

# Cirrus, Blees AI & CAI receive Eurostars grant to develop psychometrically balanced LOFT and integrate AI essay marking

UTRECHT, THE NETHERLANDS, January 10, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Cirrus Assessment, Blees AI and Chartered Accountants Ireland (CAI) are proud to announce they have been awarded a Eurostars grant to solve two of the greatest challenges of (online) assessment, cheating and the time-drain that is essay marking. On the exam creation side, they will develop technology to

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*Vegard Sivertsen, CEO of  
Cirrus Assessment*

create psychometrically balanced Linear On the Fly Testing (LOFT) exams, putting an end to cheating and content theft. On the exam marking side, they will integrate Blees AI's essay marking tool into the Cirrus e-assessment platform, to reduce marking time by up to 60%. The project will make Cirrus poised to offer educational institutions worldwide the first end-to-end e-assessment platform of its kind.

The Eurostars grant is a highly competitive program for SMEs, supporting international collaboration in research

and innovation. Cirrus Assessment, Blees AI and Chartered Accountants Ireland are honoured to be among the select few to receive this funding. Each partner brings their own specific branch of expertise: Cirrus' cloud platform enables awarding bodies, higher education and professional testing organisations worldwide to create, deliver and mark online exams anytime, anywhere. It is designed to be easy to use, while offering powerful features that take advantage of the latest developments in assessment science and technology.

Next, Blees AI is a leading artificial intelligence company that specialises in developing AI-powered solutions for marking exams and providing personalised written feedback to the candidates. Their powerful marking tool was created thanks to deep learning AI and the combined expertise of the education sector, making their automated grading AI a must for organisations looking to auto-score both short-answer and essay exam questions at scale. Finally, Chartered Accountants Ireland (CAI) is a membership body representing over 30,000 influential members throughout the globe. Their mission is to achieve excellence in the education of chartered accountants and to provide the highest possible level of support to members.

Cirrus Assessment, Blees AI and CAI will work to develop, integrate and test the auto-marking AI in Cirrus' e-assessment platform. Even though essay questions are often the most appropriate question type to test candidates' knowledge, their usage is limited due to the labour-intensive marking. The Eurostars project will greatly enhance the Cirrus platform:

- > It will reduce marking time and cost by up to 60%, while ensuring accurate scoring and personalised candidate feedback.
- > Candidates will get their results faster, improving learner satisfaction.
- > It will make Cirrus more inclusive and fair, as Blees AI promises to deliver enhanced fairness by minimising bias in essay marking.

The project will further create new programmatic data labelling techniques and address a major challenge associated with AI marking: explaining AI decisions.

Additionally, Cirrus and Blees AI will collaborate to develop the algorithm needed to deliver completely random, but equal, on-demand exams: psychometrically balanced LOFT. Linear On the Fly Testing (LOFT) generates random exams from a fixed pool of questions and is extremely useful in preventing cheating and content theft in online exams. It is already available to Cirrus users, but ensuring complete consistency between exams - in terms of difficulty and knowledge measured - remains a challenge. This new version of LOFT will solve that issue.

The grant will enable Cirrus to make new developments in assessment science and technology available to its users, letting them assess the skills and expertise of their candidates on a more sophisticated platform than ever before. "We are thrilled to receive the Eurostars grant and to partner with Blees AI and our valued customer Chartered Accountants Ireland," said Vegard Sivertsen, CEO of Cirrus Assessment. "It will allow us to continue pushing the boundaries of e-assessment and bring our technology to even more organisations worldwide. With Blees AI's state-of-the-art AI technology and CAI's educational expertise, we are confident that this partnership will lead to great innovations in the field of e-assessment and help us better serve our clients."

Sojin Lee, CEO of Blees AI remarked, "Participation in this project will allow us to combine our cutting-edge AI technology with Cirrus' powerful e-assessment platform. We will create a brand-new end-to-end assessment solution that includes AI-powered features to enable educators to create and mark unbiased assessments. CAI's subject matter expertise will be vital to conduct further R&D in AI and develop this innovative product."

The project will commence in Q2 2023.

### [About Cirrus Assessment](#)

Cirrus Assessment is a SaaS company that has helped awarding bodies, higher education and professional testing organisations create, deliver and mark online exams since 2013. The Cirrus e-assessment platform combines powerful features with an intuitive interface to let users focus on what matters: helping test takers succeed. With excellent customer service and robust security, they are a fast-growing e-assessment company based in Utrecht, The Netherlands.

## About Blees AI

Blees AI is an educational technology company that believes in transforming and improving the teaching experience and in turn positively impacts students' learning and maximises their potential.

Blees AI's experienced team of cognitive architects leverages AI deep learning models and uses advanced natural language processing capabilities to automate short and long essay marking. The AI models are trained collaboratively with domain experts from education in order to analyse unstructured content and extract domain- specific concepts in student responses. Blees AI's software platform assists educational institutions in automating the process of grading students' essays and instantly provides consistent and personalised feedback at scale. Blees AI's client, a large certification body representing a Canadian profession, experienced 86% scoring accuracy, 38x faster scoring results, and a 60% cost reduction opportunity by applying Blees AI's technology.

## [About Chartered Accountants Ireland](#)

Chartered Accountants Ireland was established as the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland by Royal Charter in 1888.

Chartered Accountants Ireland is a membership body representing over 31,000 influential members throughout the globe. Its role is to educate, represent and support its members. Members work in senior positions in practice and industry. Chartered Accountants Ireland is committed to restoring confidence at every level of the economy and works with governments and businesses to raise awareness of the importance of sound financial advice.

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