



## X5 AND IIDF SELECT 10 SUSTAINABILITY STARTUPS

X5 Group, Russia's leading food retailer, and the Internet Initiatives Development Fund (IIDF) have held X5 Pitch Day, a pitch session for sustainability startups. One hundred fifty-six companies applied to participate in the event, with the majority of projects (70 in total) ready for product scale-up and nine in the idea phase.

Ten projects made it to the final. X5 experts together with professionals from the Group's retail chains and business units are now carefully reviewing the selected initiatives. The project teams are awaiting their decision: the most suitable projects will be able to undergo funded piloting and may be scaled up if successful.

*"This was our first sustainability pitch session. The number of applicants came as a pleasant surprise to us. Many of the projects deserve special attention, as the teams demonstrated a profound understanding of the challenges the food retail industry is facing and offered potential ways to respond to them. As soon as practically possible, we will thoroughly review and assess the finalists' projects. The piloting may start as early as January 2023, just after the peak season. We are confident that ESG innovations will help us to achieve the goals set out in our sustainable development strategy in a faster and more efficient way," said Roman Timaev, Innovations Director at X5 Group.*

Experts from the IIDF accelerator have carried out a technological audit to identify areas with strong potential for employing startup solutions. These technology-driven areas include industrial automation; environmental improvements for distribution centres, stores and vehicles/transportation; waste reduction; recycling; social programmes; and more.

This is the sixth startup pitch session held by the IIDF and X5 Group. Since the first session, the two partners have collected over 700 applications, with 46 teams presenting their solutions to business customers, including more than 10 projects approved for piloting with X5 Group.

In December 2019, X5 Group adopted a sustainable development strategy based on the four UN SDGs where the Company can make the biggest difference: promoting a healthy lifestyle and the availability of quality and wholesome foods; ensuring decent working conditions and equal opportunities for employees; advancing responsible consumption and use of resources; and supporting local communities through the development of charity.

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