

Skannex honored grant to boost development of robust health testers

Outbreaks of life-threatening infectious diseases are spreading faster than ever. Testing among people in afflicted areas will become increasingly important, and the Norwegian health tech company Skannex has received a grant to accelerate a design project developing in the field testers in vulnerable areas.

The threat of new infectious disease outbreaks around the world are very real. In the World Bank's annual meeting in Washington earlier this month, a pandemic table top simulation was held.

In addition to the many casualties from an outbreak, the economic effect could be devastating to countries with strained economies. That was the case with the outbreak of Ebola a few years ago when travel and tourism to the affected countries like Sierra Leone and Liberia plummeted.

Skannex is about to develop a self tester that will increase the probability of discovering infectious diseases at an early stage. Now the company has been given a boost with a grant of NOK 600.000 from a Norwegian innovation program.

Close cooperation

- We applied and were honored grants from a Design-driven Innovation Program - DIP, CEO Siri Stabel Olsen says. There were 113 applications, with only 14 per cent awarded grants.

- Our key design partner will be the Norwegian Design Company K8 Industridesign, and the project is already underway. The goal of the DIP project is to demonstrate that Skannex' technology can be adapted to a reader which has a design and price that makes it robust and attractive enough for decentralized testing, she explains.

Vulnerable populations

There are populations with limited opportunities to detect infectious diseases and where their centralized governments are not able and do not have the resources to reach them. It can be infections like HIV and diseases like Malaria and Dengue fever.

- Skannex is already positioned in relevant markets with subsidiaries and contacts with manufacturers in China and India. The key factor is price and quality on the products that we are going to put out. Experience from the DIP project can further be introduced in the home test markets of Europe and the United States.

Skannex is also a member in NOREPS, the Norwegian Emergency Preparedness System. It is a network of public and private actors facilitated by Innovation Norway who believes that Norwegian competitiveness can contribute to respond to global challenges by making sure that smart and sustainable solutions are implemented in humanitarian operations.

Norwegian design and technology

There will be a close cooperation between K8 Industrial Design and Skannex in all phases of the DIP project. K8 has a lot of very relevant experience in planning and setting up different types of user surveys.

- Stronger involvement of designers in the early stages increases the likelihood that the product will solve real problems and give a good return on investment, Siri Stabel Olsen claims.

The final result of the project will form the basis for a commercial solution aimed at NGOs and manufacturers. Skannex' production partners will be able to accelerate a new concept and rapidly put the product in a volume production.

ABOUT SKANNEX

Skannex is a Norwegian software company that was launched in 2006 by Dag Bremnes. The company has developed sophisticated software for image analysis of biochemical information. Skannex' core expertise is within development, manufacturing and commercialisation of handheld and desktop reader systems for rapid tests. All readers are enabled by Skannex' proprietary software for image capture and analysis. The flexibility and solidity of the Skannex reader software fulfill the demand from their lateral flow test customers to go to market with a high quality diagnostic system. The Company has subsidiaries in China and India, and customers in all relevant market segments such as Human IVD, Drug of Abuse, Veterinary and Food Toxicity testing.



ABOUT K8 INDUSTRIDESIGN

K8, pushing the limits within product innovation for more than 19 years. K8 is an award winning, full service design house, offering product innovation, prototyping, interaction design, service design and development for IPR.

In close cooperation with their partners, K8 is fearless, playful and responsible when approaching new projects. This results in smart products improving life, work and society.

Their efficient design process is user and environment centered, their core principles for successful product innovation.

K8 work with large companies as well as small local entrepreneurs and start-ups, always with the same eager and passion to create unique and valuable products.

Strategic development for patenting, and IPR protection, is a central part of the innovation process at K8, and is certainly building sustainable value. – www.k8.no

K8. fearless. playful. responsible.





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