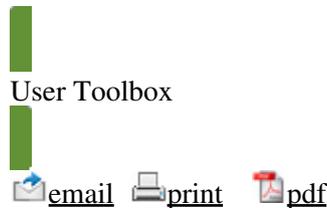


Urban Drinking Water Challenge 2018 Announces Winners from USA, India and Bangladesh

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OVERLAND PARK, Kan.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- The 2018 winners of the *Urban Drinking Water Challenge*, a global innovation competition to deploy and scale decentralized drinking water solutions for fast-growing, water-scarce cities, were announced by [Imagine H2O](#) and Founding Partners [Bluewater Group](#) and [11th Hour Racing](#). Over 160 startups from 37 countries registered for the Challenge. The three winning companies, [Drinkwell](#) (Dhaka, Bangladesh), [Microlyze](#) (Denver, CO) and [SmartTerra](#) (Bengaluru, India), represent a diverse range of technologies and entrepreneurial approaches to solve urban water scarcity and advance U.N. Sustainable Development Goal 6.

The Challenge's Founding Partners have committed up to \$1,000,000 in cash prizes, pilot funding awards and investment. Each winner will be showcased in Stockholm during World Water Week on August 26 - 31, 2018.

Over the next three decades, projected demand for water in cities will increase by 70% resulting in more scenarios similar to Cape Town, which is suffering acute drinking water scarcity, says Anders Jacobson, Bluewater President and Chief Strategy Officer. This competition unlocks the resources to validate and scale three promising solutions that prove the benefits of smarter water management in the face of rapid urbanization and looming drinking water shortages.

Evaluated on the basis of commercial viability, impact and market readiness, the winning startups merge technology with innovative business models to improve the reach and sustainability of drinking water services:

- **Drinkwell** is expanding its turnkey decentralized water purification systems across arsenic-contaminated communities in Bangladesh.
- **Microlyze** is deploying real-time water testing devices to empower households and provide cost-effective monitoring for US utilities.
- **SmartTerra** is equipping second-tier Indian cities with the tools for data-driven decision making and operations to improve delivery and access for the underserved.



Imagine H2O's evaluation committee included a diverse group of experts from institutions including the World Bank, Grundfos, The Schmidt Family Foundation, Anaergia, Rotoplas, Xylem, Aquaya Institute and Water & Sanitation for the Urban Poor.

11th Hour Racing is committed to addressing the global water crisis through innovation, says Todd McGuire, Program Director of 11th Hour Racing. "By shining a spotlight on entrepreneurs confronting problems shared by communities around the world, we can position them for scale and bolster our collective efforts for a water-secure future."

Additionally, the Challenge's Evaluation Committee awarded an Honorable Mention to Majik Water, a Nairobi-based team developing an atmospheric water generation device in partnership with local communities.

About the Founding Challenge Partners

11th Hour Racing establishes strategic partnerships within the sailing and maritime communities to promote collaborative, systemic change benefitting the health of our ocean. Since 2010, 11th Hour Racing has been harnessing the power of sport with an innovative and comprehensive approach through three primary areas of engagement: grantees, partners, and ambassadors. www.11thhourracing.org.

Bluewater is a world leader in innovating, manufacturing, and commercializing water purification technologies and solutions for residential, business and public use that harness the company's patented reverse osmosis technology to remove virtually all pollutants from water, including micro plastic fibers, lead, bacteria, pesticides, medical residues, chlorine, and lime-scale. www.bluewatergroup.com

About Imagine H2O

Imagine H2O is a nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering people to deploy and develop innovation to solve water challenges globally. The organization's water innovation accelerator provides entrepreneurs with the resources, insight and visibility to launch and scale water solutions. By partnering with industry and policy experts and a global network of customers and investors, Imagine H2O has become a proven path to market for emerging water technology businesses. Since 2009, the organization's program alumni have collectively raised more than 1 in every 10 dollars of early-stage investment in the water industry. www.imagineh2o.org.

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