

Schoolgirls from Throughout Ukraine Presented Problem-Solving IT Projects in Kharkiv



July 9, 2018, Kharkiv, Ukraine - Twenty-five schoolgirls from throughout Ukraine presented innovative IT projects aimed at solving various community problems in Kharkiv this weekend. The projects were presented at the Technovation Summer Camp 2018, organized by the Western NIS Enterprise Fund in partnership with Peace Corps Ukraine as part of the Technovation Ukraine project.

During the camp, girls developed five mobile apps projects with significant social impact. Particularly, an application allowing to monitor the household utility usage and optimize it; an application aimed to find shelters for stray animals; an application that helps volunteers from different cities unite, search for interesting projects and create their own ones; and an application aimed to improve education in orphanages through volunteer projects.

"Western NIS Enterprise Fund believes that we should pay considerable attention to women's leadership in Ukraine. The Technovation Summer Camp is one of the most important initiatives that help girls see their role in society, break down all those public-imposed women stereotypes and make this world a better place to live. The Camp gave girls a chance to see various spheres of life, where IT can be an effective tool for qualitative change," said **Iryna Ozymok, WNISEF Local Economic Development Program Manager and Technovation Regional Ambassador in Ukraine.**

The Technovation Summer Camp is a camp-like programming school for adolescent girls from throughout Ukraine. This year Kharkiv hosted the camp on July 1-8. Girls worked with the experienced mentors to develop

their own mobile applications – programs and solutions aimed to fight the community problems in their cities and serve for the improvement of municipal services. The camp has brought together 25 girls aged 14-17 years from throughout Ukraine, who were selected on a competitive basis (four candidates per place). The girls were given intensive training in coding, STEM skills, and business modeling and met with the representatives of the leading Kharkiv IT companies.

"I was always curious about programming, but unfortunately, there is no enhanced computer science program in our school. Technovation Summer Camp helped me realize that I want to keep up learning IT and use technologies to solve problems in Ukraine and globally," commented **Taisiia Onyshchenko, a student of #19 Gymnasium in Melitopol, Technovation Summer Camp 2018 participant.**

Technovation project aims to popularize programming among women, support girls in the IT-sector and develop women's leadership. In May this year, Western NIS Enterprise Fund organized the second Regional Technovation Challenge – a pitching of projects, developed by schoolgirls from throughout Ukraine. The winning team from Kremenchuk that developed the Live! mobile app aimed to improve learning and physical activity and fight depression in adolescents, will attend the Technovation World Pitch Summit in San Francisco, CA in August.

Western NIS Enterprise Fund (WNISEF) is a \$150 million regional fund, a pioneer in Ukraine and Moldova with more than two decades of successful experience in investing in small and medium-sized companies. WNISEF was funded by the U.S. government via the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Since its inception, WNISEF's cumulative investments total over \$172 million to 127 companies employing around 25 000 people and made it possible to unlock \$1.5 billion for companies in Ukraine and Moldova. In 2015 WNISEF has launched a \$35 million legacy program focused on export promotion, local economic development, impact investing and economic leadership. WNISEF is funding innovative, high-impact, reform focused programs aimed to transform life of the ordinary people in Ukraine and Moldova. Visit www.wnisef.org

Technovation is a program of US-based organization Iridescent. It is volunteer-run and free for girls aged 10 to 18 years old. Participants work in teams of 3-5 for a couple of hours after school once or twice a week, during 12-20 weeks from December to April. Once they submit their project, they compete with other teams around the world for a chance to travel to San Francisco and pitch their idea to get funding from the technology giants who partner with the program. Teachers, parents, IT professionals and other interested adults can volunteer as mentors to get free access to online resources and a chance to support the girls in this exciting educational program. Prior experience in IT is not required either from the girls or from their mentors, but a willingness to learn is imperative. <https://www.facebook.com/TechnovationUkr/>