SAP Australia launches popular Young ICT Explorers Competition in NSW

Creativity and innovation competition now open to all primary and secondary schools in NSW and Qld

SAP Research, the global technologyresearch unit of SAP AG, today announced the expansion of the Young ICTExplorers competition into NSW. The Young ICTExplorers is a not-for-profit event, initiated by SAP in Australia inpartnership with the University of Queensland (UQ) to encourage innovation in schools. The competition has been running in Qldprimary and secondary schools for the last two years.Studentscompete in teams across four age groupings fromYears Four to Twelve. Thecompetition aims to encourage and inspire school students to use theircreativity and innovation skills to gain a greater understanding of the diversepossibilities today’s technology has to offer.

The NSW judging event willbe held on Saturday 4th August 2012 at University of NSW, with the Queenslandevent to take place on 11th August 2012 at University of Queensland.

Glenn Neuber, SeniorBusiness Developer at SAP Research Labs said: “Smart phones, tablets and socialmedia tools have only been around for a few short years, yet these technologiesare rapidly changing many aspects of how we work and socially interact.

“Government policies oneducation are now reflecting ways in which innovation capabilities in studentscan be developed through technologies and education, with the goal of building aninnovation skills base in Australia.”

The Melbourne Declaration on Education Goals for Young Australians (MCEETYA2008) notes that ‘rapid and continuing advances in ICT are changing the wayspeople share, use, develop and process information and technology. In thisdigital age, young people need to be highly skilled in the use of ICT.’[i]

MauricePagnucco, Head, School of Computer Science and Engineering, UNSW said: “ICT haschanged the way we work over several decades. More importantly it is now havinga significant effect on the way we live our social lives, on how we learn andon how we consume news and media - it has significantly changed the way weinteract and deal with the people and world around us. The Young ICT Explorers competition providesan exciting and challenging way for students to become familiar with newtechnologies and to be a part of the ICT revolution.”

Professor Kathryn Moyle[ii],Executive Director, Charles DarwinUniversity's Centre for School Leadership, Learning and Development said:“Building technology innovation programs into school education providesteachers with the opportunity to recalibrate learning and teaching, so that itbecomes more relevant to the generation of IT-savvy children who will be goingthrough school in the next 10 – 15 years.

“IT investment in schools goes beyond justproviding hardware and software to schools.Students need to experience, experiment and collaborate with technology,and the Young ICT Explorers programs provides the type of hands-on experiencethat enables IT learning in a very practical way,” Professor Moyle said.

“This competition provides afun and challenging way for schools to encourage students to engage in an ICTrelated project, to collaborate, think outside the square, and use theircreativity to innovate,” Mr Neuber said.

“We are very excitedat the popularity of the Young ICT Explorers competition within schools, andthe contribution that it will make to helping students build a strong future increative thinking and innovation in Australia.”

About the Competition

Young ICT Explorersencourages students to develop technology projects and share their creativeideas in a structured environment, supported by their schools. It covers abroad range of projects and does not focus on a specific IT-topic. Each projectis assessed on the criteria of creativity, uniqueness, quality, level ofdifficulty and project documentation. This allows students and teachers to worktogether and align potential entries with the school curriculum, enablingstudents to apply what they’ve learnt in the classroom.

Students then have theopportunity to present their projects to a judging panel of academics, industrypartners and ICT professionals and they are able to network with other kidsfrom other schools with the same interests. They compete inteams across four age groupings fromYears 4-12. The competition aims toencourage and inspire students to build their creative abilities, to innovate, communicateand collaborate with each other while working their IT related project.

SAP has partnered with theUniversity of Qld and University of NSW, who provide the venues for the finaljudging event in each state, as well as judges. Schools must register totake part by the 25th May 2012 and submit projects by the 29th Junein NSW, and the 2nd July in Queensland. Registration can be completed online atwww.youngictexplorers.net.au.

Follow the Young ICT Explorers on Twitter: @youngICTExplore

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[i] MelbourneDeclaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians. Dec 2008.

On 5 December 2008, State,Territory and Commonwealth Ministers of Education meeting as the MinisterialCouncil on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, released the Melbourne Declaration onEducational Goals for Young Australians which sets the direction for Australian

schoolingfor the next 10 years. The Goals were developed by Education Ministers incollaboration with the Catholic and independent school sectors, followingpublic consultation on the draft declaration.

More information: www.mceetya.edu.au

[ii] ProfessorKathryn Moyle is author of the Australian Council for Education Research paper, Building Innovation: Learning withTechnologies which explores national and international policypriorities for building students' innovation capabilities through informationand communication technologies (ICT) in Australian schools.

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