

SA's Brayfoil Technologies startup wins GEA Summit pitch competition

Brayfoil Technologies, a South African clean-energy startup, has won the Energy Investment Village pitch competition held during the Green Energy Africa (GEA) Summit.



Left: Shailin Mbdley, co-founder | Right: Mathew Bray, co-founder | image supplied

Brayfoil is a company designing turbine blades that change shape to reduce loads, enabling larger devices. The company's technology has applications in the wind energy, aerospace, sailing and automotive sectors.

Following the win, the Brayfoil team hosted several meetings with potential investors on the sidelines of the GEA Summit.

The Energy Investment Village event saw 10 clean-energy startups pitch their business ideas to an audience of potential investors, delegates and judges from supporting partners at the summit.

The Energy Investment Village is a joint venture between Saldanha Bay Innovation Campus, the Research Institution for Innovation and Sustainability (RIIS), and the GEA Summit. The initiative aims to directly support South African business in accessing international finance for project development.

International investors holding collective assets of \$100bn were invited to attend the pitch session. Several conversations between startups and investors were initiated and will continue after the event.

Brayfoil Technologies won a R20,000 cash prize from FNB, a year's business membership with the Africa Scotland Business Network (ASBN) and a half-day ASBN branding and marketing workshop.

A further two awards will be awarded by Sasol and the JSE after both companies have reviewed the finalists. The prizes are a placement into the 2024 JSE Enterprise Accelerator Programme and enrolment in the Sasol Enterprise Supplier Development Programme worth R100,000.

A panel of eight judges adjudicated the startup pitches looking at aspects such as innovativeness and business merit, among other criteria.

The panel of judges included Wesgro senior portfolio manager, technology Eimear Costigan; Sasol senior vice president, business services Grace Ndwambi; Sasol senior vice president, commercial energy solutions Phinda Vilakazi; IDC business development executive David Sekgororwana; JSE head of CX and strategic initiative incubation Cleola Kunene; JSE head of origination and deals Samuel Mokorosi; TIA head of innovation skills development and enterprise Senisha Moonsamy; and Club of Engineers president Gijbert Bakker.

The other investment village finalists were:

- Keren Energy, the first green-hydrogen producer in South Africa
- Atlanthia, producers of green hydrogen and green ammonia
- Hydrofuels, producers of a plasma waste gasification solution
- Oceanenergy, developers of a Kite Fuel Ship technology
- SeaH4, producers of carbon-neutral biofuels from algae
- SlideLuvre, developers of a smart, two-in-one, sun-tracking solution for solar energy efficiency
- Impact-Free Water, developers of a pump that uses wave energy to pressurise and pump seawater for desalination and electrical power
- Zimi Charge, developers of electric fleet charging via a single app

- Meta Technologies, producers of an air-quality monitor

“The Energy Investment Village is a first for the Green Energy Africa Summit,” said Paul Sinclair, VP for Energy, Africa Oil Week and GEA Summit. “This exciting live-pitching addition to the programme exceeded our expectations in giving innovative, clean-energy startups exposure to potential investors and facilitating conversations that will continue well beyond the Summit. We fully anticipate hosting the event again next year.”

The Energy Investment Village is a partnership with the Saldanha Bay Innovation Campus (SBIC), an initiative of the Freeport Saldanha development zone, and advisory firm the Research Institute for Innovation and Sustainability (RIIS).

“The Energy Investment Village showcases real projects and new-energy tech in SA,” said Belinda Williams, head of Southern Africa at Hyve Group. “The interest and attendance at the event highlighted the enthusiasm for much-needed business and social development on the African continent. We look forward to enhancing this initiative next year.”

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