Executive short version:

Libromat: $1 million dollars now, for education over a lifetime

A team of Oxford students are one step closer to winning the Hult Prize to win start-up funding to solve the challenge of providing early childhood education to 10 million children in urban slums worldwide.

The Hult Prize Foundation recently announced that team “Libromat” from Oxford University has won the London regional round. They have made it into the top six teams who will be competing at the final round of the Hult Prize Challenge for USD 1 million of start-up funding in September 2015 in New York City.

The annual Hult Prize Challenge is the world’s largest student competition and start-up platform for social good. In partnership with President Bill Clinton and the Clinton Global Initiative, the innovative crowdsourcing platform identifies and launches disruptive and catalytic social ventures that aim to solve the planet’s most pressing challenges.

The 2015 Hult Prize will focus on building start-ups that provide sustainable, high quality early education solutions to ten million children under the age of six in urban slums and beyond by the year 2020.

Team “Focus for the Future” are a diverse group of post-graduate students from Oxford University who bring a wide range of experiences and expertise from education and development, to statistical methods and business management. Nicholas Dowdall (Jesus College), David Jeffrey (St Anne’s College), Kristijan Jovanoski (Magdalen College), Andrew Barnes (Exeter College) and Jenny Tran (Green Templeton College) have been working together over the past few months to improve early childhood education in urban slums using a sustainable social enterprise. The team believes that “investing in early childhood education is an investment in the future – it significantly improves childhood development, academic outcomes, and future socioeconomic status.”

“Focus for the Future were fast-tracked to the London regional round of the Hult Prize after winning the Oxford competition. Each team selected was chosen from more than 20,000 applications received from over 500 colleges and universities in over 150 countries.

Following the regional finals, one winning team from each host city will move into a summer business incubator, where participants will receive mentorship, advisory and strategic planning as they create prototypes and set-up to launch and scale their new ventures. A final round of competition will be hosted by President Bill Clinton and the Clinton Global Initiative at its annual meeting in September, where CGI delegates will select a winning team, which will be awarded the USD1 million Prize by President Bill Clinton himself.
Full version media release:

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The 2015 Hult Prize will focus on building start-ups that provide sustainable, high quality early education solutions to ten million children under the age of six in urban slums and beyond by the year 2020. This year’s challenge was selected and set by President Bill Clinton, who said, “The Hult Prize is about more than the solution to the problem, it’s about how the world has to work in the 21st century.”

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advisory and strategic planning as they create prototypes and set-up to launch and scale their new ventures. A final round of competition will be hosted by President Bill Clinton and the Clinton Global Initiative at its annual meeting in September, where CGI delegates will select a winning team, which will be awarded the USD1 million Prize by President Bill Clinton himself. President Clinton has gone on to say, “The Hult Prize is a wonderful example of the creative cooperation needed to build a world with shared opportunity, shared responsibility, and shared prosperity, and each year I look forward to seeing the many outstanding ideas the competition produces.”

About the team
Team Libromat have known each other for a long time, and have committed to making accessible early childhood education a reality to millions of disadvantaged children worldwide.

Andrew founded an education technology company, AduroLMS.com, which last year provided learning exercises for 70,000 primary school children in Mexico. He has extensive business experience and is on the board of two not-for-profits. Andrew is completing a PhD in Business Management, has a Bachelor of Economics and a Bachelor of Business Management. He is also completing an MSc in Education at Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar.

David is a qualified adult educator with professional and voluntary experience in training facilitators in early childhood literacy development in urban slums and rural areas in South Africa. He has a B.SocSci (PPE) and a PgDip in Adult Education from the University of Cape Town, and is reading a MSc. in Comparative and International Education at the University of Oxford as a Chevening Scholar.

Kristijan has extensive experience with several startups, having founded an education and health incubator while he was an undergraduate at the University of Melbourne. He is currently a Rhodes Scholar undertaking a neuroscience PhD at Oxford on learning and memory, while his previous studies involved developing innovative technologies in biochemistry and quantum optics.

Jenny is a medical doctor with a strong interest in education and community development in deprived areas in Australasia. She has founded two not-for-profits (including CHASE, a community-based health education program), has run Samoa’s national cancer education program and directed state-wide asylum seeker health initiatives in Australia. She is reading a Masters in Global Health and PhD in Population Health as a Rhodes Scholar.

Nicholas specialised in Psychology and Economics in his undergraduate degree at UCT. He moved to Oxford on a Rhodes Scholarship with a research focus on Early Childhood Education. He will begin a PhD later this year and will be

About the Hult Prize Foundation

The Hult Prize Foundation is a pioneer in crowd-based approaches to the development of entrepreneurial ecosystems and the acceleration of social enterprise. Its start-up accelerator brings together the brightest college and university students from around the globe to solve the world’s most pressing issues. It has been named by TIME amongst the top five ideas changing the world. The annual Hult Prize Challenge is the world’s largest student competition and crowd-sourcing platform for social good. The Hult Prize Foundation has been funded by the Hult family since it was founded in 2009 by current CEO, Ahmad Ashkar. To learn more, visit www.hultprize.org.

About The Clinton Global Initiative

Established in 2005 by President Bill Clinton, the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI), an initiative of Bill, Hillary & Chelsea Clinton Foundation, convenes global leaders to create and implement innovative solutions to the world’s most pressing challenges. CGI Annual Meetings have brought together more than 150 heads of state, 20 Nobel Prize laureates, and hundreds of leading CEOs, heads of foundations and NGOs, major philanthropists, and members of the media. To date, CGI members have made more than 2,500 commitments, which are already improving the lives of more than 430 million people in over 180 countries. When fully funded and implemented, these commitments will be valued at $87.9 billion.

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