



BELGIAN LUXEMBOURG  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
IN GREAT BRITAIN



BRITISH CHAMBER  
OF COMMERCE IN BELGIUM

## PRESS RELEASE

# Winners announced for 20<sup>th</sup> annual Golden Bridge Trade & Export Awards

**UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL 24 NOVEMBER 11PM GMT**

The 20<sup>th</sup> edition of the prestigious Golden Bridge Trade & Export Awards for outstanding achievements in exporting between the UK and the Benelux have been won by BelExport and Shanks Group plc. The Awards were presented by the Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce (BLCC) and the British Chamber of Commerce in Belgium. Awards were also won by Namgrass, Orega and Lancer Europe.

This year, BelExport received the coveted Golden Bridge Export Award handed over by H.E. Mr Guy Trouveroy, Ambassador of Belgium to the Court of St James's, during a glamorous gala ceremony in central London on 24 November. The Golden Bridge Trade & Export Award was handed out to Bel'Export. The jury chose this family owned company as the winner for its hard work in an very competitive and high risk environment, for its continuous quest for innovation in what many would consider a basic and simple product – apples and pears basically - and for the sheer determination of this company in the face of geopolitical and climate challenges it keeps facing and adapting to.

Shanks Group plc. won the award for British companies, which was presented by The British Ambassador to Belgium Alison Rose. Shanks is a leading international waste-to-product business. The Group uses a range of cost-effective sustainable technologies to make valuable products from what is thrown away.

Shanks meets the growing need from public and private sectors to manage waste sustainably without damaging the environment.

The jury were impressed with Shanks' investment and commitment to the Belgian market. The Group has focused on their Belgian business in numerous ways, one of which being the

issuing of their first ever 'green retail bond', worth €100 million. To be green all funds had to be proven to be dedicated to sustainable projects. They have also continually invested in their Belgian business and have put the correct structure in place to ensure their people are able to grow and develop in the company.

### **Best newcomer awards**

The award of Best Newcomer on the Belgian market was handed out to Orega by Thomas Spiller, President at the British Chamber of Commerce in Belgium. The jury were impressed with Orega's persistence and long term commitment to internationalising their business. Orega have bridged the gap between Belgium and the UK, allowing companies that work in their UK business centres to expand their reach and dip their toes in international markets more easily.

As a privately owned service office provider, Orega's success outside of its home market is associated with its continuous commitment to its people, as well as building a reputation for integrity and professionalism. Orega continues to innovate, developing their existing co-working space in Belgium and using it as a platform for engaging with start-up businesses.

The award of Best Newcomer in the UK was handed out to Namgrass by Ben De Smit, Economic and Commercial Counsellor for Flanders at the Belgian Embassy in London. The jury were impressed with how 2 young entrepreneurial spirits, one from Belgium and one from the UK, created a niche market which was deemed too small for the big players and turning it into a profitable and sizeable market with great potential.

Providing high quality artificial grass solutions for companies and individuals, Namgrass works with local partners to reach out across the UK, touting commercial work for a number of leading UK Businesses.

### **Best small & medium-sized enterprise**

The SME award was handed out to Lancer Europe by Mr Patrick Engelberg, Ambassador of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. The jury considered the company to be a very successful example of cooperation between the Brussels based HQ and the UK subsidiary, resulting in a truly innovative approach of the market with new and exciting products.

Lancer Europe provides innovative beverage dispensing products and solutions, as well as being the main supplier to the bottling industry and quick serve market. Established in Belgium in 1997, the company moved across the channel into the UK market in 2003 in order to access the unique 'Pub Culture' and high capacity entertainment venues, providing beverage solutions to venues such as Wembley Stadium, Lord's Cricket Ground and the O2.

### **“High-quality winners”**

BLCC Chairman Michel Vanhoonacker said: “Since the inception of the Golden Bridge Trade & Export Awards 20 years ago, the world has changed a lot – in terms of socio-economic mutations, new emerging economies, the internet, a growing EU and more lately of course Brexit and the US elections. However, the trading links between the UK, Belgium and Luxembourg remain as strong as ever and celebrating and recognising companies contributing to this success story, is probably more relevant than ever. We are proud to

have once again a series of high quality winners which confirm our close ties and the need for the free flow of trade in Europe.

British Chamber of Commerce in Belgium President Thomas Spiller said: “The Golden Bridge Trade & Export Awards continue to highlight the strength and importance of the Benelux and UK markets as a whole, and this year’s winners help to emphasise that point. These bilateral awards allow businesses to celebrate their commitment to maintaining a strong UK-European relationship and that we, as chambers of commerce, will continue to facilitate a platform for these UK-Belgium & Luxembourg ties to develop.”

**The Golden Bridge Trade & Export Awards 2016 winners are, in alphabetical order:**

Bel’Export – <http://www.belexport.com/>

Lancer Europe – <http://www.lancereurope.com/>

Namgrass – <http://www.namgrass.com/>

Orega – <http://www.orega.com/>

Shanks Group plc – <http://www.shanksplc.com/>

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### ***The Golden Bridge Trade & Export Awards***

*The Golden Bridge Trade & Export Awards are an initiative of the Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce in Great Britain, in collaboration with the British Chamber of Commerce in Belgium. The purpose of the event is to encourage exporting efforts to and from the UK and at the same time to give Belux and British products and services a higher profile abroad. Its great success has shown the need to provide Belgian, Luxembourg and British companies with a platform to prove their achievements on their respective export markets.*

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