



Vienna, 13 March 2023

## EIT Manufacturing awards next generation innovators at JA Marketplace Vienna: reFILL3D

On the weekend, 38 international student teams presented their companies and solutions in Vienna, competing for different prizes. The team reFILL3D from Austria convinced the expert jury for the best Innovation Award with their solution for converting PET bottles into filament.

Vienna, 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023. On Saturday, the JA Marketplace Vienna, an international trade fair for student companies taking part in the Junior Achievement (JA) Company Programme across Europe, took place. At this fair, the student teams practice to present and sell their products or services under real-market circumstances. 17 teams from Austria and 21 teams from all over Europe (Finland, Czechia, Estonia, Switzerland, Latvia, Germany, Lithuania, Greece, Luxembourg) participated in the competition. JA Austria and its partners rewarded the best performances in various categories: Innovation, Pitch, Marketing and Visual Presentation, Sustainability, Sales and Alumni Spirit.

### reFILL3D won Innovation Award

EIT Manufacturing, a knowledge and innovation community supported by the European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT) which is a body of the European Union, sponsored the **Best Innovation Award** rewarding the business idea with the best value proposition, business concept and future potential. reFILL3D developed a "Creator" to convert unused PET bottles into valuable filament for 3D printers. This allows trash that would otherwise end up in landfills or the ocean to be used as a resource. The Creator is easy to use and eco-friendly.

**Monika Primožic**, Education Manager at EIT Manufacturing, handed over the prize to the proud winners. She sees the event as an important opportunity to encourage and promote critical thinking, a sense of adventure and openness to adapt among young students. *"It is really an honour that EIT Manufacturing can contribute to the success of this year's JA Austria international trade fair. We have seen many great innovators here. I am very impressed by the entrepreneurial spirit all teams have shown and I am sure all of them have a bright future ahead. Congratulations to all winners!"*

### Collaboration for raising the next generation of manufacturing innovators

On a European level, the Junior Achievement network will celebrate the achievements of European students aged 15 and onwards at the Gen-E event in Türkiye from 11 to 14 July 2023, where thousands of young entrepreneurs will showcase their cutting-edge business ideas and will be competing for the titles of Best Company and Best Start-Up of the Year. EIT Manufacturing sponsors a special award at Gen-E 2023: The **Green Manufacturing Award** honours the student team with the most innovative solution to use fewer natural resources, reduce pollution and waste, recycle and reuse materials, or develop new processes to reduce manufacturing resources and decrease emissions.

Junior Achievement is a programme for students to help them generate ideas, establish businesses and run them up to one school year allowing them to develop and train their entrepreneurial and soft skills by experiencing the real business world. The Austrian organisation of JA engages more than 4,000 students to take part in their different programmes each school year, who are being supported by 300



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educators and 400 business volunteers. For the educational and societal impact it creates as one of the world's largest and most-impactful youth-serving NGOs, the global network JA Worldwide has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize 2023 for the second time in two years.

### Background information

The [European Institute of Innovation and Technology \(EIT\)](#) is Europe's largest innovation ecosystem bringing together over 3400 partners from top business, research and education organisations across Europe in 200+ innovation hubs. The EIT is an EU body and an integral part of Horizon Europe, the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation. Through dynamic pan-European partnerships, called Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) the EIT Community offers a wide range of innovation and entrepreneurship activities, strengthening Europe's ability to innovate and powering solutions to pressing global challenges while nurturing entrepreneurial talent to create sustainable growth and skilled jobs in Europe.

[EIT Manufacturing](#) is one of the nine innovation communities supported by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), a body of the European Union. EIT Manufacturing's main goal is to bring European stakeholders focused on manufacturing together in innovation ecosystems that add unique value to European products, processes and services and inspire the creation of globally competitive and sustainable manufacturing. EIT Manufacturing brings together more than 80 members (universities, research institutes and companies).

[EIT Manufacturing East](#) is one of the six innovation hubs of EIT Manufacturing, located in the Technology Center Seestadt in Vienna, Austria. It serves seven countries in Central and Eastern Europe: Austria, Croatia, Czechia, Hungary, Serbia, Slovakia, and Slovenia. EIT Manufacturing East works in close cooperation with its members from industry, research and academia and its network partners. EIT Manufacturing East is additionally supported by three Austrian Ministries (Federal Ministry Labour and Economy; Federal Ministry Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology; Federal Ministry Education, Science and Research) as well as the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG).

### EIT Manufacturing — Making Innovation Happen!

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