

SXSWedu® ANNOUNCES LAUNCH COMPETITION FINALISTS FOR 2017 PROGRAM

Early-Stage Education Startups Pitch to Leaders in Business, Investment and Learning Sectors

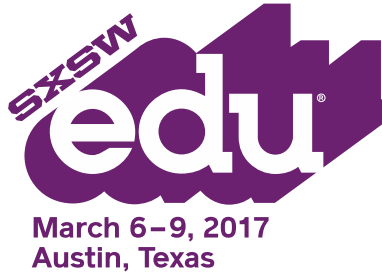
Jan. 11, 2017, AUSTIN, Texas – SXSWedu® unveiled the 10 Launch competition startup finalists in the countdown to the 2017 Conference & Festival which begins March 6th. The competition, which spans two days, is one of the premier components of the event and showcases early-stage companies from around the world that are dedicated to supporting teaching and learning. Over the past five years, SXSWedu’s popular Launch competition has featured startups that have gone on to receive millions in funding and impact learning across the country.

After a rigorous selection process led by the [Launch Advisory Board Committee](#), 10 early-stage education companies have been selected for the sixth annual Launch competition at SXSWedu. Finalists will compete in two rounds of pitching before a panel of judges and will receive guidance and mentoring from industry leaders. Through this exercise, they will learn key tips and refine their pitches each step of the way. The winner of the competition will be chosen and announced on Wednesday, March 8th at the Launch Party & Winner Announcement hosted by Walton Family Foundation.

This year’s top 10 finalists are:

- [Adjunct Professor Link](#) (Valparaiso, IN)
- [ALEX, Anyone’s Learning Experience](#) (Washington Township, NJ)
- [ASD Reading](#) (Las Vegas, NV)
- [Cell-Ed](#) (Palo Alto, CA)
- [LlamaZOO](#) (Victoria, BC)
- [Quizling – the Knowledge Game!](#) (Canberra, Australia)
- [Sown to Grow](#) (Oakland, CA)
- [Teachers Connect](#) (Boston, MA)
- [The Graide Network](#) (Chicago, IL)
- [The Whether powered by Better Weekdays](#) (Saint Louis, MO)

“Each year the Launch competition highlights the intersection of creativity and innovation in the education sector,” said Ron Reed, Director, SXSWedu. “We are delighted to provide a platform where early-stage startups get exposed to new ideas and leaders who can support their continued development. The unique interaction between educators, administrators and business leaders at the event helps form the groundwork for these startups to build impactful companies that serve the larger learning community.”



Past winners of SXSWedu Launch Program include: [ELSA](#) (2016), [Zaption](#) (2015), [RobotLAB](#) (2014), [Clever](#) (2013), [BloomBoard](#) (2012). ELSA (2016), which stands for English Language Speech Assistant, is a mobile app that uses AI to help people improve their pronunciation. The company is garnering lots of traction with international students and media. Clever (2013), a platform that simplifies and secures the integration of student data exchanged between SIS platforms and educational applications, recently partnered with Google on a Chromebook integration for learners. Lastly, BloomBoard (2012), one of the leading professional development platforms for K-12 educators, has built a number of vibrant partnerships with K-12 schools and state departments of education.

Emcees, judges and coaches for this year's launch program will be announced over the next few weeks. For the full program for SXSWedu, please go to the [online schedule](#).

About SXSWedu

The SXSWedu® Conference & Festival fosters and celebrates innovations in learning by hosting a diverse and energetic community of stakeholders across a variety of backgrounds in education. The annual four-day event affords registrants open access to engaging sessions, immersive workshops, interactive learning experiences, film screenings, early-stage startups, business opportunities and networking. Through collaboration, creativity and social action, SXSWedu empowers its global community to *Connect. Discover. Impact.* SXSWedu is a component of the South by Southwest® family of conferences and festivals. Join the passionate and innovative community at SXSWedu, March 6-9, 2017 in Austin, Texas. For more information, please visit <http://sxswedu.com>

###

Press Credentials: If you are a member of the press and interested in attending, media accreditation for SXSWedu 2017 is now open. Please visit <http://sxswedu.com/press> for more information.

Contact:
Liz Hillman Stein
SXSWedu Press & Publicity
elizabeth@sxswedu.com