Media Release
Spirit of GovHack Awards celebrating collaboration in ACT

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Outstanding ACT individuals and teams at this weekend's GovHack 2016 have been awarded coveted Spirit of GovHack Awards.

GovHack National Director, Richard Tubb, says, "over 3,000 digital entrepreneurs, app developers, game makers, data custodians, data analysts, engineers, designers, digital media creators, filmmakers, storytellers, academics and researchers of all ages from across Australia and New Zealand have spent the weekend at the world's biggest annual government open data hackathon - GovHack 2016. The number of projects they submitted has shot up from 270 last year to 428 this year."

GovHack is a free, 46 hour event held simultaneously at over 40 locations across Australia and New Zealand. Teams form and work together to transform data to tell a story or create apps, visualisations, websites and more. The Spirit of GovHack Awards recognise teams and individuals who have shown true GovHack spirit through helping others and contributing to a positive and happy event.

Presenting the awards, the ACT Government's Chief Digital Officer, Jon Cumming, said, "GovHack is much more than a mashup of data. It's a mashup of people who work together, support each other, and develop ideas to improve lives. When you put these minds into a cohort of creators it's just fantastic. It gives us so much energy and a real hope for the future that this data is going to provide something really amazing and helpful for everyone."

"The Spirit of Govhack Awards celebrate teams and individuals who best shared, learned and applied their skills to collaboratively create solutions with our open data sets."

Chris Beer, a data mentor from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, won the Canberra Spirit of GovHack award for his contribution towards helping teams effectively use data sets from the ABS in their projects - and spending the entire weekend at the event assisting.

Additionally, this year a brand new Youth Spirit of GovHack Award was introduced to recognise the contribution of youngest hackers.

George Dan and Sam Reading-Thompson in Year 10 from Canberra Grammar School won this award, in recognition of the support they provided other teams (particularly their younger peers) in producing their hacks - many times at the expense of time they could have been spending on their own project.

Jaxon Kneipp and Damian Camilleri also in Year 10 from Canberra Grammar School were the runners-up in the Youth Spirit of GovHack Award, for the support they provided in helping with the pre-event logistics and also mentoring younger students regarding choosing a project and data sets to use.

Richard Tubb says, "the teams are also competing for state, national and international awards to be announced later in 2016. The awards include cash prizes totaling more than $300,000 and special opportunities to work with data custodians, sponsors and mentors. I'd also like to give a big shout out to our record number of competition sponsors for their amazing support of the award categories."

GovHack aims to connect citizens with government to help unlock the social and economic value of open data - estimated to be worth around $25 billion a year in Australia alone.

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