

Press Release

Hao2.eu's work "3D Novations" initiative wins an award recognising the very best in online achievement and innovation

6 July 2012 – Hao2.eu, a social firm championing inclusive innovation with partners across the EU, Commonwealth and China, was announced last night as a winner at [Nominet Internet Awards 2012](#), which showcase projects from UK businesses, charities, individuals and public and private sector organisations which help to make the internet a more secure, open, accessible and diverse experience for all.

Winning the category, CBI Most Innovative Internet Business, Hao2.eu has been recognised for the initiative it set up to help tackle the growing exclusion of people with disabilities such as autism from education and employment. 80% of the Hao2.eu team have autistic spectrum conditions. Working in partnership with National Autistic Society, Remploy, Kingston and Greenwich Universities, Hao2.eu tested the viability of 3D virtual worlds as a fourth digital channel through which people with ASC could access personalised and flexible education, training and employment support services. The initiative has produced transformational results for people with autism who have participated in it and demonstrated the potential of 3D virtual worlds as an austerity friendly medium for business innovation and growth.

The Nominet Internet Awards celebrate the achievements and innovation of UK internet initiatives. The awards are open to any organisation or individual who is doing great work online, whether it benefits their business, the wider economy, local communities or the UK's internet users in general. Over 65 organisations, initiatives and individuals have been nominated for awards this year. Entries were reviewed by an independent panel of judges, chaired by Rt Hon Stephen Timms, MP. The winners will be announced at an awards ceremony on Thursday 5 July 2012 at the Saatchi Gallery, London.

Each winner's initiative will be showcased by Nominet at the next meeting of the United Nations' [Internet Governance Forum \(IGF\)](#), taking place in Baku, Azerbaijan, in November, to help promote and develop industry best practice for the entire global online community.

For the full list of shortlisted organisations, visit the [Nominet Internet Awards website](#).

Nicola Herbertson, CEO of Hao2.eu says: "Winning this prestigious award is a testament to the skills and commitment of our team, 80% of whom have autistic spectrum conditions. Less than 15% of people with autism are in full time employment and supporting the needs of people with autism is a global

and growing challenge. Our initiative has shown that by focusing on developing capability rather than disability and by combining the potential of the internet with some technical and social ingenuity, organisations of all sizes anywhere in the world can increase employment opportunities for people with Autism"

Lesley Cowley, CEO of Nominet says: "We're always inspired by the efforts British businesses, charities and individuals make on projects designed to help make the Internet a safe, accessible and helpful place, and this year's awards has seen an incredibly strong list of candidates. By using the power of the web they are making a real difference to peoples' lives, and providing a shining example to the rest of the world."

About Hao2.eu

Hao2.eu is a female led social firm providing research, development and training services to promote inclusive innovation in the UK, EU, commonwealth and China. Hao2.eu's recent work has focused on how 3D virtual world technologies can support people with disabilities such as autism

About the Nominet Internet Awards

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About Nominet

Nominet is the not-for-profit organisation responsible for the smooth and secure running of the .uk infrastructure. A public service ethos drives everything we do – we strive to make the Internet an ever more trusted space for everyone who uses it.

As one of the world's largest Internet registries, we maintain a 'directory' of domain names ending in.uk, and run the technology which locates the computer hosting the website or email address you are looking for. Our public purpose is manifest in two principal investments – the independently run Nominet Trust and knowthenet.org.uk.