

05212024 Imagine Cup

**Imagine Cup**  
**Dona Sarkar, Annie Pearl**  
**Redmond, Washington**  
**Tuesday, May 21, 2024**

**ANNOUNCER:** Please welcome Donna Sarkar and the Imagine Cup World Championship finalists.

**DONNA SARKAR:** Hello Microsoft Build! We are so excited to be here to announce who will be crowned the Imagine Cup World Champion. For those who don't know, who might be new here — anyone new here? A few hands. Imagine Cup has a proud 22-year-old history of empowering students all around the world to solve some of our most difficult challenges using tech. From the tens of thousands of students who applied — and we really do mean tens of thousands, every country in the world, by the way — we're so excited to have the final three startups live here with us today. These students are not holograms and they're not AI. They are real and live. Wave. Earlier this month — everyone, yes. Thank you. Earlier this month, these finalists pitched to our esteemed panel of judges. Here they are: Elnaz Sarraf, first of all, the CEO and founder of ROYBI Robot; second, Ali Partovi, CEO of Neo; and third, Annie Pearl, corporate vice president of ecosystems here at Microsoft.

Each of these startups presented their solution, demoed their technology and fielded some pretty hard questions, I think. They were judged on their use of AI, their consideration of inclusive practices and design — we like that — and third, their overall viability. These students are just so impressive and you're absolutely going to fall in love with them. Let's get to know them. All right, PlanRoadmap, tell us about you, your team, and your project.

**PlanRoadmap:** My name is Aaliya, this is Ever, and that's Clay. We're from the United States. I go to Georgia Tech, and they go to Binghamton University. We created Roadmap, a product designed for people struggling with ADHD and task paralysis. Roadmap leverages ADHD-specific motivators and simplifies decision making to help people start their task. We use Azure OpenAI to personalize the user experience with learned user information and the latest ADHD research. We want to help people work with their brains, not against them.

**DONNA SARKAR:** That is fantastic. Can we get a round of applause, please? Thank you. Your neurodivergent friends thank you, by the way. Just saying. All right, so next up, JRE, over to you. Tell us.

**JRE:** Absolutely, Donna. Well, this is Akshat from India, and I am Jorge from Mexico. We both are students at the University of Oxford. What if I told you that with a device smaller than the size of a soda can, we could revolutionize the steel manufacturing industry? Well, that's what we do. By using this sensor and our proprietary AI model, we are able to detect anomalies in the steel-making process, helping the industry become safer, greener, more efficient and more profitable. By doing so, we truly put AI to work for our motto: People, Planet, Profit.

**DONNA SARKAR:** "People, Planet, Profit"; can we agree with that? We all know sustainable manufacturing is the future of manufacturing. Thank you for your work. Hardware is hard, good job. All right. Last and definitely not least FROM YOUR EYES. Let's hear from you, Zülal. Well, first of all, hi everyone.

**FROM YOUR EYES:** I am Zülal, this is Emre, and Ege is also joining us being online today. FROM YOUR EYES is an artificial vision company. We actually trained our own custom AI model in order to customize and localize the video image processing and real-time image processing. We also use GPT-4 for the NLP process. We have three solutions right now: The first one is the API for the developers and businesses in order to give them a basic environment to build their own solutions, the second one is a vehicle vision in order to make vehicles see, and the third and the last one is a mobile application for visually impaired people to allow them to see.

**DONNA SARKAR:** So impressive, yes? Great job. I love a good accessibility project. That's pretty cool. I love it. All of these startups are doing absolutely incredible things with AI and making such an impact in the world. We'd love to see them in action and watch a recap of their pitches and the competition. Let's roll!

**PlanRoadmap:** There are over half a billion people estimated with ADHD worldwide. In general, someone with ADHD has a higher chance of dropping out of school, getting unemployed, having depression, all these other kind of ailments. We want to change that for people. I think there's two big ways that Roadmap could change the world. First and foremost, I think it could help people struggling with ADHD unlock their true potential; and then second, we can start reducing the stigma against ADHD worldwide.

