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Presentation Secondary School Tralee scoops top prize at national final of AIB's Build a Bank Challenge

- **Presentation Secondary School winners awarded top prize of €5,000 at RDS event by AIB Chairman Richard Pym**
- **Minister of State at the Department of Finance, Simon Harris TD, commends students for entrepreneurial skills**

AIB chairman Richard Pym today awarded the top prize of €5,000 to Presentation Secondary School at the national final of AIB's Build a Bank Challenge held in the RDS in Dublin at an event attended by Simon Harris TD, Minister of State at the Department of Finance.

Over 160 students from around Ireland congregated at the RDS to showcase the final results of months of hard work that went into successfully running their school banks. Now in its 13th year, the competition has grown to be one of the largest school competitions in the country. The 28 teams competing at the National Final had earlier succeeded at regional heats over the past couple of months.

The winning schools are:

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| 1st place: | Presentation Secondary School, Tralee, Co. Kerry |
| 2nd place: | Dunshaughlin Community College, Dunshaughlin, Co. Meath |
| 3rd place: | St Patrick's Grammar School, Downpatrick, Co. Down |
| Best Digital Bank: | Scoil Mhuire, Wellington Rd, Co. Cork |

AIB Chairman Richard Pym said: “More than 10,000 students from across Ireland have run their own bank since the Challenge began 13 years ago. I would like to congratulate Presentation Secondary School who have emerged as the winner from among the more than 180 schools who entered this year’s competition. All the participants demonstrated strong business and influencing skills in their presentations to the panel of judges. These are the kind of skills any employer would value in their workforce.”

AIB’s Build a Bank Challenge involves Transition and Fifth Year students setting up and running a bank in their school with the support of their AIB Student Officer. It is one of Ireland’s largest transition year competitions. The students get involved in everything from sourcing new customers and opening AIB accounts to encouraging regular savings, exploring new ways to bank and customer loyalty programmes. At the final the schools showcased their school bank through innovative exhibitions -- displaying excellent communication skills in their presentations to the panel of judges.

Specially commissioned trophies were awarded to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd placed teams. Eugene McDonough, chief operations officer of the CoderDojo Foundation presented the ‘Best Digital Bank’ Award.

In his role as AIB Youth Ambassador Colm ‘the Gooch’ Cooper has been heavily involved with the students taking part in this year’s AIB Build a Bank Challenge. He attended the BABC Final to offer some words of encouragement to the finalists.

Simon Harris TD, Minister of State at the Department of Finance, said: “I’m really impressed by the quality and depth of the projects and presentations on show at today’s national awards. Not only does it provide a great platform for students to develop and apply their presentation and public speaking skills, but it also gives them a working knowledge of the nuts and bolts of setting up and running a successful business. Given the quality of work I’ve seen here today I’m confident that many of today’s students will be tomorrow’s entrepreneurs – well equipped to grab hold of opportunities not only in the global village but also in their own communities.”

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Notes for Editor:

More information on the AIB Build a Bank Challenge is available on www.aib.ie/buildabank and to see all the action from the day check out AIB’s Facebook page: www.facebook.com/AIB and Twitter by searching #AIBBuildaBank.