

MEDIA RELEASE

ACTION FOR THE UN SDGs: 9 WSA DIGITAL GLOBAL CHAMPIONS OFFER SOLUTIONS FOR UNEMPLOYMENT, EPILEPSY & ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

Vienna / Salzburg, March 16, 2020. Social entrepreneurs and ICT Experts met at the Erste Campus in Vienna from March 8 to 11. At the WSA Global Congress, 45 social tech entrepreneurs presented their creative and innovative solutions to achieve the UN SDGs. 9 have now been awarded as global champions by an international jury.

A world captivated by fake news, climate catastrophes, epidemics and the great inequalities between gender, wealth and access to information.

The year 2020 shows us more than ever, that the need for action instead of fear has become and that only international cooperation can solve the great challenges of our time. This is exactly what the 9 WSA Global Champions are about.

In Vienna, 120 international ICT experts exchanged ideas and knowledge under the motto 'Hack the Gap - Digital solutions for the UN SDGs'. Out of 600 nominees worldwide, 9 social tech startups were awarded as WSA Global Champions. Their solutions not only drive the achievement of the UN SDGs, but also show that digital creativity can make a positive impact on society.

CitizenLab from Belgium facilitates active citizen participation in over 100 cities from Brussels to Vancouver through a participative, digital platform for budget management.

The **Spanish start-up MJN** has developed a portable sensor the size of a hearing aid that tracks brain activity and warns epilepsy patients and caregivers if there is a risk of seizures.

The global online learning platform **BitDegree from Lithuania** makes acquiring digital skills easy and attractive through the active involvement of employers.

Belarus' OneSoil mobile and web-based apps work with satellite imagery and AI to combat the excessive use of fertilizers and pesticides, as well as ineffective land use and soil depletion.

The Living First Languages Platform from Australia is revitalizing indigenous languages with dynamic, community-run and interactive apps, while promoting digital skills of native Australians.

Refugee movements, war and natural disasters lead to the loss of proof of identity for millions of people. **The People's Protection App from Spain** is a multifactorial biometric mobile and desktop solution for identifying people.

Using simple, automated data collection and analysis tools, the management platform **Socialsuite from Australia** helps companies monitor to what extent social investments achieve their program goals.

The **South Korean Dot Incorporation** makes books, news, websites or chats accessible to the blind, with a wristwatch that can form braille characters flexibly.

The virtual school **Virtualahan from the Philippines** integrates life and career counseling with technology to free disadvantaged people from poverty.

Prof. Peter A. Bruck, Chairman of the World Summit Award Board of Directors states:
"The 9 global champions only show a small selection of what social innovations can be achieved worldwide with digital, content-based solutions. The worldwide network of WSA and the Global Champions of 2020 show that action, not fear, leads to avoiding suffering and alleviating need. This results in sustainably positive transformations in our society and a significant advancement towards the UN SDGs."

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Information at <https://www.worldsummitawards.org/wsa-global-congress-2020-vienna/>
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About the WSA

The World Summit Award (WSA) was founded in 2003 by Austria as part of the UN World Summit on Information Society as a global initiative to award local digital content with high social value and presents it worldwide. Through close cooperation with the United Nations agencies and strategic alignment with the UN SDGs, the WSA is a globally recognized quality seal for digital innovation.

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