

PRESS RELEASE

SICK Solution Hackathon 2023: A wealth of ideas for the world of tomorrow

Young students and start-ups from around the globe envision new solutions for automation and digitalization

Waldkirch/Germany, November 15, 2023 – 107 young tech talents, 23 teams, 48 hours and countless cups of coffee: from October 24 to 26, 2023, the SICK Solution Hackathon brought the ingenuity of students and start-ups from around the globe together with leading software and technology. The result: in just a short time, a host of creative technological solutions that could make our lives simpler, more sustainable or more mobile. For a third consecutive year, SICK hosted its Solution Hackathon, this time with the support of ten corporate partners, including Bosch, ABB, NTT DATA and Ericsson.

Technology enthusiasts, software-savvy students and practitioners from around the world applied to take part, and 107 developers received a ticket to the SICK Solution Hackathon. 23 teams from 22 countries, including Georgia, the USA, Turkey, Japan and Spain, traveled to the SICK Sensor Intelligence Academy (SIA) in Buchholz near Freiburg for the chance to turn their innovative ideas into realities. In this regard, the participants had at their disposal industrial soft- and hardware from SICK and its prominent corporate partners to develop their digital solutions in one of five industrial fields: mobile applications and robotics (“Make it Move”), simplifying the automation of everyday tasks (“Make it Easy”), data visualization (“Make it Visible”), solutions for more sustainability and conserving resources (“Make it Green”), and safety applications for humans and machines (“Make it Safe”).

The “hackers” only had 48 hours to implement their ideas and prepare a five-minute “pitch presentation” to the audience and an expert jury alike. A veritable race against the clock, including a night shift, during which they were supported by experts from SICK and its corporate partners. The audience – on-site and via global livestream – voted for their favorites, while the jury of experts assessed the ideas in terms of their applications, the value of the ideas themselves, and their technical implementation. The two winning teams managed to equally impress the jury and the audience with their ideas on how to simplify and automate everyday tasks:

Winner in the category “Best Business Idea”: Team EOS (David Petriashvili, Alexander Sainishvili, Giorgi Tsartsidze, Adam Karam Naguib Shehata (all from Kutaisi International University, Georgia), David Feeny (University of Freiburg, Germany) and Rakesh Singh (Rohde & Schwarz, Germany)).

Team EOS presented a solution for automating the rental of electric vehicle charging stations and parking slots that more efficiently uses the resources available in the current charging infrastructure. Their app-based solution is designed to make parking, charging, and reserving charging stations for electric vehicles easier and automated, for end users and intralogistics transport systems alike.

Winner in the category “Technological Excellence”: **Team Mind Hackers** (Mobina Mobaraki (University of British Columbia, Canada), Oliver Hausdörfer (TU Munich, Germany), Julian Hagert (TU Dresden, Germany), Maryam Zahiri (Collective Minds Gaming, Canada), Elliot Gestrin (University of Linköping, Sweden) and Jack Volgren (Pennsylvania State University, USA)).

How can Artificial Intelligence help make the world healthier and more athletic? This was the question posed by the winning team “Mind Hackers,” who developed a camera-based, AI-enhanced sensor solution that analyzes how people throw basketballs and gives them tips on how to improve their technique and posture – an application that not only paves the way for better performance in professional sports, but which can also support those playing just for fun.

During the announcement of the winners, Dr. Mats Gökstorp, Chairman of the Executive Board at SICK AG, was visibly impressed by the young talents’ creativity and drive. As he told the Hackathon participants: *“It’s remarkable how, in just 48 hours, you’ve bridged the gap from idea to real-world application. You’ve all left your comfort zones and joined forces as teams. You’ve collaborated with a great deal of energy and, with the aid of leading hardware and software, created true innovations.”*

In the course of three days, the SICK Solution Hackathon included plenty of creative breaks: there was table tennis and table football to choose from; a ball pit with a personalized ball for every participant hidden somewhere inside; and a 360° selfie camera for capturing the moment in a truly unique way. Further highlights included the live recording of a SICK “SICKnificant” podcast episode on the topic of “innovation” with guests from the Netherlands and the USA, and tours of SICK’s production and logistics facilities.

Image: SICK AG_Hackathon 2023_1.jpg (© SICK AG)

Caption: Discussing, programming and presenting ideas – this year, the SICK Solution Hackathon was once again hosted at the Sensor Intelligence Academy in Waldkirch-Buchholz.

Image: SICK AG_Hackathon 2023_2 (© SICK AG)

Caption: Coders from around the world gathered in the Black Forest for the SICK Solution Hackathon to jointly develop new digital solutions for industry and society.

Image: SICK AG_Hackathon 2023_3 (© SICK AG)

Caption: The team “Mind Hackers” was one of the winning teams, in recognition of its solution’s technological excellence. In a basketball-focused application, they convincingly demonstrated how generative AI can be used to improve athletic performance.

Image: SICK AG_Hackathon 2023_4 (© SICK AG)

Caption: The international hacking group “EOS” was the other winning team at the SICK Solution Hackathon 2023. Its winning entry was a digital sensor solution to optimize the use of available resources in the current charging infrastructure.

Members of the press can find further impressions of the SICK Solution Hackathon 2023 for editorial use here: <https://brand.sick.com/d/EpGNpaiQVAEZ/media-library/collection/229>

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About the “SICK Solution Hackathon” 2023:

For a third consecutive year, sensor provider SICK hosted the “SICK Solution Hackathon.” During the three-day event (October 24 to 26, 2023) at the SICK Sensor Intelligence Academy near Freiburg, young talents from around the globe had the chance to tackle current challenges in the industry by combining creativity and bleeding-edge technologies. The goals of the SICK Solution Hackathon are to support the community of developers, firms and innovators; to help everyone involved expand their current networks; and to foster a passion for technology. This year, SICK jointly hosted the event with its corporate partners ABB, Bosch, rexroth, Continuum, Ericsson, NTT DATA, Safelog, Xitaso, robominds and userlike. You can find additional information, along with videos of all participating teams, at <https://hackathon.sick.com/> or using the hashtag #SICKSolutionHackathon.

About SICK:

SICK is one of the world's leading solutions providers for sensor-based applications in the industrial sector. Founded in 1946 by Dr.-Ing. e. h. Erwin Sick, the company with headquarters in Waldkirch im Breisgau near Freiburg ranks among the technological market leaders. With more than 50 subsidiaries and equity investments as well as numerous agencies, SICK maintains a presence around the globe. SICK has almost 12,000 employees worldwide and generated a group revenue of around EUR 2.2 billion in the 2022 fiscal year. Additional information about SICK is available at www.sick.com