

4 Startups Win Big at Tel Aviv Booster Lab

Booking.com B.V. Awards Startups with Grants of up to €25,000

Vienna, March 13th, 2018 - A diverse quartet of international sustainable tourism startups walked away with grants of up to €25,000 at the Booking.com Booster Lab in Tel Aviv last week, for which Pioneers Discover drove the process of startup selection as well as developed and managed the content and framework. After 3 days of workshops, talks and mentoring, accessibleGO, bitemojo, Questo and Knowers convinced the jury with their four-minute pitches.

The series that began in Barcelona this December, run by Booking.com B.V., gives early-stage sustainable tourism startups the tools, guidance and possible funding to boost their impact and drive their future success.

“It’s been terrific to win a grant here,” said Miriam Goldman, co-founder and CEO of accessibleGO, which won a grant of €25,000. The Jerusalem-based startup has developed an online community with content, reviews and booking information for disabled travellers. “This is a real validation of all of the planning we’ve been doing up until now, and of our direction.”

bitemojo, based in Jerusalem, also took away €25,000. They’ve developed food tours with local outlets, which users can purchase via the app. Each ‘bite’ on the tour is claimed by showing the phone to the vendor, who gets paid by the startup at the end of each month.

“We’re honoured that one of the world’s biggest brands recognized bitemojo as an impactful startup,” said CEO Michael Weiss. “I hope this will be another step on the path to success, and hopefully we can work with Booking.com one day!”

Questo, a Romanian startup that’s developed mobile app for self-guided tours, also earned a boost of €20,000. Meanwhile Knowers, a platform that connects travellers to the right locals for info, tips and services, was granted €15,000.

None of the startups emerged empty-handed. Trailze and Citynsider were each awarded a coveted pair of tickets to Pioneers’18, our flagship event in Vienna, while Paratrek, FarmGuests and Lighthead all won €500 Booking.com travel vouchers.

But the takeaways from the event will run deeper than the grants and prizes. The Tel Aviv startup scene is brilliant at harnessing the power of connections, and talk of collaboration was already in the air as proceedings wrapped up. bitemojo and Questo were openly discussing the possible ways in which their products could complement each other.

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Furthermore the three-day Booster Lab is just the beginning of the relationship between the participating startups and Booking.com B.V. Each startup's dedicated mentor and a pool of additional experts will support them in executing their growth plans and achieving positive impact over the subsequent months.

“It was amazing to see the commitment and energy everyone put in,” said Marianne Gybels of Booking.com. “The startups showed the variety of how many things ‘sustainable tourism’ can mean. It’s not just about being green. It’s about inclusive travel, bringing local back to local, and investing in communities when you travel. All while preserving local culture and natural resources.”

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Note to the Editors

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About Pioneers:

Founded in 2009 in Vienna, Pioneers establishes and facilitates direct, meaningful business relationships between startups, corporate executives, and investors to foster growth and innovation. It is the ultimate One-Stop-Hub for global tech innovators to access high-value, curated and qualified data of early and Series A European startups. Pioneers offers various platforms to help redefine industries, develop future technologies and introduce cutting-edge solutions. Its services include digital services, consultancy, ventures services, events and inspirational, tailor-made offline experiences. Its flagship event takes place annually in the 500-year-old Hofburg Imperial Palace in Vienna and brings together a community of 2,500 founders, investors, executives and public sector representatives from over 100 nations. Of all future tech events globally, Pioneers has unparalleled access to European tech leaders. The 2017 edition was awarded with the bea World ‘Best Conference/Congress’ Award.

