**DEMOLA UP - INNOVATION CHALLENGE**



Demola is an innovation platform that connects businesses and students. The concept was born in Finland, but the platform and the Demola Community have now grown into an international network of more than 60 universities in 16 countries around the world, including the UP, which joined in 2019.

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Last spring, Demola UP and the Green University Program of the UP launched a challenge to support the strategic work of the Green University Program. Five UP students participated in the project team, worked successfully together, and developed a number of innovative ideas. Due to the pandemic, the entire challenge had to be hosted in the online space.

The GreenIdea challenge project team was very diverse in terms of its cultural and academic background. Alua Bizhanova was born and raised in Kazakhstan and is a student of Psychology at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

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What motivated you to apply for the GreenIdea challenge, did you have any prior expectations?

The GreenIdea challenge was my second Demola project. Although it was created by the UP itself, my previous project was originally Finnish. I was simply curious to see how different and perhaps how much easier it would be if the project was more local. Also

 I feel that it is the moral duty of every conscious person to take an interest in the future of our planet, so there is no need to put into words why I applied for this challenge.

What advice would you give to UP students who are thinking of getting involved in an international innovation project?

Just do it! Innovation is about creating something new, which is literally about trying and failing before you succeed in making something happen. No one expects you to know everything or to be perfect from day one. But it's also the perfect way to hone your skills and abilities, and to do it on the job. Just make sure you have the time, I know how hard it is to decide what to do when your university career is reduced to CV competitions. Try it, if you don't like it you can always choose something else instead.