

Ericsson makes Internet ideas a reality for five non-profit organizations

Today, five charitable and non-profit organizations from Australia, Fiji, South Africa and the United States received awards for their innovative ideas on how Internet technology can be used to improve life for the individuals and communities they serve. Each Winner will receive USD 100,000 in web development services from Ericsson's Internet Solutions division to turn their ideas into reality.

The five charitable and non-profit organizations are winners of the Ericsson Internet Community Award (ERICA), a program developed by Ericsson to provide non-profit and charitable organizations with the resources and inspiration for using technology to further their mission. The two-year-old ERICA program will honor the five global winners as well as a People's Choice ERICA winner at the World Resources Institute's (WRI) "Creating Digital Dividends" Conference in Seattle.

The five winners are: The Fiji School of Medicine, FIJI; The Gould League, Australia; National Downs Syndrome Society, USA; Pathways Community Network, USA; and Rhodes University Mathematics Education Project, South Africa.

The different ideas from the winners include using mobile Internet technology, such as wireless application protocol (WAP), to access up-to-the-minute shelter information while working on the street with the homeless; developing a telehealth backbone to provide doctors and healthcare professionals throughout the Pacific Islands with interactive consultation and communication services; and, building a communication network for teachers in rural South Africa to share curricula and improve the quality of mathematics instruction for thousands of children affected by the legacy of Apartheid.

"The ERICA program seemed a perfect fit for our conference on closing the digital divide and finding ways to use technologies for social and environmental benefits," says Dr. Allen Hammond, chief information officer of WRI. "We were delighted that Ericsson chose to hold the awards ceremony in connection with the Creating Digital Dividends conference."

In addition to fulfilling the Internet dreams of the five winners, ERICA provides information to non-profit and charitable organizations through discussion forum, monthly newsletters and webcasts on the ERICA website.

“Today, hundreds of thousands of people depend upon the services and support of non-profit and charitable organizations,” says Jennifer Hilborn, Ericsson’s corporate citizenship manager. “ERICA empowers these organizations with the tools and resources to better utilize technology and to deliver their services more economically, more efficiently and to a wider range of people. The goal of the ERICA program is not only to build new Internet applications, but to serve as a vehicle to maximize the power of the Internet to foster, explore and share visionary ideas.”

More than 700 applicants from 39 countries submitted ideas online at <http://www.ericsson.com/ERICA> for this year’s ERICA prize. The website continues to be a repository of visionary ideas from the global philanthropic community.

Ericsson is the leading communications supplier, combining innovation in mobility and Internet in creating the new era of mobile Internet. Ericsson provides total solutions covering everything from systems and applications to mobile phones and other communications tools. With more than 100,000 employees in 140 countries, Ericsson simplifies communications for customers all over the world.

Read more at <http://www.ericsson.com/pressroom>

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