



EXPO 2020 إكسبو 2020
دبي، الإمارات العربية المتحدة
DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Press Release

Irish startups scoop Expo Live grant for their innovative tech solutions

- **CoderDojo Foundation provides free technology clubs for the young**
- **AID:Tech to use grant to scale their blockchain platform for NGO's & governments**
- **Winners may get the opportunity to showcase their solutions at Expo**

Two Irish startups combining innovation with technology, security and education, have each won an Expo Live grant from organisers of the next World Expo, being held in Dubai in 2020.

The **CoderDojo Foundation**, a non-profit organisation based in Dublin, is a volunteer-led global movement of free programming clubs for young people aged 7-17 years.

Anyone in the world can start a 'Dojo' – to create a space in their community for young people aged 7 - 17 to come together and learn how to programme and create with technology in a fun, social and informal environment. The movement connects education, technology and industry.

By attending free Dojos young people are able to learn programming skills that enable them to create websites, apps games and more. Through exploring technology in an informal, creative, and social environment, youth also learn soft skills such as problem solving, teamwork and collaboration. The aim is to contribute towards solving the global skills gap and give people the opportunity to understand and harness technology rather than being passive consumers of it.

AID:Tech, also based in Dublin, is bringing social and financial inclusion to the world's undocumented and underserved population using Digital Identity based on Blockchain technology. Today, there are more than 2.4 billion people in the world living without a legal identity. One of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals is to bring legal identity to all by the year 2030. AID:Tech is doing this and their solution also enables governments and private donors to follow the flow of money and ensure that it is linked to a beneficiaries digital identity, AID:Tech hopes to maintain trust and empower recipients to build their own credit profile.

AID:Tech's innovative solution is based on Blockchain technology - which allows each and every transaction to be recorded and verified digitally - cutting down on fraud and misappropriation of funds. It allows governments and humanitarian organisations to sidestep middle men and ensure that welfare, remittances, aid and social services gets to a beneficiary in a ground-breaking way. With the support of EXPO 2020 Dubai, AID:Tech will roll out a groundbreaking welfare project in Jordan.

Expo 2020 Dubai's Expo Live programme has an allocation of USD 100 million to back projects that offer creative solutions to pressing challenges that impact people's lives, or help preserve the world – or both. Organisers are looking for projects that would not reach their full potential without its support.

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Expo Live is not disclosing the amount for each project it is supporting but has said it would grant up to USD 100,000 per initiative for its Innovation Impact Grant Programme.

Giustina Mizzoni, Executive Director of the CoderDojo Foundation, said: "The first Dojo started in Cork, and within five years the movement has scaled rapidly. We now have 1,250 clubs in 65 countries. We believe CoderDojo is truly unique; its model, its open-source, and its community ethos are the reasons we have been able to scale.

"We have 40,000 kids learning how to programme and create all for free around the world. If you are someone looking for volunteering opportunity there is plenty of them, if you are parent, or a company, CoderDojo is teaching the next generation of future change-makers and creators

"Being part of Expo 2020 Dubai is an absolutely incredible opportunity for us. We will have a chance to meet so many people from all around the world and to showcase CoderDojo. We know that it will contribute to scaling even further globally."

Joseph Thompson, CEO and co-founder of AID:Tech, said: "Our solution brings identity to the unidentified, of which there are 2.4 billion people in the world right now. It gives them a 'financial voice' and connects them with important services like welfare, aid, donations, remittances and insurance. It also gives humanitarian organisations and governments the ability to sidestep costly middlemen, to access and verify critical information, and to track the flow of funds and resources from donation through to delivery.

"We are delighted to receive this grant from Expo 2020 Dubai, which will provide operational support to the technology through global partnerships."

AID:Tech is also supported by Irish Government Agency Enterprise Ireland. Speaking from Dubai, **Mike Hogan – Manger, Middle East & North Africa** also added: "Enterprise Ireland are delighted that AID:Tech, an Irish company, have been selected as one of the Global Innovators as part of Expo 2020 Dubai. Through our support of the company on their project in Lebanon, we recognized the ability of the team, and their innovative Blockchain solution, to have a wide ranging social impact and it is great to see AID:Tech getting further recognition and support for the work it is trying to do"

World Expos, which trace their origins back to the 1851 Great Exhibition in London, have always celebrated the latest in innovation and technology.

The Expo Live programme was launched in January 2017, following a pilot phase last year. It aims to stimulate innovation that has a social benefit, by supporting winning projects with funding, business guidance and promotion. Successful applicants will also have the chance to showcase their work to many millions of visitors to Expo 2020 Dubai.

Expo organisers received 575 responses to their initial call for proposals. This was whittled down to just 29 winners.

Expo Live Vice-President, Yousuf Caires, said: "CoderDojo is an inspiring example of a grassroots movement that aims to educate and empower young people, giving them the skills to thrive in the modern world. I hope that our grant and the platform that Expo 2020 Dubai will provide to engage with millions of people will help them to spread their message and model around the world so that many more young people can benefit from their ideas.

"Using technology to provide people with a legal identity is hugely important. And what is amazing is that it unlocks a whole host of services where were previously unavailable to billions of people. What we are particularly interested in is the ability of blockchain to bring transparency to foreign aid and charitable giving, which is helping millions of people worldwide each and every day. It is making a difference, but in order to go on doing so, donors - whether governments or individuals - want to know how their money is being spent, and that it is being spent well. AID:Tech's application of blockchain technology to achieve this is a simple solution that addresses this challenge.

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"These are real change-makers addressing our world's most pressing challenges; they are visionaries who are determined to see their projects bring meaningful change to those that need it. We are fortunate to have them on our programme and look forward to walking by their side on their path to success.

"Their work speaks for itself and deserves the financial support from our programme, but it is their character, their drive and their reasons for choosing this path – the path of a change-maker – that earns them a place in our Expo Live family and the opportunity to inspire millions at Expo 2020 Dubai."

Expo Live's flagship Innovation Impact Grant programme is open for submission twice a year. The programme supports projects from around the world whose solutions generate social and environmental value and are in line with Expo 2020 Dubai's subthemes of Opportunity, Mobility and Sustainability. Interested applicants can find out more on: www.expo2020dubai.ae/expo-live

To find out more about the winning projects visit: www.coderdojo.org and <https://aid.technology>

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