

**Global service for preventing wildfires won the main prize at the UN's international innovation contest in Espoo.**

**The World Challenge Finland 2018 proved that new brilliant solutions can be created to tackle the effects of climate change and the other big challenges of the World. The idea of the competition was to develop services supporting sustainable development using satellite data. At the same time, Finland was given the opportunity to make its space expertise visible and to attract foreign companies and students to Finland.**

The Wildfire Aware, the main prize winner, utilizes data from various sources and provides machine-learning-based forecasts about wildfires and thus prevents and minimizes the damages caused by fires. The service is a result of the long-term development work of a team of mathematics and computer science students from the University of York, UK. In addition, Wildfire Aware won special prize provided by Microsoft as the best service using Azure cloud service.

Space Nation, well-known for its mobile astronaut training program, handed over its own special prize to the Aalto KitSat training satellite, which students can control and use to collect data from the space in real-time.

Vaisala, also a partner of the World Challenge 2018, has presented competitors a special challenge aiming to reduce the air pollution. In this category, the award was given to Environment Channel, a service that visualizes the air quality data in very creative way.

The National Land Survey of Finland special prize went to a service called Global Traffic Forecast.

In addition to the winners, the competition finale saw several interesting solutions related to forecasting traffic and pollen as well as water problem solving and environmental viability evaluation in developing countries.

The prizes of the competition were money, physical goods and opportunities to present solutions to potential partners. Space Nation's special award was worth tens of thousands of euros consisting of the opportunity to send one's own device to the orbit.

The technical core of the competition was the WorldWind virtual globe model based on NASA's and ESA's development and open-source code.

The goal of this contest was to create solutions and services that can be utilized globally in UN projects. In addition, the UN's first Technology and Innovation Labs (UNTIL) will be opening in Finland during the autumn and the event was a soft launch for this project.

The finals event was opened by the Minister of Transport and Communications Anne Berner, and in addition to the Finnish space experts there were also presentations by UN representative Maurizio Gazzola and former astronaut training instructor Ron Fortunato.

World Challenge 2018 final event was organized by Digital Forum Finland and Ultrahack.

The partners were Business Finland, ESA Business Incubation Center Finland, Turku Business Region, EIT Digital, Finnish Meteorological Institute, National Surveying Office,

Nokia, CGI, Espoo Marketing, Reaktor Space Lab, GISdevio, City of Helsinki, Vantaa City, Aalto University, Microsoft, Aalto Startup Center, Vaisala, IBM Finland, University of Helsinki, Clarion Helsinki, SSF, Space Nation, FLIC, Halti and Finnair. The global competition was held for the sixth time.

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