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Headline: Canadian university tops LKY business plan contest

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A silicon chip which can help detect even trace amounts of the contaminant melamine in milk powder earned a Canadian team the top prize of \$100,000 in the Lee Kuan Yew Global Business Plan Competition on Thursday.

The SpectraPlasmonics team from Queen's University, which beat five other finalists, hopes to use the prize to further its work.

"With this award we will be able to put a lot more focus on product development," said 22-year-old Tyler Whitney, one of the five members of the team, which hopes to commercialise the product.

The theme of this year's competition, organised by the Singapore Management University's Institute of Innovation and Entrepreneurship, was "Smart City", and called for creative proposals from university, college and polytechnic students across the globe to address the challenges a smart city faces and seize opportunities for innovation.

The competition drew 550 submissions from more than 300 universities in 68 countries, including Singapore.

The six finalists from the United States, Canada, Italy, China, Sweden and the United Kingdom were selected from 36 shortlisted teams.

As part of the final round, they took turns to present their ideas to a panel of seven judges at the Singapore Management University School of Law on Thursday.

The judges included Professor Lui Pao Chuen, adviser to the National Research Foundation Singapore, as well as Mr Michael Seibel, CEO of Y Combinator, a leading start-up incubator and accelerator in the United States.

The winning project involves the use of a metal-coated silicon chip to aid ultra-sensitive chemical detection. Lab samples are placed on the chip, which is implanted on a specimen slide and examined through a spectrometer.

The chip is able to enhance detection signals by at least a million times, thus producing more comprehensive test results and reducing the need for complex lab tests that are both costly and time-consuming.

Another finalist, Elephant Chain from Zhejiang University in China,



won the Smart Services Outstanding Award, a cash prize of \$25,000.

Elephant Chain is a project that builds a platform to facilitate financial transactions by reducing costs

that are incurred by the use of third-party intermediaries, which are also prone to fraud.

Daniel Ong

The winning Queen's University team was represented at the finals by (clockwise from left) Mr Malcolm Eade, Mr Tyler Whitney, Mr Ryan Picard and Mr Christian Baldwin. The fifth member was not present. PHOTO: LIANHE ZAOBAO

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