

**‘Porto Water Innovation Week’ – 24-30 September  
INTERNATIONAL WATER EVENT is taking place in Porto  
“INNOVATION IN THE WATER SECTOR: PLUGGING THE GAPS, CREATING  
OPPORTUNITIES”**

**1,200 participants from 60 countries, over 70 speakers, 118 exhibitors**

The largest water event ever held in Portugal will take place on the theme of “**Innovation in the Water Sector: Plugging the Gaps, Creating Opportunities**”. **Porto Water Innovation Week** will bring together 1,200 participants from a wide variety of knowledge areas, from scientists to experts from every area of business, from 60 countries and five continents. The conference will also include a fair where over 100 companies will show the water sector what they have to offer.

In this context, special emphasis is given to innovative solutions which answer not only the challenges placed by Europe but also those made by the entire world. From the business point of view, matters related to the opportunities offered by the market for general innovation inside and outside Europe will be addressed, which also implies breaking down barriers to enable the solutions found to be applied.

This major challenge was presented by the **European Innovation Partnership on Water**, or **EIP-Water**, to the **Municipality of Porto**.

The conference has attracted a wide variety of experts who will not only give speeches but also participate in the debates. It is thus hoped that contributions will be made to solving the existing gaps in the broad water sector and, consequently, help to create opportunities and foster strong partnerships. The conference will therefore be attended by political leaders from across Europe, Portugal and locally. And also by regulatory bodies, public service decision-makers and technicians, industry and agriculture. It has also attracted many university and R&D centre researchers, creatives in general, startups and SMEs. As a result, there will also be an impressive presence by investors.

### **Five key aims**

The global importance of the event is also reflected in the panel of speakers, without mentioning particular names, only to remark that there will be a large number of Portuguese contributions. Having said that, of particular note will be the presence of the Minister for the Environment, **Pedro Matos Fernandes**, and, obviously, the host, **Rui Moreira**, president of the Municipal Council. Given the importance of his position, it is notable that the European Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, **Karmenu Vella**, will also attend and speak about the work carried out by the EU in matters of the environment and innovation.

The full list of speakers can be found on the event’s website at:  
<http://www.portowaterinnovationweek.eu/eip/conference#speakers>

In sum, the Porto conference will be conducted on the theme of the following 5 key aims: to improve access for innovation to financing and the markets; to facilitate the acquisition of innovations by final users; to develop innovation-

friendly regulations; to share good practices and facilitate access to results via open platforms; and to construct broad European partnerships with different stakeholders and collaborators.

## Stage for innovative startups

The initiative which businesses are most keenly anticipating is that directed at startups. For these, a competition was created and a jury shortlisted 6 finalists from 28 international entrants. On the stage, each will use their talents to win one of the prizes. Each of the businesses will have just three (3) minutes to convince the jury, which will consist of the following entities: Porto, UPTEC, Isle Utilities, Global Impact Partners and Launch Factory 88.

The top 3 presentations will be chosen by the jury and the audience, at a weighting of 75% and 25%. The audience will vote via a specific smartphone app. Entrants will be competing for three money prizes of €12,000, €6,000 and €3,000, respectively, with a further cumulative prize of €1,000, called InnoEnergy, for the project with the greatest energy efficiency potential.

The shortlisted startups are:

OXFINITI (UK)  
TALENTMOLECULE (Sweden + Portugal)  
BLUE-TEC (Netherlands)  
EDDY HOME (Canada + Portugal)  
TRIGGER.SYSTEMS (Portugal)  
THE O INITIATIVE (Australia + New Zealand)  
OPENDATASOFT (France + USA)  
DEFCON8 (Spain)  
BIOMARK, SENSOR RESEARCH (Portugal)  
AQUA-Q (Sweden)  
ENVIROSUITE (Spain)  
INFRASPEAK (Portugal)  
BRIGHTWORK + INGU SOLUTIONS (Netherlands + Canada)  
INANOENERGY (Portugal)  
SOLARDEW (Netherlands)  
FLOW LOOP (Denmark)

## Businesses on show

Running in parallel with the conference will be an important exhibition by a hundred companies in the furnace room of Alfândega do Porto. This will showcase the innovations and provide contact with entrepreneurs from all segments of the water sector. In this context, an event called **Splash Innovation Stage** will be held. This is designed to show innovations which startups in particular have reserved for this moment. It will also be a talent-spotting exercise.

These are the major events of “**Porto Water Innovation Week**” (PWIW), an international event that will put Porto on the map as European capital of water and innovation from 24-30 September this year. It is being jointly organised by

Porto City Council, through the municipal enterprise Águas do Porto, Águas de Portugal, Laboratório Nacional de Engenharia Civil and Parceria Portuguesa para a Água.

The initiative, which will be held notably at the Alfândega do Porto Congress Centre, consists of 3 major events: the “**EIP Water Conference**” and “**Mayors&Water Conference**”, both under the auspices of the European Commission, and the “**Water Innovation Lab Europe**”, conceived by the Canadian company Waterlution. It is on this diversified theme that world opinion-makers in the water and innovation sector will take stock of the situation of this essential resource in its multiple uses.

Of the some 60 countries registered, there are some surprising inclusions, such as Bhutan, Iran, Iraq, Mali, Nepal and Togo. This diversity shows that both the present and future of water is a global concern that cuts across areas, and it is crucial to debate the theme from the perspective of the different areas of knowledge as they are all relevant.

## A week dedicated to innovation with four major events

The “**EIP Water Conference 2017**”, organised by the **European Innovation Partnership on Water (EIPWater)**, will take place on 27-28, the fourth iteration of this international conference. Debated will be the main issues raised by the revolution underway in the sector, always in the twin aims of breaking down the barriers to innovation and creating business opportunities. There will therefore be a major emphasis on scientific and entrepreneurial areas.

In its turn, the “**Mayors & Water Conference 2017**”, held on 29, will focus on the Urban Water Agenda 2030 (UWA2030) and on demonstrating case studies on sustainable and innovative solutions for managing water in cities.

**It will also be an opportunity for cities, via their political decision-makers, to sign the “UWA2030 Porto Declaration” in which they agree to support the process of cooperation between cities and the European Commission in developing the agenda.** Through the City Council and Águas do Porto, Porto will naturally have a chance to show the good practices implemented in the city via the work of this municipal company.

## Laboratory atmosphere

Aimed at younger people aged from 18 to 35, the “**Water Innovation Lab Europe Porto 2017**” will occupy the entire week from 24-29. This initiative is designed to reproduce a conducive “laboratory” atmosphere encouraging collaboration between young leaders, mentors and facilitators of ideas. It will therefore certainly constitute a unique and unforgettable experience in intergenerational and intersectoral learning for its dozens of participants.

## Involving the public and the city

The conference will have a closing event on 29 and 30 September – **Aquaporto 2017**, the great Water Festival held once again at the Parque da Cidade. Included under the theme of **Water & People**, Aquaporto is an event dedicated to water resources. It has a strong scientific component that combines education with entertainment. Many entities will



be taking part in the festival, from city institutions and bodies, R&D centres and institutes of higher education. The programme will be varied, focusing heavily on the practical side of the activities to make them appealing and diverse. The space surrounding the Water Pavilion will therefore become a multi-coloured festival during these two days in which knowledge will be interspersed with fun and provide a great event for families and tourists.

All the initiatives are free, but require registration, with the exception of the Innovation Dinner and Water Innovation Lab Europe Porto 2017.

**It is important to note that representatives of the media must obtain prior accreditation.**

**For more information**

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