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MEDIA CONTACT:

Ione Villegas
Marketing Coordinator
Innovation Coast
ivillegas@uwf.edu
Office: [850.426.4193](tel:850.426.4193)
Cell: [850.293.6938](tel:850.293.6938)

Innovation Awards registration opens Oct. 3

Pensacola, Fla. – Sept. ~~29XX~~, 2016 – Registration for the 2017 Innovation Awards opens on Oct. 3. The Innovation Awards is Florida’s most lucrative business plan competition for technology and knowledge-based companies.

With companies competing for a share of more than \$250,000 in cash and prizes, the Innovation Awards is a catalyst for business growth. The contest is designed to provide winning companies with a financial boost, while giving participants the opportunity to connect with potential angel investors and network with peers at the event. The 2017 Innovation Awards will take place April 12-13 at the Hilton Pensacola Beach at 12 Via De Luna Drive on Pensacola Beach.

This year the Innovation Awards is expanding its reach by awarding a \$5,000 cash prize to an entrepreneurial community college or university student, and \$10,000 to a veteran-owned business. This is in addition to the \$150,000 for first and second prizes in the post-revenue category, and \$20,000 for first and \$15,000 for second prizes in pre-revenue category.

A testament to the contest’s success is the 2014 Innovation Awards winners and contestants, many of whom have experienced exponential growth. For example, winning first place in 2014 gave IRIS: Intelligent Retinal Imaging Systems the confidence and momentum it needed to raise an additional \$750,000 in funding from the Florida Venture Forum, a statewide organization. It also received matching funds from the Florida Institute for the Commercialization of Public Research.

Companies can start the next chapter of their success story by registering for the 2017 Innovation Awards. For more information or to register for the awards, visit awards.innovationcoast.com.

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About [Innovation Coast](#): Innovation Coast is an alliance of technology and knowledge-based companies and institutions of higher learning in Northwest Florida. Its mission is to grow, sustain and showcase the region's successful, vibrant ecosystem of technology companies, professionals and investment opportunities.

About the [Innovation Awards](#): Launched by Innovation Coast in 2014, the Innovation Awards is the most lucrative business plan and capital-acceleration opportunity in Florida. The competition was designed to foster economic development and engagement by showcasing the region as a leader in innovation and entrepreneurship, specifically in the areas of technology and knowledge-based companies.