

# Lumkani awarded EIC Horizon Prize

Five innovations that can make a big difference in the lives of the most vulnerable people around the world have won the EIC Horizon Prize on Affordable High-Tech for Humanitarian Aid.



Image supplied

Mariya Gabriel, commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, and Janez Lenarčič, Commissioner for Crisis Management, announced the five winners at the European Research and Innovation Days, this year taking place entirely online.

The prize is funded under Horizon 2020, the EU research and innovation programme, as part of the European Innovation Council (EIC) pilot. It rewards the best, proven, cost-effective, technology-based solutions for humanitarian aid in five categories: shelter and related assistance; water, hygiene and sanitation; energy; health and medical care; and an open category. The winners, one per category, each received €1,000,000; or just under R20 million.

Lumkani was awarded the prize in the Shelter and Related Assistance category.

LHP, developed by the South African SME Lumkani, is a low-cost solution providing community-wide alerts for fires in settlements such as slums or refugee camps

Lumkani is a social enterprise with the mission to mitigate the loss of life and property caused by shack fires in South Africa and across the world. The award winning organisation's approach to shack fires is reportedly the first of its kind.

Francois Petousis, head of Product at Lumkani, says “We do this in two ways: by providing risk-reducing innovative hardware solutions, designed specifically for these communities, and by developing and distributing affordable financial products to allow people to rebuild after disaster strikes, breaking the cycles of poverty common in these environments”

Lumkani’s affordable insurance may be the saving grace for individuals who do not qualify for traditional household insurance.

Petousis continues: “We provide access to self-protect, without needing to rely on external actors to fund activities to build resilience of people’s shelters and communities”

Lumkani has plans to use the grant to deploy its technology across South Africa, 30 000 devices will be installed in homes of underserved individuals. The aim is to continue to have a positive impact and mitigate the c associated with the challenges of fires in informal settlements across the world.

The other winning innovations in each category are:

- **Water, hygiene and sanitation:** LORAWAN monitoring by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) offers real-time solutions for remote monitoring of water tankers and reservoirs to improve the effectiveness of water trucking programming globally;
- **Energy:** BRIGHT Move by the Norwegian SME Bright Products AS provides refugees with light and energy thanks to an affordable, recyclable and rapidly deployable phone charging device combined with a solar lantern;
- **Health and medical care:** TeReFa, developed by the French non-profit organisation Handicap International, provides affordable, high quality prosthetic and orthotic devices produced through digital and 3D scanning and printing technologies;
- **Open Category:** Odyssey2025, developed by the French non-profit organisation Handicap International, deploys drones to improve the efficiency and safety of land release in mine clearance (allowing the land to be used again), while reducing costs and ensuring sustainability.

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