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**2022 Australian Teen Entrepreneur of the Year announced**

Ned Heaton, 15 year old founder of The Turtle Tribe was this week crowned as Australia’s Teen Entrepreneur of the Year for his mission to save the oceans from plastic pollution.

Founding his business at the age of 11, Ned had grown up witnessing the problem of ocean plastics first hand during his annual family camping trips on Mulgumpin (Moreton Island), and decided to do something about it.

“I’m honoured to receive this award”, says Ned, “and hope it shines a light on the issue of ocean plastics, and the urgent need for us all to reduce our plastic waste.”

“Scientists predict that by 2050 there’ll be more plastic in the ocean than fish, and we can’t let that happen. We have to change. We have to use less plastic.”

“Plastic toothbrushes last for several hundred years in the marine environment, and every one you’ve ever used is still in the world somewhere. The crazy thing is, there’s no need to make them out of plastic. Bamboo toothbrushes work just the same but biodegrade when you’ve finished with them.”

Ned credits his success to his many supporters, including Ocean Crusaders, Sea Shepherd, University of Queensland, Brisbane Sustainability Agency, Dolphin Research Australia, Regis Aged Care, Youth in Business and more.

Forging inter-generational partnerships with some of Australia’s largest aged care providers has seen The Turtle Tribe grow quickly into one of Australia’s largest suppliers of bamboo toothbrushes.

The Teens in Business Awards received hundreds of entries from around the country, and finalists were invited to pitch their business ideas in front of their peers and a panel of judges during the online event, as part of Spark Festival 2022.

The judges were blown away with the calibre of entries this year, and noted Ned’s “impressive business model, providing a tangible solution to a major world problem”, also recognising him with the Most Impactful Teen Business Award.

The Teens in Business Awards is a joint initiative between Young Change Agents and BOP Industries, the 2022 Teens in Business Awards celebrates and amplifies the creativity, passion, and interests of young people as they try to create positive change in their communities. The awards acknowledge young people and give them a platform to expand their impact.

Spark Festival is a not-for-profit, grassroots festival for start-ups and innovators looking to create a better future.  
  
Interviews 0408220055

<https://theturtletribe.com.au/pages/neds-story>

<https://www.teensinbusiness.com/2022-winners>