**Press Release**

**Empowering and incentivising youth, Expo Live’s University Innovation Programme returns with call for students’ climate-related ideas**

* **Programme’s third cycle seeks concepts from students at UAE-based universities**
* **UIP aims to empower youth to participate in addressing shared global challenges**
* **Grant and chance to pitch at COP28 spur creative problem-solving and collaboration**

**Download accompanying assets** [**here**](https://expocitydubai-my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/comms_store_expocitydubai_ae/EjqwoTgtbv5Ftdszk7CCeswB_wyYfqF7swE125AGiKjc3Q?e=OR6Bo2)

**DUBAI, 11 September 2023** – The Expo Live Innovation Programme on Monday launched the third cycle of its University Innovation Programme (UIP), calling on all students at UAE-based universities to submit their ideas for climate-related solutions, in line with the UAE’s Year of Sustainability.

The UIP, which began in 2017, engages with students at UAE-based universities and aims to incentivise creative thinking and collaboration with a view to solving problems relevant to the UAE, the region and the world.

At stake is an opportunity for students to finesse their concepts at an Expo Live workshop before pitching to an expert evaluation committee in the first week of December, during COP28, which will take place at Expo City Dubai. Selected solutions will receive a grant of AED 25,000 to help turn their idea into reality.

**Yousuf Caires, Executive Director, Expo Live Innovation Programme**, said:“Young people are bursting with ideas to help create the future they want and deserve, but they often lack the resources to take those concepts to the next stage. The University Innovation Programme aims to bridge that gap by identifying promising conceptual solutions and accelerating them through the innovation curve, from ideation to validation to prototyping.

“While ensuring the survival of our planet is everyone’s responsibility, our youth will be impacted most. It is essential they have a voice in actively exploring solutions to climate change.”

The UIP’s first two cycles attracted more than 1,000 applications from over 40 universities, from which 46 student teams from 19 universities were awarded grants. Among those were U-Light, a team from the American University of Sharjah, whose human-powered energy solution is providing light to off-grid communities in Nigeria, Kenya and Lebanon.

**Omar Ghanem, Co-founder and CEO at U-Light**, said: “We had a simple solution to provide light to remote communities, enabling children to continue their studies and increasing the number of productive hours while also reducing the use of kerosene. We knew it was a good idea with the potential to reduce energy poverty, but we needed support to put it into practice. With the help of the Expo Live University Innovation Programme, our solution is up and running and reaching tens of thousands of people in off-grid communities across three countries.”

For details of the programme and to complete an application online, please visit [www.expocitydubai.com](https://www.expocitydubai.com/en/expo-live/university-innovation-programme/).

The UIP is part of [Expo Live](https://www.expocitydubai.com/en/expo-live/), which was initiated under Expo 2020 Dubai and continues as part of Expo City Dubai. Expo Live helps innovators from around the world develop solutions to pressing challenges, backing projects that improve people’s lives and/or preserve the planet, providing an invaluable platform for accelerating entrepreneurial spirit and demonstrating the power of collaboration and innovation to further human progress.

**-ENDS-**

**About Expo City Dubai**

* Expo City Dubai harnesses the unifying spirit of Expo 2020 Dubai and carries forward its legacy, continuing to demonstrate that by working together, we can propel human progress
* An innovation-driven, people-centric city of the future and one of five hubs in the Dubai 2040 Urban Master Plan, it is designed as a blueprint for sustainable urban planning, galvanising action on its journey to carbon neutrality
* Its ecosystem supports cross-sector collaboration and provides a springboard for businesses of all sizes to scale and grow, enhancing Dubai’s position as a global centre of trade and reinforcing the UAE’s development and diversification ambitions
* Its residential communities redefine urban living, exemplifying best practice in innovative, environment-friendly design with a focus on wellbeing and happiness
* Packed with educational, cultural and entertainment offerings and a go-to destination for globally significant events, it celebrates human creativity and ingenuity and inspires future generations
* Expo City Dubai connects businesses, government, organisations, educational establishments, residents and visitors, enabling them to work together towards a better, more equitable, more sustainable future for all

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