Sandoz invites young entrepreneurs to enter Sandoz HACk, a global competition to help solve healthcare access challenges

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Tomorrow (September 28), we will launch the Sandoz HACk (Healthcare Access Challenge). I am proud to be part of this ambitious program.

The HACk has a clear objective: to drive access to medicines, medical information and healthcare capacity. It takes a “bottom-up” approach and aims to encourage young people to identify local access-related problems and “hack” them – in other words, to come up with solutions that could have a big impact.

I joined Sandoz as Corporate Responsibility Manager just over a year ago. Since then, I have learnt some often heartbreaking facts. For example, despite the significant overall drop in global deaths from infectious diseases over the past few decades, 1.5 million people still die every year from tuberculosis – a treatable and curable disease[1].
Also, coming from a developed Western country (the UK in my case), I made the wrong assumption that access to healthcare is a challenge faced only by those living in the developing world. In fact, people in developed countries also experience significant challenges, including access to transformative but increasingly expensive biologic treatments.

The combined efforts of public and private stakeholders have made significant advances. But large-scale systemic initiatives need to be supported by bottom-up, community-led change. And, from talking to colleagues around the world, I know that there are many people trying to solve the same problems – in their villages, neighborhoods and local communities.

So it got us thinking. What if Sandoz could tap in to the enthusiasm, passion and innovative thinking of young people worldwide, and support their efforts to make a difference?

Which is where the idea of ‘hacking healthcare access’ came from.

The Sandoz HACk is a global competition to generate innovative ideas and solutions, to help tackle some of the world’s most pressing healthcare access problems. The competition launches on September 28 and is open to anyone aged between 18 and 35 with a great idea.

Initial entries can be submitted via the Sandoz Facebook page [2] and we will ask selected entrants to provide more detail on their idea. Six shortlisted finalists will be published on OpenIDEO [3] – a global community of leading organizations and individuals, working together to design solutions to the world’s biggest challenges.

Entrants’ ideas will be refined and evolved in partnership with this online community before being presented to a panel of judges at Wired Health 2017. Three winners will each receive €20,000 seed funding and the opportunity for ongoing mentoring by senior Sandoz leaders to help bring their ideas to life.

I am confident we will unearth some great ideas that can make a big impact. Together, we can create – and activate -- a community of creative minds, to break down the barriers that prevent healthcare reaching those who need it most.

Video of Sandoz HACk teaser


Links