Purina Announces 2024 Pet Care Innovation Prize Winners

Pet Care Startups from Melbourne, FL, Kansas City, MO, Chicago, IL, Vancouver, CA, and Perth, AU Awarded Cash Prizes and Support from Purina

ST. LOUIS, Jan. 8, 2024 /PRNewswire/ -- Pet care startups from the U.S., Canada, and Australia have been named finalists for the eighth annual Pet Care Innovation Prize powered by Purina, each receiving $25,000 and support from the pet care leader as they work to grow their businesses in the$136.8 billion* pet care industry. This year's class represents innovation across the spectrum of pet care products and services, from pet enrichment toys, a toothbrush designed specifically for a cat's anatomy, alternative protein and allergy-friendly pet treats and food, to a game-changing microchip that monitors pet health from the inside, and a platform to help organizations provide foster care for pets.

Nearly 150 companies from around the world applied for the 2024 Pet Care Innovation Prize. The 2024 Pet Care Innovation Prize Winners are:

SwiftPaws (https://swiftpaws.com)
Melbourne, Florida-based SwiftPaws makes playful enrichment products to exercise and entertain pets. Best known for their American-made lure coursing kits, the SwiftPaws team is dedicated to the mental and physical well-being of pets and the people who love them. SwiftPaws was featured on Shark Tank in 2022.

BestyBnB (https://bestybnb.com)
Kansas City, Missouri-based BestyBnB bridges the gap between human social services and animal welfare organizations by securing safe, temporary housing for clients' pets when they are in challenging situations where they cannot care for their pets. By creating and enhancing crisis care and safety net pet programs for organizations that serve people in crisis, BestyBnB helps ensure that clients will seek care and help knowing that their pets are safe.

Arch Pet Food (https:/archpetfood.com)
Chicago Illinois-based Arch Pet Food company offers alternative protein pet treats and food that are food-allergen friendly, highly nutritious, and sustainable. Arch does this by utilizing superfoods like microalgae, insect proteins, and invasive fish as key ingredients.

RYERCAT (https:/ryercat.com)
Vancouver, Canada-based RYERCAT hopes to redefine feline oral health with a toothbrush and dental line designed specifically for feline anatomy. Like many cat owners, the founders of RYERCAT struggled to brush their cats' teeth, which led them to create a better dental solution to improve the brushing experience for cats and their owners.

VetChip (https://www.vetchip.com.au)
Perth, Australia-based VetChip is a biotechnology company dedicated to improving animal health and welfare through pioneering technology that monitors, analyzes, and detects pet health issues. The VetChip is implanted to gather data and alert pet owners via an app if potential issues or signs of illness or injury are detected, allowing for faster diagnosis and treatment.

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Each of the five startup winners will receive $25,000, mentorship from the Pet Care Innovation team at Purina and Active Capital and will participate in an accelerator boot camp at Purina's headquarters in St. Louis, MO, featuring pet experts from Purina and across the pet care industry.

"At Purina, our purpose and passion revolve around enriching the lives of pets and the people who love them. Collaborating with startups that share our enthusiasm for pets and are dedicated to continuous innovation enables us to mutually inspire and learn from each other," said Blair Morgan, co-lead of Purina's 9 Square Ventures group and Vice President of Strategy and Innovation for Purina. "This year's group of winners exemplifies the diverse range of possibilities in pet care, and we look forward to working with each of these companies to help accelerate their success in an incredibly competitive and rewarding industry."

During a culminating pitch competition in March at Global Pet Expo, an annual trade show in the United States presented by the American Pet Products Association and the Pet Industry Distributors Association, the five finalists will present their businesses to an audience of Purina executives, industry influencers and investors. A grand prize winner will be chosen at this event to receive an additional $25,000 in cash from Purina.

The Pet Care Innovation Prize is a collaborative effort of Purina's 9 Square Ventures corporate venturing group and investing leaders Active Capital to support and connect with early stage pet care startups that are currently in market with an innovative business addressing pet and pet owner needs in the areas of pet health and wellness, services, technology, and food, treats or litter.

9 Square Ventures leverages Purina's knowledge, experience, and financial resources to help emerging pet care startups scale their businesses and make a positive impact on the lives of as many pets and their owners as possible. The group has been steadily investing millions of dollars in a diverse set of early-stage pet care startups since it was founded in 2014.

For more information about the Pet Care Innovation Prize powered by Purina,
visit https://petcareinnovation.net

**American Pet Products Association*

About Purina

Nestlé Purina PetCare creates richer lives for pets and the people who love them. Founded in 1894, Purina has helped dogs and cats live longer, healthier lives by offering scientifically based nutritional innovations. Purina manufactures some of the world's most trusted and popular pet care products, including Purina ONE, Pro Plan, Fancy Feast and Tidy Cats. Our more than 10,000 U.S. associates take pride in our trusted pet food, treat and litter brands that feed 46 million dogs and 68 million cats every year. More than 500 Purina scientists, veterinarians, and pet care experts ensure our commitment to unsurpassed quality and nutrition.

Purina promotes responsible pet care through our scientific research, our products and our support for pet-related organizations. Over the past five years, Purina has contributed more than $150 million towards organizations that bring, and keep, people and pets together, as well as those that help our communities and environment thrive.

Purina is part of Nestlé, a global leader in Nutrition, Health and Wellness. For more information,

visit purina.com or subscribe here to get the latest Purina news.

About Active Capital:

Active Capital is a St. Louis-based impact investing leader, helping startups and investors come together to grow innovative products and initiatives. Active Capital manages the Pet Care Innovation Prize.

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