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10 finalists chosen in 2019 Startup Competition

Almost 300 companies from 55 countries took part in the initial competition.

Projects relating to Fan Engagement, Media, Smart Venue and Performance were selected in the final ten.

The chosen companies, which hail from Spain, United Kingdom, United States and Australia, will take part in a Growth Acceleration Program which includes mentoring and contact sessions with investors and top directors at LaLiga and GSIC powered by Microsoft, among others.

2nd July 2019 – The Startup Competition 2019 from The Original Inspiration Centre by LaLiga supported by GSIC has chosen the 10 winners of the first stage of the competition. This initial phase saw a total of 279 companies from 55 different countries and five continents take part.

The competition, organised by LaLiga and the Global Sports Innovation Center powered by Microsoft, is part of the global agreement signed by LaLiga and Microsoft in 2016. The initiative seeks to boost digital talent and ideas by promoting disruptive solutions that can help LaLiga and its clubs continue to grow in the field of innovation and technology, acting as a gateway into the sports and entertainment world for new companies around the world.

All solutions submitted for consideration had to be based on the following fundamental aspects: *Media* (OTT, Broadcasting, Digital Content, etc.); *Fan Engagement* (Fan Profiling, Social Media, eSports, etc.); *Smart Venue* (Security, Ticketing, Cashless Payment, etc.); *Performance* (Analytics, Injury Prevention, Health, etc.); and others such as Big Data, Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning.

Below are the projects chosen for each area by a panel drawn from LaLiga, GSIC and Microsoft representatives:

- **Smart Venue:**
 1. A project presented by an Australian company offering solutions in the fields of access control, cashless payments and user experience. Can also in the future develop solutions which will facilitate the purchase of official merchandise and prevent piracy.
 2. An app developed in the United Kingdom which helps capture fans' most exciting moments inside a stadium. Can help generate high-quality and viral content for clubs across LaLiga.

- Performance:
 3. A solution developed in Spain which helps to analyse the cause of injuries and, above all, how to avoid them. Facilitates the work of backroom staff across LaLiga and helps reduce the number of injuries suffered by LaLiga players.
 4. Another Spanish initiative which can recreate a 3D body model with a scanner to direct medical supervisions and track the progress of each player.
- Media:
 5. A Spanish-developed product that allows for instant movement between different cameras to improve the fan experience, with the added ability to connect with different events simultaneously.
 6. An application developed in the United States which offers different commenting options for live games. Can facilitate the adaptation of LaLiga-developed content for broadcast in different countries.
- Fan engagement:
 7. A solution developed by a UK-based company which connects users and allows them to interact during match broadcasts. Can help to improve LaLiga's television broadcasts, connecting fans from across the world.
 8. A Spanish application which gives fans the chance to have digital autograph collections certified by *blockchain* technology, in addition to offering a marketplace where users can buy, sell and exchange memorabilia. Can strengthen the club-fan relationship for every club at both a national and international level.
 9. A U.S.-developed application which helps fans travelling in another country to find fellow fans of their club and watch the game at a venue in the city they're in. No matter the place, fans will always be able to share and exchange their football experiences.
 10. A Spanish solution which analyses user behaviour and habits through the use of artificial intelligence and data analysis to make content recommendations. Can help generate more user-specific content, improving fan experience as a result.

Iris Cordoba, Managing Director at GSIC powered by Microsoft, said: *"Thanks to The Startup Competition 2019, ten innovative companies will have the opportunity to explore synergies on an individual level with LaLiga and in group with other winners,*



and, as a result, initiate pilot schemes within one of the most important sports organisations in the world. At GSIC powered by Microsoft we will help them at this stage through our growth acceleration program and by incorporating them into our ecosystem, boosting the integration of these solutions into LaLiga's strategy."

Minerva Santana, LaLiga's Innovation Director, said: *"We are convinced that we have picked the perfect startups to improve the LaLiga fan experience and boost our clubs' technological growth. From this point on we'll be working hand-in-hand with them in order to maximise the potential of these pioneering projects."*

A unique growth acceleration program

The ten chosen teams will prepare through July and August for the immersion week, which will take place in September. In this final phase of the competition the ten selected startups will arrive in Madrid to prepare their final presentations at the World Football Summit (24-25 September). This preparation stage, which will extend until December, will help them to better understand the organisation and familiarise themselves with the areas in which their pilot projects will be developed.

During the period the ten startups will start the growth acceleration program with GSIC powered by Microsoft featuring mentoring sessions, contact with investors and high-level directors at both LaLiga and GSIC powered by Microsoft, digital transformation certification and the chance to access the Microsoft for Startups program. In addition, pilot projects approved by LaLiga will begin development during this time.

The ten finalist start-ups will also be able to enjoy free GSIC membership for six months with all the services and benefits the center provides its ecosystem: networking, participation in activities aimed at innovation and applied research, B2B contacts, media coverage and international events, among others.



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About GSIC powered by Microsoft

About GSIC Global Sports Innovation Center powered by Microsoft (GSIC) is a business cluster created by Microsoft Sports Team that brings together all types of sport entities (clubs, federations, associations), institutions, technology companies, from startups to corporations, research organizations, investors and key figures in the sports industry to provide them with values. To do so, we focus our activities and services on 4 main points: entrepreneurship, business network, applied research and showcase. Based in Madrid, GSIC now has more than 200 partners in 30 countries around the world.


About LaLiga

Founded in 1984, LaLiga (Liga de Fútbol Profesional) is a sports association comprising the 42 teams that make up the first and second divisions of professional football in Spain. LaLiga, based in Madrid, is responsible for the LaLiga Santander and LaLiga 1|2|3 leagues and the television production, which in the 2017/2018 season reached more than 2.7 billion people globally. The association also has an active foundation and is the world's first professional football league with a league for intellectually challenged footballers: LaLiga Genuine.

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