



**United  
Nations**



**unite  
ideas**

## CASE STUDIES

TECHNOLOGY & IDEAS FOR SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT



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This document presents brief case studies of a sample set of challenges which have been powered by the Unite Ideas platform, as well as their impact for the organizing entity.

It is not an exhaustive list of challenges, instead it is showcase of different ways in which the Unite Ideas platform is being leveraged by entities of United Nations system to foster technology and innovation for sustainable development.

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## About Unite Ideas

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Unite Ideas is an online platform through which the UN system can draw upon the skills, creativity and intellectual property of a standing community of +19,000 engaged global citizens and organizations to solve the world's most pressing problems:

<https://ideas.unite.un.org>

Adopted by the UN High-Level Committee on Management as a standard crowdsourcing platform available to all UN Agencies, Funds, and Programmes, it can be used for online calls for innovations, competitions, virtual hackathons and crowdsourcing with the general public.



### Unite Ideas in Numbers



#### 13 UN Entities Using it

UN DESA, UNCCT, WHO, UNDP, UNAIDS, WFP, UNICEF, UN CEB, OCHA, UNCTAD, UNOPS, ILO, UN Global Compact, World Humanitarian Summit.

#### 4 UN Member States & International Organizations Used it

The European Commission, Brazil, Finland, United States.

#### 13 Universities Involved

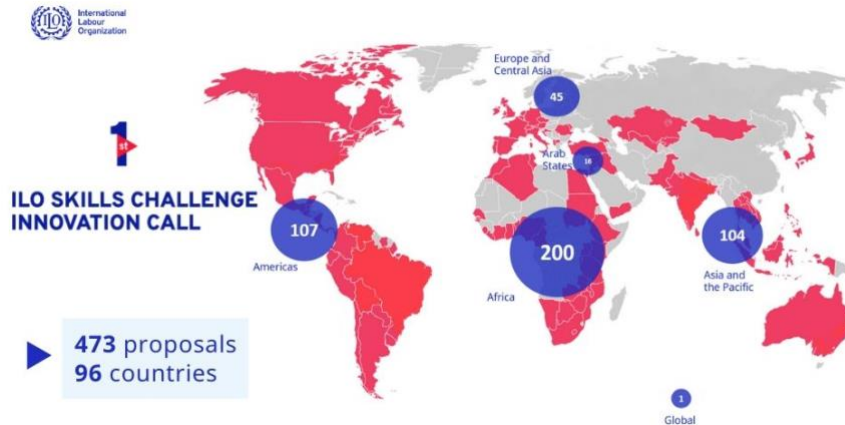
KTH Royal Institute of Technology, New York University, Aalto University, Universiteit Leiden, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Ecole de Mines Saint-Etienne, Rutgers University, University of Northampton, University of Southampton, George Washington University, Northeastern University, Fordham University, Carnegie Mellon University.



## CASE STUDIES



## Skills Challenge Innovation Call (International Labour Organization)



Organizing  
Entities

International  
Labour  
Organization

### Challenge

The ILO Skills Challenge Innovation Call invited innovators to propose new and practical ideas and solutions with the potential for sustainability, scalability and replication on a wide scale. The call drew nearly 500 proposals from 100 countries.

The evaluation process needed to be thorough and transparent since the winners would receive cash prizes and be sponsored to travel to training bootcamps abroad. The proposals were received in multiple languages and required reviews from more than 35 diverse subject-matter specialists distributed worldwide.

The ILO leveraged the Unite Ideas platform to manage the online review of the proposals by specialists, saving hundreds of hours and achieving a level of automation and accountability difficult to achieve through a manual process based on e-mails and spreadsheets.

### Output

- Hundreds of hours saved on management of the evaluation process, thanks to the online evaluation and reporting features of Unite Ideas.
- Transparency and accountability of the innovation call selection process.
- Confidentiality: the selection process is done online in a private space accessible only by the evaluation panel.

### Observations

The ILO will retain the participating entrepreneurs in an open-ended innovation community on Unite Ideas, where they can collaborate online on

Public  
Impact

**473**

Proposals  
evaluated

Evaluation  
effort

**+35**

Specialists  
worldwide  
evaluating  
proposals online



developing their projects and be easily reachable by the ILO to engage them in future calls for innovation or other technology innovation initiatives.



## Reboot Health & Wellbeing (World Health Organization)



### Organizing Entities

WHO

WFP

UNICEF

UNAIDS

### Challenge

The World Health Organization (WHO), together with UNAIDS, the World Food Programme, UNICEF challenged youth to apply their bright minds and entrepreneurial skills to address one of the of urgent health challenges for the next decade: Keeping young people safe.

### Output Solutions

- **Embargoed:** The 3 winning solutions have been selected and will be announcement during June 2020. They are creative solutions combining technology, public health awareness, and innovative ways to tackle problems.

### Observations

This challenge involved a cross-functional team distributed worldwide from 5 UN entities evaluating solutions. Big efficiency gains were realized during the evaluating process by leveraging the Unite Ideas online scoring features and calculating averages and randomized assignment of evaluation tasks.

The entities involved had common objectives in the challenge topic and created synergies by this joint initiative. The challenge organizer will be highlighting the wining innovations at upcoming WHO events, and follow-up activities are being planned for supporting the scaling of the output solutions.

