



Call for Nominations for BIC Entrepreneurs

within the frame of



“EBN Smart Entrepreneurship Competition 2010”

To mark the **25 years of EBN**, the real stars of the EBN 2010 Annual Congress will be a selection of **25 innovative entrepreneurs, 25 smart champions**, nominated and coached by the **250 Members** of the EBN network, the **smart BICs**.

The selected entrepreneurs will be show-casing their stories, their models, their innovations, their passions, and how their BICs contributed to their success with a focus on the end-users of the BICs' supply chain.

The **show-cases** and discussions will be organized around **five topics** which have been considered as critical factors in the capacity of entrepreneurs to innovate, to grow, to compete, and to adequately respond to a changing and challenging market: business models, collaborative models, digital models, total services models and socially responsible models.

A smart entrepreneurship festival, during which smart people will share smart ideas by interacting “live” in open and collaborative discussions.

This is an **open competition**, and we are now calling each EBN member, each BIC to participate in this stimulating festival by nominating two of their **“Champion entrepreneurs”**, one early-stage **start-up and/or** one high-growth **gazelle!**

1. Who may be nominated?

All entrepreneurs should be **nominated by** a Business and Innovation Centre (BIC) or by an EBN Associate Member (AM). This means that we are looking for EBN members' "customers", entrepreneurs who have intensively used and benefited from the BICs' added value services, enterprises which can be considered as flagship references of the BICs.

2. What do we mean by "start-up" and "gazelle"?

- I. EBN wishes to make a distinction between **"start-up" companies**, incubated and intensively supported by BICs at early stage, and **"gazelle" companies**, which is an expression for high growth & fast developing firms.
- II. **The nominated start-up companies** should currently be benefiting from the BIC's incubation support services.
The nominated gazelle companies could have left the incubator or the BIC's customer portfolio (because of their substantial growth during the last couple of years), but they must have stayed in close connection with the BIC or they are currently taking advantage of advanced services provided by BICs to such companies.

3. Are there eligibility criteria?

To be eligible for this competition, and besides being **affiliated** as a BIC customer, entrepreneurs must be operating for at least **one year**, and have filed one full set of annual accounts (12 months), and have a permanent team of minimum **three staff members**.

4. What is the purpose of this competition?

The primary goal of this initiative is to stimulate the identification and dissemination of success stories and to illustrate the core mission of a BIC and its impact: **creating and supporting innovation-based entrepreneurs**, capable to generate growth, wealth, jobs, IP, Investment, and business leadership.

By identifying and short-listing two BIC champions this year, the EBN community can virtually set-up **a club of 400 champion Entrepreneurs**, and could offer a series of business2business, benchmarking, international soft-landing, and collaborative projects services. Just imagine if we do it this every year!

By **selecting 20 of them**, EBN wishes to create a flagship sample of best-in-class cases, and to share and analyze these stories with members and delegates during the major annual networking event of our Community, the EBN annual congress.

For the BICs and its Entrepreneurs, the purpose is first to be selected among the 20 finalists, and then eventually win an award.

5. This is a competition!

Your Entrepreneur and your BIC are called to compete, to win, and be prepared to accept the idea of possibly not being selected.

The competition has two selection levels:

- 1: The first level of the **20 finalists**, invited to show-case their innovation at the Burgos Congress on the 1st and 2nd of July 2010.
- 2: The second level of the **5 awards**, one per topic (Business Models, Collaborative Models, Digital Models, Total Services Models, Socially Responsible Models).

6. Nominees must choose only one of the five categories

This year, we have decided to focus on **five topics** considered as fundamental pillars of entrepreneurs' skills in order to innovate, growth and navigate across challenging markets:

a) Business Models

Business models describe the business logic on how an organization delivers and captures values. It consists of four components: a customer value proposition, the profit formula, key resources & assets, and processes. Business Models is about reshaping - sometime reinventing - existing industries as well as it is stimulating the emergence of new companies, ready for capturing new market segments.

b) Collaborative Models

Standing alone is not an option anymore, neither for entrepreneurs nor for researchers. Clusters, joint project-based international initiatives, shared technology platforms and application facilities, Living labs communities, Creativity blogs, Co-creation and Concurrent enterprising, Collaborative software: there is an incredible number of collaborative initiatives and tools, an incredible change in the entrepreneur's behavior, and a fantastic growth of open & collaboration-based new ventures.

c) Digital Models

The EU has recently adopted an ambitious action plan for the future of the digital economy placing consumers at the centre, and aiming at creating a genuine consumer-friendly single market for on-line services. What is new is the rapid and massive growth of web-creative class & digital class heroes! Web-entrepreneurs, Media-tech masters, gaming innovators, satellite navigation & geo-localization new usages, e-government & e-procurement systems, etc: for this true entrepreneurial horizon.

d) Total Services Models

Fostering innovation in the services sector seems another obvious strategy to follow to tackle recession, because indeed services are fast, flexible, adaptable, user-centric,

and generate jobs, but services are also more & more knowledge intensive, technology adopters, standards accelerators, skills enhancers, productivity & quality enablers, new markets facilitators, etc. The services industry is probably the new playground for innovation-based entrepreneurship, the “next big thing” as recently stated by *Business Week* magazine. Service innovation can be everywhere, in a new customer interaction channel, in a new distribution system, in a novel application of technology, in new forms of operation with the supply chain or in new ways to organize operations. A service innovation benefits to both the service producer and it improves its users’ competitive edge. But this will have a significant impact only if traditional non-services behaviors are seriously challenged and create a drastic change in people’s mindset.

