

Daria Sadkina from Stop and Stare Design Co. Ltd. based in Bailieborough, Co. Cavan was named as the overall Young Entrepreneur of The Year 2016/2017 in County Cavan

Daria also won the category for Best Start-up Business and an investment fund from LEO Cavan worth €15,000.

We spoke to Daria in September 2017 to find out what winning IBYE meant for her and her business and get her advice for anybody considering entering the Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur (IBYE) Competition.



Business: Stop and Stare Design Co. Ltd:

Q. Why did you enter the Cavan competition to find Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur?

- I entered the competition in autumn 2016 when my company – Stop & Stare – had already launched in the market
- I had also showcased at the Local Enterprise Office Village as part of the National Ploughing Championships and I felt that our product was good enough to win 'Best Start-up' category in the IBYE
- I would have liked to apply the previous year when the idea of tattoo designs printed on natural-looking tights was just an idea; however, as I was already 33 at that stage, the upper age limit of 30 at the time ruled me out of competition.
- So I was delighted that the limit was increased to 35 last in 2016.
- As a start-up brand, my business partner Marina and I multi-task a lot: from design, to actual production, to marketing, and doing VAT returns, etc. So having to take the time out of the everyday busyness to take part in the competition allowed me to take a strategic view on the business: where it is, where we want it to be and what to do to get us there.
- Taking part in the bootcamp and the consultations with the experts in the industry and business in general also gave me access to the expertise and knowledge and experience I wouldn't have come across elsewhere.

Q. How did it feel to be announced the winner of the IBYE "Best Start-Up" Category & then announced as the Overall Young Entrepreneur of the Year for Cavan?

- The feeling was amazing – even though you start out with the idea of winning, you benefit so much along the way that the actual prize seems to move to the back of your mind as you go through different stages of the competition.
- And because you get to know other participants and their business ideas so much, and realise how creative, innovative, ambitious and competitive other people in the room are, it's the sense of disbelief, I guess, that a panel of independent judges will pick my business out of the whole lot.
- It was very emotional, to say the least – I didn't have a speech prepared or anything, so there was a lot of improvising and a tear or two!

Q. What did winning IBYE 'Best Start-Up' category and being involved in the Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur (IBYE) competition mean for you personally and for your business?

- Personally – it gave me a kick and confidence booster that yes, I can do it if I put my soul and dedication into it and learn to take some risks and trust my gut feeling along the way.
- For business – well, after being self-employed and working from home for so many years, we finally moved into a purpose-designed and built 40 m2 office which gives us a proper creative and working environment to continue doing what we do best!

Q. What advice do you have for anybody considering entering IBYE?

- Just go for it and give it your best shot.
- Take time out of the everyday tasks and emails that bog you down and never seem to end, and take a bird's eye view on your idea or existing business.
- Don't hesitate to ask the experts all those questions, talk to other participants, share ideas and inspiration
- And overall **dare to dream!**



Daria (standing) and business partner Marina put the finishing touches to a new design for 'Stop and Stare'



Daria Sadkina models one of the designs and creations by her company 'Stop & Stare' tattooed hoisery