### Public Impact

**6,000**

Votes & Comments

**140**

Ideas received

**3**

Winner solutions





## Reboot the Ocean (UN Global Compact)



### Organizing Entities

UN Global Compact

### Challenge

Reboot the Ocean aimed to bring youth together to develop new solutions that address current sustainability challenges and ensure a healthy and productive ocean.

### Output Solutions

- End Waste Entering the Ocean: Reduce, Reuse, Refill, Recycle, Recube. Creating Reusable Systems to Enable Circular Economy in F&B, FMCG and E-Commerce Sectors.
- Sustainable Seafood: Community Approach to Locally and Sustainably Sourced Fish.
- Mapping the Ocean: Cloudonomous - Low Cost Marine Autonomous Vehicle Framework to Map Seabed.
- Set Sail for Decarbonized Shipping: SANC-S (Ship Active Noise Canceling System).
- Harnessing Ocean Electricity: Ocean-based alternative energy technologies and positive environmental considerations.

### Public Impact

1,800

Votes & Comments

80

Ideas received

5

Winner solutions

### Observations

This challenge involved a range of non-UN actors through the reach of the UN Global Compact, including private companies and non-governmental organizations. The availability of the Unite Ideas platform was critical to the UN Global Compact's ability to engage with the target audience virtually during the Covid-19 pandemic, and in light of the cancellation of the UN Oceans Conference in 2020.





The challenge organizers will be highlighting the winning innovations at the upcoming UN Ocean Conference and organize follow-up activities to support the scaling of the output solutions.



## DigiEduHack global finals (European Commission)



### Organizing Entities

European Commission

UNTIL

### Challenge

DigiEduHack brought together 1700 innovators in 21 countries solving 60 challenges in digital education for 24 hours. Among 130 innovative solutions, co-created in local DigiEduHack events in 21 countries, 10 finalists were picked out from 33 winning local solutions.

Using Unite Ideas, more than 4200 people all over the globe voted for their favorite solution.

### Output Solutions

- Teaming 4.0: Using artificial intelligence to create better teams on the basis of information from co-evaluations of individual skills and overall teamwork performance and satisfaction.
- Science Escape Room: A scientific escape room as a virtual tool to provide students with an immersive learning experience and enhance digital education in science literacy. In the Science Escape Room, different avatars will interact with scientific objects to allow the invisible world to become visible.
- Student4Students: Student4Student is a mobile platform for last year high school students who are interested in learning more about career options in Informatics and getting in touch with university students who already pursue such studies. The platform aims to encourage specifically young female students to continue their education in the Informatics area, as a way to achieve better gender balance in the IT industry.

### Public Impact

4,200

Votes & Comments

10

Ideas received

3

Winner solutions



## Observations

This challenge reached a large number of young people worldwide due to the promotion capacity of the European Commission. The winners from Italy, Spain and Mexico were awarded in Brussels and named DigitalEducation Ambassadors by the European Commissioner on Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, Mariya Gabriel.



## Cybersecurity: Countering Digital Terrorism (UN Office of Counter-Terrorism)



### Organizing Entities

UN Office of Counter-Terrorism

UNTIL

### Challenge

**#CYBERSECURITY CHALLENGE - Countering Digital Terrorism.**

The Challenge called on people to develop solutions to address the digital terrorist activities listed below (Solutions could be technical or non-technical including: data visualization, policies, standards, awareness raising):

- 1) Kinetic cyber-attacks to critical infrastructure and/or IoT devices
- 2) Spread of terrorist content online
- 3) Online terrorist communications
- 4) Digital terrorist financing

### Output Solutions

- A Plug-and-Play Forensicator System for Live Forensics
- Framework for Seminar Series Curriculum: Tackling Radicalization Through Prevention Education, Teaching Digital Skills, and Entrepreneurship Education
- Community based CyberTerrorism Content Filtering and Censorship
- Policy Brief: Online Community Policing

### Observations

### Public Impact

**1,700**

Votes, Comments & Views

**60**

Ideas received

**4**

Winner solutions



This challenge involved the online selection of teams from around the world based on the quality of their proposals. The selected teams were travelled to a physical hackathon event where they received mentoring and feedback for improving their projects and solutions. The participants were also able to interact with subject-matter experts and potential partners to scale and implement their solutions.



## Science & Technology Matcher (UN DESA)



Organizing  
Entities

UN DESA

### Challenge

The UN DESA challenged computer programmers to use their technology skills to bring Science & Technology knowledge to millions of users in developing countries. Developing an information system to collect information from a curated list of reputable sources worldwide to match innovators, entrepreneurs, and everyday users with the science and technology they need to build a sustainable world.

The goal was to develop a prototype for an online platform of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism, which is a target of Sustainable Development Goal 17.

### Output Solutions

- 3 prototypes were selected as winners. They provided features to aggregate data and information from a series online sources including United Nations entities and other international organizations. The prototypes allowed people to find science and technology offers, requests and publications relevant to sustainable development.

### Observations

The winning prototypes were featured in front of Member States to inform discussions at the High-level Study Visit to China on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs and the Science Technology and Innovation Forum 2019, in New York, USA. This rapid prototyping challenge enabled

Public  
Impact

7

Information  
Systems  
prototypes  
received

3

Winner solutions



UN DESA to accelerate development of this online platform by soliciting ideas from a broad and diverse set of programmers from across the globe.





information • innovation • transformation



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**unite**  
ideas

For more information visit

<https://ideas.unite.un.org>

