CANADIAN POST-SECONDARY STUDENTS USE AI TO HELP TACKLE THE CHALLENGE OF MISINFORMATION IN ONLINE NEWS

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Special guests Mr. Alexandre Boulerice, MP (Rosemont–La Petite-Patrie), Mr. Jean-Marc Rousseau, Director of Technology Transfer, IVADO, Mr. David Lametti, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development and MP for LaSalle—Emard—Verdun, Mr. Siegfried Usal, Managing Director of cortAIx and Thales Canada's Vice President, Strategy, Research and Technology, Thales Canada and Mr. Phillipe Molaret, Chief Technology Officer, Thales Canada, celebrate with the three winning teams of Thales' 2018 Student Innovation Championship.

Canada's brightest post-secondary students put their minds together to identify new ways to tackle one of today's most popular topics – misinformation in online news. Students were challenged to identify new solutions, using artificial intelligence, to classify opinion clusters on a particular topic on the internet, and qualify their supporting evidence using their knowledge in AI, software design, engineering and IoT.

Fifty-two (52) student teams from across Canada prepared to pitch their novel solutions to a panel of industry experts in the hope of winning the $20,000 grand prize. Second and third place winners were awarded $10,000 and $5,000 respectively. Thales congratulates the winners of the 2018 Student Innovation Championship.

> "Thales Canada's Student Innovation Championship was created to offer students a glimpse into the business world while supporting new ways of solving problems. It has developed into an effective way to share the expertise of industry with the creative solutions prepared by the student teams," said **Siegfried Usal, Thales Canada's Managing Director of cortAIx and Vice President of Strategy, Research and Technology.**

Grand Prize: Team NeuroSci, Western University (London, Ontario)
Kartik Pradeepan, Megha Verma, Qingfan Liu

Second Prize: Team RU-ML, Ryerson University (Toronto, Ontario)
Alex Dela-Cruz, Cory Austin, Kayvan Tirdad

Third Prize: Team Rococo Basilisk, University of Windsor (Windsor, Ontario)
Kaival Patel, Ruturaj Raval, Zarreen Naowal Reza

"IVADO is very pleased to support the 2018 Thales Student Innovation Competition as a main sponsor. This competition promotes two of our objectives: the training of a new generation of talent in data science and the development of innovative solutions powered by data. I would like to thank and congratulate all of the participating and winning teams and encourage participants to continue the development of their creative potential", said Gilles Savard, Chief Executive Officer of IVADO.

“By experimenting with artificial intelligence to solve problems, Canadian students are provided with the hands-on learning experience and skills needed to successfully transition from the classroom to the workforce. Investing in today’s talent is the best way to spur innovation and compete in tomorrow’s economy, said Mr. David Lametti, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development and MP for LaSalle—Émard—Verdun.

Eight finalist teams presented to a panel of judges comprised of industry experts at Thales’ Centre of Research and Technology for AI eXpertise (cortAIx) and the home of Thales’ North American Digital Factory in the heart of Montreal’s AI hub. The teams also participated in workshops featuring speakers from Thales, event sponsor IVADO, and Microsoft.

Background on winning projects:

Grand Prize – Western University
The Grand Prize project, titled Opinion Galaxies: A Machine Learning Network Approach to Big Data in Medical Research focused on a specific use case: helping doctors and researchers filter opinions on medical research. This team presented an exceptionally innovative solution that would evaluate research papers based on the hypothesis they presented and their solution could then measure these hypotheses against others for similarity, influence and their connection to other research papers.

Second Place – Ryerson University
The project, titled Opinion and Evidence Analysis, proposed to take information from a source and, through a series of steps, transform these sources into a single opinion that could be labeled then be labelled valid or invalid compared to the norm defined.

Third Place – University of Windsor
This project, called Spdybot, presented an end-to-end learning model without any human participation. The team’s proposed solution is capable of mining all opinions available on the web on a certain topic along with relevant evidences so that users can decide the authenticity of each opinion before taking them into account. The user is presented with visual statistics of a list of opinions with supporting and contradicting evidence and a credibility score that they can use to decide if an opinion deserves sufficient authenticity.

Thales Canada’s annual Student Innovation Championship was launched in 2017 with the objective of challenging post-secondary students to tackle new problems faced by companies every day, giving them valuable business insights and real-world experience.

Documents

> Canadian post-secondary students use AI to help tackle the challenge …

Contact

Cara Salci, Thales Canada
613-404-9413 cara.salci@ca.thalesgroup.com