



## Amazon Launchpad announces winner of ‘Startup of the Year’ as part of Innovation Awards: WeWALK, creator of a revolutionary smart cane, receives €100,000 prize

July 12, 2021

*Amazon Launchpad, the one-stop shop for unique and unexpected finds from startups, has announced UK based small business, WeWALK, as the 2021 ‘Startup of the Year’*

*The ‘Startup of the Year’ has been awarded a €100,000 prize, with four other winners from around Europe each receiving a €10,000 grant, free access to Amazon Launchpad for one year and much more*

*To celebrate the Innovation Awards, Amazon Launchpad will run a 48 hour “Innovation Day” event from today, a curated collections packed with forward thinking products designed by the winner and finalists available to shop at [amazon.co.uk/launchpad/innovationawards](https://amazon.co.uk/launchpad/innovationawards)*

**LUXEMBOURG— 06.00am, 12th July 2021** Today, Amazon Launchpad has announced the winner of the ‘Startup of the Year’ award as part of the [Amazon Launchpad Innovation Awards](#), a free-to-enter competition designed to support innovative European startups. The winner, UK based small business, WeWALK, creator of the revolutionary smart cane, has been awarded a €100,000 prize to support the future growth of the business.

The Startup of the Year and four other winners, CasusGrill from Denmark, Páhoj from Sweden, PlanetCare from Slovenia and Callaly from the UK were chosen from over 1,800 applications from 26 different European countries. All of the winners received a €10,000 grant to invest into their growing businesses as well as 1-year free access to Amazon Launchpad.

Winning products were initially judged by a panel consisting of five industry experts, both within and outside of Amazon, including: Andy Fishburn, Managing Director, Virgin StartUp; Greg Williams, Editor-In-Chief, Wired UK; Jamie Siminoff, CEO, Ring; Aditi Singh, General Manager, Amazon Launchpad Europe; and Ryan Frank, Head of Marketplace, Amazon Spain. Submissions were judged on their aesthetic, design and uniqueness as well as social, ecological, economical and sustainability factors. Customers were then invited to vote for their favourite of the winning businesses as their ‘Startup of the Year’.

To celebrate the Innovation Awards, Amazon Launchpad will run a 48 hour “Innovation Day” event, a curated storefront spotlighting the forward-thinking products designed by WeWALK and some of the other winners. Customers will also find a host of other innovative products on offer from startups across Europe in categories ranging including Personal Care, Consumer Electronics and Home.

Since its launch in 2015, Amazon Launchpad has worked with over 200 leading venture capital firms, startup accelerators and crowd-funding platforms to help startups launch products. There are now around 13,000 products from startups available at [amazon.co.uk/launchpad](https://amazon.co.uk/launchpad) in over 30 categories including furniture, electronics, fashion and beauty.

Prime Day 2021, which took place last month was the biggest two-day period ever for Amazon’s third-party sellers globally, nearly all of which are small and medium-sized businesses, growing even more than Amazon’s retail business. Customers spent over US\$1.9 billion on more than 70 million small business products during the promotional period, more than a 100% year-on-year increase on sales compared to the Prime Day October 2020 promotion.

### **The 2021 Startup of The Year**

**WeWALK, UK** – The founders believe that the visually impaired community, consisting of more than 250 million people worldwide, could do more with the right technology. This starts with the white cane, a critical tool for visually impaired mobility that has not evolved in hundreds of years. Headquartered in London with offices in San Francisco and Istanbul, WeWALK is using modern technology to transform the traditional cane into a ‘Smart Cane’ to help visually impaired people feel safer, move more independently, and better navigate the world around them. The WeWALK team includes visually impaired members that drive product development through lived experience. WeWALK is now Series A fundraising after having reached users from over 59 different countries.

### **The Winners**

**Callaly** – are the UK’s first ever period-care B Corp and inventors of the award-winning Tampliner® – the first tampon redesign in 80 years. Invented by a gynaecologist, the tampliner combines an organic cotton tampon with a soft mini-liner for extra protection against leaks. Callaly’s tampliner brings innovation to a category that has seen no meaningful change since the 1930s. After nearly a decade of continuous research and development, robust testing and soft launches, Callaly came to market in early 2020. In just a year, and with patent and design registrations covering nearly 80% of the globe, they are now ready to disrupt the period care industry using Amazon as a launchpad.

**CasusGrill - Denmark** – Carsten Brøgger, Founder of CasusGrill, re-designed the aluminium disposable grill and made it green. Made of cardboard, untreated bamboo, briquettes of bamboo and lava rocks – the grill is 100% natural. It’s a truly unique product as bamboo is a sustainable material - the plant is fast-growing, naturally thrives without pesticides and fertilisers, absorbs CO2 and produces up to 35% more oxygen than trees.

**Páhoj - Sweden** – The Páhoj bike seat and stroller is a tool for environmental and social change. It promotes a healthier and more flexible lifestyle, making it easier for parents and carers to go biking and walking with their children. With Páhoj’s unique dual functionality and clever design, customers don’t have to choose between the two activities. The product is a great way to manifest healthy habits from childhood to adulthood.

[PlanetCare - Slovenia](#) – Mojca Zupan, founding CEO of PlanetCare is on a mission to stop microplastic pollution that pollutes the oceans and harms our health. 35% of all microplastics in the ocean come from washing machines. PlanetCare is the first and only washing machine filter with 90% efficiency in keeping plastic microfibre pollution out of wastewater before it goes from the machine down the drain and into oceans. The filter installs easily and operates with reusable cartridges for a fully closed loop service – 95% is reused and 5% is recycled.

ENDS

**About Amazon**

Amazon is guided by four principles: customer obsession rather than competitor focus, passion for invention, commitment to operational excellence, and long-term thinking. Amazon strives to be Earth's Most Customer-Centric Company, Earth's Best Employer, and Earth's Safest Place to Work. Customer reviews, 1-Click shopping, personalised recommendations, Prime, Fulfilment by Amazon, AWS, Kindle Direct Publishing, Kindle, Career Choice, Fire tablets, Fire TV, Amazon Echo, Alexa, Just Walk Out technology, Amazon Studios, and The Climate Pledge are some of the things pioneered by Amazon. For more information, visit [amazon.co.uk/about](https://amazon.co.uk/about) and follow @AmazonNewsUK.

**For further information please contact:**

Amazon UK Press Office

Email: [pressoffice@amazon.co.uk](mailto:pressoffice@amazon.co.uk)