



Funded by the
European Union

EIT Health Innovation Days: Driving Health Innovation in Academic Institutions



What are Innovation Days?

Innovation Days (i-Days) are challenge-based learning events where students develop innovation and entrepreneurial skills. Using design thinking methods, they participate in teams to brainstorm solutions to tackle real-life health challenges, and perfect their pitch to expert judges. EIT Health supports academic institutions to organise the competition, encouraging students to help shape the future of healthcare.

In April 2023, the i-Days competition was nominated for a prestigious Irish Healthcare Centre Award in the category of 'Student Programme'.



How it works

To host i-Days, academic institutions need to form a consortium which must include a non-academic partner and can also include healthcare providers, patient organisations, research organisations, SMEs or start-ups.

Consortiums applying to host a new i-Days event must include at least one academic organisation to lead the implementation of the i-Days event, and at least one non-academic organisation (preferably industrial company).

Involvement of start-ups, healthcare professionals, and patient associations is strongly recommended.

EIT Health provides funding for a period of two years. However, after the two-year period, the consortiums could opt to enter the Recognition Scheme, under which universities can continue to host self-sustained i-Days programmes.

Each host academic institution brings together students to work on potentially life-changing solutions for various healthcare issues and pitch their ideas to expert judges.

The winning team from each of the local i-Days events will be invited to participate in the European semi-finals and finals later in the year. In addition to learning new skills, the i-Days winners from each participating European i-Days city gather together to pitch and compete for prizes aimed at supporting them to continue their entrepreneurial journey.

Who should register?

Academic institutions interested in growing their human capital, enhancing the talent pipeline, and meeting high-end skills needs, with access to international researchers and innovators, should consider applying to host an i-Days in 2024.

i-Days is designed to promote skills and enthusiasm for health innovation among undergraduate and postgraduate students from any background. For participants, there is no prerequisite skills or prior experience required in innovation, entrepreneurship or healthcare.

Innovation Days 2023

In 2023, i-Days events took place across 23 cities in Europe. In Ireland, Atlantic Technological University, Sligo (ATU Sligo), Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT), and University of Galway hosted i-Days across three weeks in October with over 200 students coming together to collaborate on ideas to advance healthcare innovation.



OLLSCOIL NA
GAILLIMHÉ
UNIVERSITY
OF GALWAY

University of Galway became the first Irish University to win the overall EIT Health i-Days pan-European award.

Participation: The i-Days event at the University of Galway gathered 58 students.

Winning Solution: The winning team, **RecoverKnee**, comprised Thomas Brogan, Dara Keane, Darragh McAndrew, and James Gorman. Their solution integrates sensors into a brace to aid in the recovery process of anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) injuries, providing real-time feedback and personalised guidance.

Competition Format: The competition was divided into two sessions: problem identification/validation and ideation/prototyping/storytelling.

Winner's prize: Exclusive attendance at the EIT Alumni CONNECT 2024, \$15,000 worth of Amazon Web Services (AWS) cloud credits, access to the "Healthcare Entrepreneurship 101" e-learning education programme by EIT Health, and mentoring support with European experts.

"Competing against 22 teams from 16 countries is no small challenge. The first day was incredibly engaging; we participated in workshops where we dug deeper into immersive technologies, AI, and had the opportunity to connect with like-minded individuals passionate about bioengineering and innovation. Interacting with knowledgeable experts in the field was invaluable, and the pitching experience was truly rewarding for us." - *Team Recoverknee from University of Galway*





Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKIT)

Participation: DKIT's i-Days event saw 65 participants collaborating on innovative ideas to address dementia care challenges.

Winning Solution: The winning concept, **Connect Care**, is a user-friendly digital platform and patient-worn bracelet that facilitates communication and data sharing among caregivers and medical professionals, aiming to streamline dementia care.

Competition Format: The competition was divided into two sessions: gathering insights and ideation/prototyping/pitching.



"We received tremendous feedback from participating students who enjoyed the pace and creativity of the Design Thinking process and are now really excited about the future of healthcare. The students had fantastic support and encouragement from circa twenty mentors across the health ecosystem over the two days." - *Breannán Casey, Education & Outreach Manager- Connected Health & Wellbeing Cluster, DKIT*



Atlantic Technological University (ATU), Sligo

Participation: ATU's event brought together 93 students, forming 25 teams.

Winning Solution: Amplixer, selected as the winning solution, is a low-sugar, healthy supplement drink designed to combat malnutrition, particularly catering to individuals unable to meet their nutritional needs through regular diet.

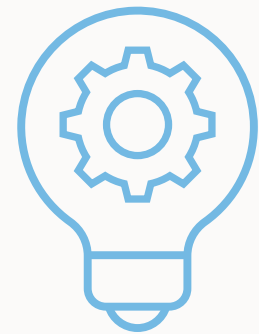
Competition Format: The competition was divided into three sessions: gathering insights/training workshops, ideation/prototyping and pitching.



"We've scaled i-Days massively this year, and students from different disciplines have come together to address critical healthcare challenges. This is their first step into innovation and entrepreneurship, and we hope they'll carry these skills forward into their careers, feeding a pipeline of entrepreneurs and innovators into the region and beyond." *Konrad Mulrennan, Associate Director of the Health and Biomedical (HEAL) Research Centre at ATU*



Impact



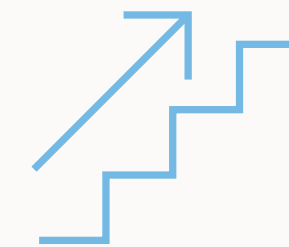
Innovative Solutions

The i-Days events inspire the development of creative solutions to pressing health challenges. Students are equipped with the practical tools and skills to develop a solution or idea which one can pursue after the event.



Collaborative Environment

Through collaborative efforts, students gain valuable experience in problem-solving, ideation, and prototyping, fostering a culture of innovation within the academic community.



Continued Advancement

Winning teams are provided with opportunities to further develop their solutions, contributing to ongoing advancements in health innovation.

EIT Health is inviting academic institutions to apply to host i-Days events from 2024. Offer your students a challenge-based learning event that train them in innovation and entrepreneurship, design thinking methods, and pitching. **Apply today.**

Learn more at: <https://eithealth.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/2024-02-01-2024-Flagship-Call-Document.pdf>