

Power of the network helps people to help people (sponsored contribution)

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The recipients of RSM's I WILL Award €15,000 prize are discovering the true power of the network and how fast it can work.

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Making business - and business education - an instrument of positive change is the aim of RSM's forward-thinking 'I WILL' movement. More than 2,000 people from RSM's diverse community of alumni, international students, faculty, business leaders and staff have 'liked' its Facebook page and have made their own I WILL statements, which can be seen online.

Last October, I WILL launched a competition to find a 'big idea' demonstrating willpower, ambition and a desire to be active in creating change. The winning idea was chosen in March 2012.

CroMiDo - helping people help people

E-business specialist Carlo Cronauer, and economist and manager of non-profit organisations Paola Gutierrez Watts, who both graduated from RSM's MBA programme this spring, won €15,000 of funding to help develop their CroMiDo plan, which allows people anywhere in the world to help another person in need by sending micro-donations by mobile phone. 'The system is simple, immediate, and transparent and can even be used to pay electricity or water bills directly on behalf of the person in need,' Carlo explains.

The system uses a unique and intelligent algorithm to rank people in developing countries in order of need. It uses technology similar to a social media platform, allowing members of the local community, aid workers and tourists to 'rate' potential recipients according to their need of financial support. An algorithm then allocates micro donations accordingly. This approach allows monitoring through a web interface and gives instant feedback to the donor. It delivers small donations directly to mobile phone accounts, making use of the buying power of a single Euro compared to local currencies and local incomes.

Use of mobile phones is widespread - and growing - in some of the least developed nations, and while there is already a system for transferring credits between users in the same country, Carlo and Paola's innovation is one of the first to enable international donors to send micro-donations by mobile phone directly to recipients.

The first steps after winning the award were to register the CroMiDo organisation, to put together an advisory board and finalise strategies, as well as to continue to develop the CroMiDo.com website and gather followers on its social media network, through Facebook, Google+ and Twitter.

News of the CroMiDo win roused almost instant interest from organisations with similar operations. The Dodore Foundation in the Netherlands, which already sends monthly donations to recipients in Kenya via the 'M-Pesa' system of transferring credits via mobile phone through its 'geefsimpelweg' website, approached the CroMiDo team to discuss a partnership.

'They were interested in our ranking algorithm, and rather than competing, we think we can profit from each other's know-how by running our projects in parallel,' said Carlo.

In a year's time, the CroMiDo team hopes to be forwarding micro-donations to Kenya, and receiving donations from the Netherlands, Switzerland and Germany. 'We also hope to start expanding into North America,' said Paola.



But while the €15,000 prize money gives them a great start - covering initial set-up costs and travel to Kenya to see how the system works in practice - other backers are still needed. 'The I WILL Award has given us a great start but isn't enough to put the whole plan together. We are looking for more partners or sponsors,' said Paola.

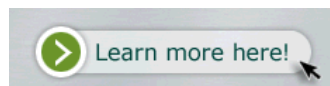
Carlo and Paola had stiff competition: there were over 80 entries in the I WILL award competition, two of which were shortlisted alongside their CroMiDo project. Dean of RSM Steef van de Velde said that the ideas behind all three proposals were exactly what the I WILL movement was intended to accomplish, demonstrating compassion, teamwork, innovation, pro-activity, professionalism, idealism, ambition, and the four core values of RSM; Innovation, Critical Thinking, Sustainability and Spirit.

For more information on CroMido:

www.CroMiDo.com
www.facebook.com/iwillrsm

For more information on RSM's MBA programmes:

www.rsm.nl/mba



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