**DONNA SARKAR:** OK, PlanRoadmap, it's time for your pitch.

**PlanRoadmap:** Roadmap has small, simple questions to help you break down the task into smaller steps, and it guides you through the conversation with tailored suggestion buttons to make it as easy as possible to interact with it. Let's take a test biology lab report and type it into Roadmap. As you chat, Roadmap learns about you, and it tailors your future conversations to your strengths and weaknesses. It can also suggest integrated tools such as a timer which creates urgency, or a music player if you need novelty, aligning with interest-based nervous system of ADHD. Winning the Microsoft Imagine Cup would give us the funding we need to address more of the things people with ADHD struggle with.

**JRE:** The steel industry is one of the top polluters, accounting for almost 7% of the total global carbon emissions. By using a small sensor no bigger than the size of a soda can, we can create huge environmental impact, huge savings in terms of raw material use, and huge added value in terms of profitability for manufacturers.

**DONNA SARKAR:** JRE, we are ready for your pitch.

**JRE:** Our system detects slag at the optimal level, ensuring that the amount of wasted steel is brought down to almost zero with minimal slack flowing out of the ladle. The commercial benefits are massive, too, with an increase in profits by an average of \$1.5 million per annum per manufacturer. If we deploy our system and get about 10% of the global steel market share, we'll be able to save over 30 million liters of water, over a million tons of coal from being burned, and enough electricity to power the New York City skyline for over two months. This is the power of small incremental gains.

**FROM YOUR EYES:** There are more than 330 million visually impaired people worldwide, so our main purpose is to design the closest version of vision with AI.

**DONNA SARKAR:** OK, FROM YOUR EYES, let's start your pitch.

**FROM YOUR EYES:** FROM YOUR EYES is an AI vision company, and we have two solutions. The first one is the mobile application, FYE, and the second one is the API. Thanks to our mobile app, visually impaired users can design their own AI assistance in order to get descriptions to the photos, videos or other visual documents as well. Thanks to our API, we integrate our solutions to the required fields such as developers, businesses and enterprises by licensing it. For example, (inaudible) and together our APIs with the vehicle, in order to become a car assistant for visually impaired passengers. "The vehicle is driving on asphalt and gray tones. The two-way road is framed by the beauties of the surrounding nature." If we win the competition, all of the visually impaired people have a chance to see with our technology.

**ALI PARTOVI:** I was quite blown away by all three of your projects.

**ELENAZ SARRAF:** The team members are working on something truly impactful.

**ANNIE PEARL:** My words of encouragement are really keep pushing. Keep pushing during the peaks of the journey, but more importantly, keep pushing during the valleys of your journey and just don't ever lose this passion to really change the world.

**DONNA SARKAR:** I still can't get over how amazing your pitches were. We could all use some life coaching on how to pitch like that. The pitches were amazing, competition was incredible, and I'm so thrilled to be joined by Imagine Cup judge, Annie Pearl. Annie, thank you so much for joining us here today. how fantastic are these startups.

**ANNIE PEARL:** Donna, every single one of these startups has shown the grit and the resourcefulness that it takes to be a successful entrepreneur. It's been so inspiring to see their creative uses of AI, and it really just goes to show you what can happen when you take students and you give them access to the power of Azure AI, and you let them build.

**DONNA SARKAR:** That's right. When they're given these awesome tools like AI Copilot and all of these things, it's amazing how you can just do the thing. In fact, all of these teams are winners today. Both runners up will receive \$50,000, and our world champion will go home with \$100,000 plus a mentoring session with Microsoft Chairman and CEO Satya Nadella. Pretty good mentor. Not so bad. For all of you in person, you absolutely need to go up to the fifth floor.

What did I say? Fifth floor, demo theater and see their demos live because they're amazing. Absolutely amazing. All right. Is everyone ready? All right, here we go. A little excitement here.

**ANNIE PEARL:** All right, let's go.

**DONNA SARKAR:** And the 2024 Imagine Cup world Champion is FROM YOUR EYES from Türkiye. Imagine Cup 2025 is now open. Everyone, please enjoy Microsoft Build.

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