



## **Global Atlantic and BEDC Reveal Finalists for Wave of Opportunity Pitch Competition**

***November 21<sup>st</sup> Event is Open to the Public and on Livestream***

**HAMILTON, BERMUDA — October 24, 2024** — [Global Atlantic Financial Group \(“Global Atlantic”\)](#), a leading insurance company meeting the retirement and life insurance needs of individuals and institutions – in partnership with the Bermuda Economic Development Corporation (BEDC) – today announced the eight finalists for the upcoming Wave of Opportunity Pitch Competition. The event will take place at the Hamilton Princess Hotel on November 21<sup>st</sup> where the finalists will pitch their businesses for the chance to win one of five \$25,000 prizes. It will be open to the public to attend and will also be livestreamed.

This year’s competition attracted an impressive 65 applications, which were carefully evaluated and narrowed down to a select group of 25 applicants. This included 5 outstanding candidates in the youth category and 20 exceptional entries from local companies. Following an initial round of preliminary pitches, the field was reduced to five adult finalists and three youth finalists who will go on to compete in the finals.

The Wave of Opportunity Pitch Competition will result in five entrepreneurs being awarded up to \$25,000 each:

- 3 local companies from any industry;
- 1 youth entrepreneur (ages 13-22); and
- 1 People’s Choice Award, where the public will vote for their favorite business.

The three youth finalists are:

- The Playroom – Akilah Acka: An indoor playground and cafe for children ages 6 months to 6 years.
- Navigate – Tre Maxwell: A mobile drone light show service, offering custom LED drone displays.
- Flow by Nico – Nico Bean: Unique acrylic paintings, handcrafted ornaments, and custom-printed notebooks and phone cases.

The five businesses advancing to the finals are:

- PsyNeu – Adriene Berkeley: A mental health practice offering cognitive skill development and emotional wellness services.
- Sweat Suites Studio – Lauren Furbert: Bermuda’s first wellness club offering contrast therapy, infrared saunas, and cold plunges.
- NBK School of Nails – Keely Trott: An internationally accredited nail technician school offering comprehensive hands-on training.
- Bermuda Sports Radar – Jekon Edness: OTT sports media company offering live event coverage, highlights, and profiles for local sports fans.
- Sade Milan Skin – Ashleigh Simons: An all-natural intimate skincare brand focusing on self-care and feminine wellness.

"We are thrilled to continue our partnership with BEDC for the Wave of Opportunity Pitch Competition. The caliber of finalists this year is truly impressive, showcasing the innovative spirit and entrepreneurial talent in Bermuda," said Darryl Herrick, Co-Head of Reinsurance at Global Atlantic and President of Global Atlantic Re. "By providing these grants, we aim to fuel the growth of local businesses and contribute to the island's economic vitality. We look forward to seeing these promising entrepreneurs pitch their ideas and take their ventures to the next level."

The Wave of Opportunity Pitch Competition is a pivotal element of the collaboration between Global Atlantic and BEDC. Together, they are committed to providing a \$125,000 small business accelerator grant to winning entrepreneurs, aimed at bolstering Bermuda's small business landscape, creating jobs, and stimulating the local economy.

Erica Smith, Executive Director of BEDC, emphasized the importance of the continued partnership in driving small business success, stating, "We are excited to continue our work with Global Atlantic to provide vital support for Bermuda's entrepreneurs. These partnerships are essential for helping businesses grow and thrive, contributing to the island's economy. I'm excited for the finals and look forward to seeing the innovative ideas presented."

The public is encouraged to register for the November 21st event, where they can engage in the competition and vote for the People's Choice Award. Registration and livestream details can be found at [www.bedc.bm](http://www.bedc.bm).

#### **About BEDC**

Bermuda Economic Development Corporation (BEDC) is Bermuda's premier source of free, confidential business advice for entrepreneurs. The mission is to serve Bermuda's local business community with the highest degree of professionalism by providing authoritative business advice, counsel, and financial support. Bermuda Business Starts Here! For more information, visit [www.bedc.bm](http://www.bedc.bm).

#### **About Global Atlantic**

Global Atlantic Financial Group is a leading insurance company meeting the retirement and life insurance needs of individuals and institutions. With a strong financial foundation and risk and investment management expertise, the company delivers tailored solutions to create more secure financial futures. The company's performance has been driven by its culture and core values focused on integrity, teamwork, and the importance of building long-term client relationships. Global Atlantic is a wholly owned subsidiary of KKR, a leading global investment firm. Through its relationship, the company leverages KKR's investment capabilities, scale and access to capital markets to enhance the value it offers clients. KKR's parent company is KKR & Co. Inc. (NYSE: KKR).

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Global Atlantic Financial Group (Global Atlantic) is the marketing name for The Global Atlantic Financial Group LLC and its subsidiaries. The Global Atlantic Re foundation is dedicated to the promotion of economic development, education and environmental sustainability initiatives throughout Bermuda.

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