VICTA students successful at Tallinn-based Hackathon

digix.eu

VICTA student Robert Kasela presenting the application Zetix.

DIGIX and the Open Academy of Tallinn University organized a Creative Hackathon, which united IT, creative sector and business developers.

The purpose of the event was to develop new products and services for the creative sector. The prize fund was significant. DIGIX incubator rewarded the winners with an opportunity to continue their app development at their incubator and Europeana (A European Digital Library for all) provided 25 000€ worth of awards for three teams who crowned the use of the assets of The Digital Library. A special prize went out to the team whose app had the best audiovisual and art development. Thirteen teams of three to eleven members participated. A group of VICTA students and our academic José Prieto were happy to take part of this first creative hackathon in the Baltics.

For VICTA participants, the event started with a bus ride from Viljandi to Tallinn on the 29th of January. The hackathon took place in Baltic Film and Media School, where arriving people had to register. Some time later, the 48-hour "Loomehäkk" (Creative-hack) was opened. Partners presented their ideas and problems from which each participant had to find the right one for them. Teams were made, but as always there was a lack of software developers. Because of that several ideas were left unhacked. Nevertheless, VICTA students had a successful hackathon.

First place, public's favorite and music special prizes were given to PRAP (Production Assistant App) team. The team of ten led by Nevel Niit, became popular on the first night as people were interested in using the app, before it was made. PRAP collects and standardizes the call-sheets and raiders of musicians. It creates an environment where creative people and production companies can communicate in a group. This will ease the massive paperwork that comes along with production. PRAP enables to see an event and its details such as location, time, etc.

Two VICTA students participated in developing the Production Assistant App - Karli Ots (on the right) and Hendrik Sihver (on the left). Karli worked as a full-stack developer and Hendrik was kept busy on the front-end. On the third and final day of the hackathon PRAP team decided to create a web page which would introduce the product instead of creating the prototype. This decision was made due to lack of time mixed with the amount of work that had to be done. However, while people were gathering for the final presentation, the team managed to finish the code.

Second place was given to a team
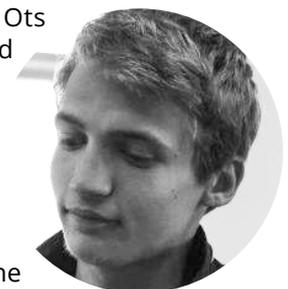
who created Kool, which will ease teachers life as it simplifies planning the use of interactive methods, to teach students.

Third place and the best audiovisual prize was earned by team Raggie. It offers a cross-media conception for „Sipsik", a children movie that is planned to premiere by 2018. Our student Kaur Saarepuu, who helped with the app, believes that the platform of Sipsik can be used in similar projects. The team is currently planning their next step.

Europeana rewarded Postcard, VR Quiz and Language of History developers. VICTA students Mikk Reinsalu and Mihkel Väin, who belonged to the Postcard team of three, worked on an idea to provide a solution for ajapaik.ee, which would enable to find information written on old postcards. The trio is currently waiting for Europeana prize money so that they could carry on with the Postcard project. The Best Art prize was given to a team who pro-jected historical virtual reality game, VR Quiz. The Language of History enables learning languages through historical photos.

During Loomehäkk our students took part in creating SmartCard, Zetix and Source. SmartCard gathers loyalty cards in one app which will enable to lose the mess of loyalty cards that tend to disappear or pile up. It did not get a prize just yet, but earned compliments from several mentors. Our hacker, Janek Ehasoo, left SmartCard team as he is busy with his own project. Source is a card app that helps to post photos and comments, however the team is not planning any next steps.

Robert Kasela, who studies at VICTA, was a member of team Zetix, an app that plays a role in marketing Estonian movies. He is not certain about further actions regarding this project. Most of our students are planning to join their Loomehäkk teams after graduation.

Our lecturer, José Prieto, participated in Loomehäkk as a mentor. Since mentors were only giving advice, each group had to make its own decisions. José advised the teams on brainstorming, possible technologies, and methods. He said that Loomehäkk was a great opportunity to work with his students in a different environment, and it helped to create a stronger bond between him and the students.

Martin Aadamsoo is one of the founders of DIGIX. He was happy to see the enthusiasm and says that they were surprised by the amount of actual participants, and the fact that only one team did not make it to the finish. All the rest of the teams had remarkable results. Martin recommends hackers to keep an eye on DIGIX and other incubators, if they wish to carry on with their projects. However, he claims that there is no need to push an idea or a team, that does not seem to have any potential. „Try again, but with a new idea or a new team. When you start to believe in your project, keep an eye on the possibilities of DIGIX and other incubators" says Martin.

Mr. Aadamsoo recommends the participants to plan their idea presentations as they have only one minute to convince the listeners. „Start finding partners before the hacktathon, if you are planning to participate with your idea because the competition is tough. Having a programmer on the team would be perfect, as there is always a lack of them. I would like to thank the IT guys from Viljandi as they helped to ease the deficit." Martin says.

VICTA would like to thank all the organisers and partners for the motivating and instructive event. Hope to see you soon!

prap.me

A part of PRAPs team developing.