal of a patient's exhalation. A universal three colored signaling system is used to indicate the respiratory rate; green indicates normal breathing, yellow alerts to potential breathing problems, and red alarms that the patient needs attention.

## Mobile Apps

- Garden Answers (<http://www.gardenanswers.com>) - **Garden Answers.** Ever wanted to identify a flower or plant? Now you can with the GardenAnswers.com Plant Identification app. Just snap a picture and you will instantly get plant matches along with detailed care information by garden and horticulture experts! Our advanced image recognition technology can

instantly identify flowering plants from our database of 10M+ photos.

- Great Jones Street (<http://www.greatjonesstreet.press>) - **Great Jones Street Short Fiction App**. Great Jones Street is a short fiction app for the mobile lifestyle. It curates thousands of original stories in science fiction, street lit, crime, mystery, erotica, fantasy, and horror by fiction's best contemporary writers. Since launching in 2016, Great Jones Street has become the largest buyer of short fiction annually.
- NotesFirst (<https://notesfirst.com>) - **NotesFirst**. NotesFirst is a mobile platform for capturing and improving the quality of health data for lower-middle income regions of the world.

## Robotics and Unmanned Vehicles

- Asteres (<http://www.asteres.com>) – **ScriptCenter**. Asteres Inc. creates innovative business and technology solutions for hospital, military and retail pharmacies that address the explosion in prescriptions while increasing revenue, securely managing inventory and driving operational efficiencies. Asteres offers ScriptCenter, the industry's first automated prescription pickup kiosk for pharmacy filled prescriptions and retail products.
- Brain Corp (<http://www.braincorp.com>) – **BrainOS**. BrainOS is a self-driving A.I. technology service and proprietary operating system that integrates with off-the-shelf hardware and sensors to provide a cost-effective “brain” for robots. It enables robots to perceive their environment, control their motion, and navigate using visual cues and landmarks while avoiding people and obstacles.
- Diakont (<http://www.diakont.com>) - **Stingray Online Storage Tank Floor Inspection System**. The Stingray system inspects storage tank floors for leaks while the tank is filled. Before this technology, tank owners took tanks out of service and move the product, like diesel, to another tank and have

inspectors enter the tank – unsafe and it released emissions that harm the environment.

## Software and Digital Media

- Approved (<http://www.getapproved.io>) – **Approved**. Approved has built a digital mortgage platform for lenders that allows them to streamline their loan app, and automate their document collection, and approval process. We allow any lender, even those without an IT team, to compete in today's digital world.
- Sourcify (<http://www.trysourcify.com>) – **Sourcify**. Our platform connects companies with the right factories and walks them through the product development cycle with project management tools.
- TerraManta (<http://www.terramanta.com>) - **TerraManta for Crude Oil**. By combining analysis of fundamental factors and geo political drivers, TerraManta provides customers with more accurate information about longer term volatility of crude oil prices.

## Sport & Active Lifestyle Technologies

- Activbody (<http://www.activ5.com>) - **Activ5 Isometric-Based Strength Training Device**. Activ5 is a wireless-enabled, handheld strength training device + smartphone app which coaches users through five-minute full body workouts and measures data such as strength, precision, and other personal metrics. The sleek and portable design makes it possible to workout anywhere. It's like having a personal trainer in your pocket!
- Athelytix (<http://www.athelytix.com>) - **The GRID**. The GRID uses optical lasers to track precise speed and trajectory of sports objects. Coupled with a hi-def video capture, the system enables coaches and players to see how their mechanics impact their results.
- Case by Case (<http://www.phonecasexcuse.com>) - **Case by Case**. A Phone

Case not just made to fit your phone but fit your lifestyle! Case by Case is an entire product line of the top selling phone accessories incorporated in one interchangeable case to use based off your needs per activity. Truly the best-case scenario! Attach yourself to infinite possibilities.

- Levitate Technologies (<http://www.levitatetech.com>) - **AIRFRAME™**. The Levitate AIRFRAME™ is a lightweight wearable exoskeleton technology engineered to support the upper extremity of professionals and skilled trade workers who are exposed to the repetitive elevation of the arms. The AIRFRAME provides all day and seamless ergonomic support and reduces muscle fatigue resulting in a healthier worker.

To be eligible for the 2017 Most Innovative New Product Awards, the product must have been first introduced after January 1, 2015, never been selected as a MIP finalist, and generated revenue from sales (except free mobile apps and companies submitting for the Life Science Products - Clinical Stage category).

The winners will be announced along with the presentation of the 2017 Hall of Fame Award; the Duane Roth Distinguished Contribution Awards for Life Science and Technology; and the CONNECT Founders' Award on the evening of November 30 at an evening showcase, presentation, and dinner, to be held at the Hyatt Regency La Jolla at Aventine, 3777 La Jolla Village Drive, San Diego, CA 92122.

To purchase your seat for the event, please visit [www.connect.org/events/MIP2017](http://www.connect.org/events/MIP2017) (<http://www.connect.org/events/MIP2017>)

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**ABOUT CONNECT**

CONNECT is a premier innovation company accelerator in San Diego that creates and scales great companies in the technology and life sciences sectors. By creating an environment in which entrepreneurs and C-suite executives have access to the people, capital, and technology resources they need for success, CONNECT has assisted in the formation and development of more than 3,000 companies since 1985. Widely regarded as one of the world's most successful organizations linking entrepreneurs and C-suite executives with the resources they need for the commercialization of innovative products and services; our program has been modeled in more than 50 regions around the world.

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