e) Socially Responsible Models

Not just for profit! This probably summarizes very clearly the current trends in Corporate Social Responsibility. The triple bottom line “People, Planet & Profit” adds an environmental dimension, which brings all this back to “sustainable development”. A quiet revolution is also in progress here, bringing back ethics, respect, transparency, better governance, gender/ racial equality, engagement in continuous education, investment in human capital, attention to social inclusion, etc. It’s good for people and for the planet, as well as for entrepreneurs because it improves human resources and team engagements, it explores new sources of talents and it helps building a favorable ecosystem and a network of well-connected stakeholders. Socially responsible leaders/entrepreneurs are good for others and for themselves as they are better business developers and jobs & growth accelerators.

You must decide for which of these five categories your nominees will compete! What is the one field which distinguishes your company’s innovation the most? Please choose **one category only, one for your ‘best start-up’, one for your “best gazelle”**.

7. A jury will examine nominations and select 20 Entrepreneurs

A committee of **five experts** will be invited by EBN to evaluate the nominations addressed by EBN members and they will select 4 finalists per topic (i.e. 20 finalists in total), two early-stage start-ups and two gazelles.

The proposals will be evaluated according to the following **selection criteria**:

a.	Relevance to the topic selected	10 %
b.	Uniqueness of the business concept	20 %
c.	Entrepreneurial dynamics of the management team	15 %
d.	Innovation potential (technological, non-tech)	20 %
e.	Business development potential (national, int’l)	15 %
f.	Use of BIC assistance (intensity, diversity, duration)	20 %

8. Submit nominations by using the attached application form

Once you have made up your mind about your champion incubated companies (Start-up) **and/or** mature firm (Gazelle), please fill in the attached application form together with the entrepreneur/company, and sent it to EBN by email to Silvia De Pasquale at: sdp@ebn.be

Please note that you can nominate maximum **1 company for each category** (start-up and/or gazelle). In this case please send 1 application form for each category. (i.e. a BIC is allowed to send maximum 2 applications).

The deadline for receiving the nominations is **03 May 2010**.

9. What happens with the 20 selected finalists?

The 20 finalists (4 entrepreneurs in each workshop) will be invited to show-case their success-story during the two days of the 19th EBN annual congress in Burgos, on July 1st and 2nd, 2010.

Following a key-note introduction by an expert, each entrepreneur will be given a 30' slot to present his/her case, in duo with his BIC advisor/mentor, during a 3-hours interactive session allowing a mutual exchange of views on real entrepreneurship cases. Each presentation will conclude with an all-round Q&A session.

The audience will have the opportunity to meet the entrepreneurs at their booths in the **Burgos Smart Village** during the two days.

10. Calendar

March 12th	Launch of the call for nominations
April 15th	Constitution of the Jury
May 3rd	Deadline for nominations
May 21st	Selection of the 20 finalists
June 1st	Confirmation of the 20 speakers
July 1st & 2nd	Showcasing at Burgos Congress
July 2nd	Awarding the 5 winners

11. How are the 5 winners selected?

The public attending the various workshops at the Congress will be invited to vote and drop a voting form in a ballot box when leaving the room; the vote of the public (counting for 50 %) will be combined with the vote of the Jury (counting for the other 50 %) who will meet in July the 2nd during lunchtime. The participants are invited to stay for the full duration of the workshop for their vote to count.

The EBN secretariat will count the votes casted and results will be communicated during the Awards ceremony.

12. What are the benefits for the 20 finalists and the 5 winners?

The following prize package will be awarded to all **20 short listed finalists**:

- Promotional support via the EBN congress promotional tools (website, brochure and briefcase) and dissemination of their case studies in all relevant EBN publications and websites;
- Free of charge access for 1 person to the EBN Burgos Congress (value of 500 € for EBN members; 650 € for non members) including access to the Gala Dinner;
- Presentation slot in the EBN Congress workshops;
- Free exhibition stand within the Congress Exhibition Area;
- A 250 € lump sum reimbursement for covering travelling expenses to Burgos;
- 2 hotel nights' accommodation in Burgos in one of the hotels listed in the Congress website.

Prize for the **5 winners**:

In addition to the prize package for all 20 finalists, the 5 winners will be awarded with the following additional prizes:

- A “cash prize” award of 1500 € ;
- Presentation of the Award & Certificate at the Congress Closing and Award Ceremony;
- Promotional coverage after the event, which will also include a special company feature on the EBN website and newsletter published after the congress;
- Free of charge access to the Congress (for a value of 500 €) for 1 staff member from each the 5 BICs which has supported the winning companies.

Competition **DEADLINES**:

- 03rd May 2010: Deadline for submitting the candidatures by email to Silvia De Pasquale sdp@ebn.be
- 14th May 2010: Deadline for EBN to acknowledge the results of the eligibility check stage
- 21st May 2010: Deadline for the Jury Panel to communicate the short list of finalists
- 18th June 2010: Deadline for finalists to submit their Power Point presentation
- 01st-02nd July 2010: Congress Workshops and Award Ceremony

For more information please contact:

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