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Plastic waste recycling solution wins Singapore start-up challenge

KAREN LAIRD





Oh Chu Xian, NTUitive Chairman Mr Inderjit Singh and Adriel Ng

A Singapore startup that has developed technology to turn plastic waste into road additives has taken the top prize at ideasinc 2020, a start-up accelerator programme run by NTUitive, the innovation and enterprise company of Nanyang Technological University in Singapore.

Magorium, founded by Oh Chu Xian and Adriel Ng from Singapore Management University, aims to provide a solution that will solve two two problems at the same time. First, the technology addresses the issue of plastic waste and second, it will extend the life of roads.

Their goal aligned perfectly with one of the key challenges which ideasinc 2020, inspired by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, has targeted: building a zero waste nation by reducing e-waste, plastic and packaging or food waste.

According to Chu Xian, Singapore lacks a recycling facility of its own. "We used to ship plastic out, but due to recent changes, we are no

longer able to do that," she said.

She became interested in the possibilities for more eco-sustainable uses of plastics, which ultimately led to the creation of Magorium, inspired by a project in Melbourne. In that project, glass, plastic and recycled asphalt were used to create a new asphalt used to lay a 300-metre stretch of road.

Magorium obtains the plastics from collectors in Singapore. Using patented technology this is reprocessed into pellets that can be added to asphalt for laying new roads. The initial tests were promising and the company is now in the testing and approval stage with Singapore's Land Transport Authority and the National Environment Agency, after which, hopefully, the additive will be introduced commercially. The company is also currently in talks with Thailand and China.

The Magorium team credited ideasinc for providing them with resources and expert mentorship that helped them in developing their innovative solution, taking them further in their journey of entrepreneurship.

The two runners-up in ideasinc 2020 were Insect Feed Technologies and MO Batteries. The three winning teams received cash prizes totalling SGD \$35,000.

ideasinc, which began in 2009 as a business plan competition for NTU students, is open to everyone aged 18 and above who is a first-time entrepreneur. NTUitive is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Nanyang Technological University in Singapore and manages the University's intellectual property, promotes innovation, supports entrepreneurship, and facilitates the commercialisation of research.