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THE WATER COUNCIL



The Water Council Announces Kickoff of Second Tech Challenge Competition

Competition seeks innovative ideas for sensors and artificial intelligence processes

MILWAUKEE (September 16, 2019) – [The Water Council](#) and its corporate partners today announced the second [Tech Challenge](#), a global competition designed to identify cutting-edge freshwater technologies and ideas with high potential for commercialization or implementation. Finalists have an opportunity to win prize money, access to corporate R&D resources and a chance to partner on the development with corporate sponsors on the marketing, licensing or sale of their winning technology or idea. Tech Challenges are sponsored by corporate partners from water-intensive and water technology industries, including A. O. Smith Corporation, Badger Meter and Zurn Industries, a Rexnord company.

“A. O. Smith is pleased to continue its support of entrepreneurs, researchers and promising startup businesses in the ever expanding field of water technology,” said Dr. Robert Heideman, senior vice president and corporate technology officer, A. O. Smith Corporation. “As a 145-year-old organization built on the premise of innovation, A. O. Smith is excited to be able share our experiences and potentially help bring proposed ideas to life in day-to-day products.”

Anyone with an innovative idea that addresses a topic selected by our corporate sponsors is encouraged to apply. Prospective technologies or ideas can be submitted from entrepreneurs, university students or researchers, professionals already working in water-dependent industries, private sector and government labs or just inventive individuals from any location in the world.

“The first round of the Tech Challenge exceeded our expectations in discovering some very promising ideas and technologies that were not on our radar screen,” stated Fred Begale, vice president of engineering at Badger Meter. “We look forward to this next round of Challenges and being introduced to some new global innovations that will help Badger Meter as we advance our research and development program.”

The second round of Tech Challenge competitions are seeking innovative solutions for:

- Inline sensors for detecting water quality parameters
- Artificial intelligence for pipe networks and systems

“Zurn is focused on solving difficult water quality, efficiency and plumbing system issues by applying IoT technologies to commercial plumbing systems,” said Tony Wilcox, vice president, innovation and digital solutions at Zurn. “We’re excited about the Tech Challenge’s focus on sensors and artificial intelligence processes and we welcome the opportunity to meet and work with new researchers and entrepreneurs.”

“No question that the results from our first round earlier this year exceeded not only our expectations but, more importantly, those of our corporate sponsors,” stated Dean Amhaus, president & CEO of The Water Council. “We were impressed with the quality and maturity of ideas that were submitted from across the world and this played out by the fact that our corporate sponsors found a number of solutions that they are continuing to pursue.”

For Tech Challenge topics, application criteria, entry forms and other Water Council program details, go to watertechhub.com. Applications are being accepted through November 3, 2019 and finalists will be announced in December.

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About A. O. Smith

[A. O. Smith Corporation](http://www.aosmith.com), with headquarters in Milwaukee, Wis., is a global leader applying innovative technology and energy-efficient solutions to products manufactured and marketed worldwide. The company is one of the world’s leading manufacturers of residential and commercial water heating equipment and boilers, as well as a leading manufacturer of water treatment products.

About Badger Meter

Badger Meter is a leading innovator, manufacturer and marketer of flow measurement and control products, serving water and gas utilities, municipalities and industrial customers worldwide. Measuring a variety of liquids — from water to oil and lubricants in commercial processes — products from Badger Meter are known for accuracy, durability and the ability to provide valuable and timely measurement information. For more information, visit www.badgermeter.com.

About Zurn Industries

Zurn Industries, LLC, a Rexnord company, is a recognized leader in commercial, municipal, healthcare and industrial markets. Zurn offers the largest breadth of engineered water solutions, including a wide spectrum of sustainable plumbing products. Zurn delivers total building solutions for new construction and retrofit applications that enhance any building’s environment. For more information, visit Zurn.com or RexnordCorp.com.

About Tech Challenge

Spearheaded by The Water Council (TWC), the [Tech Challenge](#) is a new global competition designed to identify cutting-edge freshwater technologies and ideas with high potential for commercialization or implementation. A series of Tech Challenges will run throughout the year, and each Challenge is designed around specific topics identified by corporate sponsors. Every Tech Challenge is open to anyone with a good idea and candidates can apply to as many of the Challenges as they like. Solutions can come from entrepreneurs, university students or researchers, professionals already working in water-dependent industries, private sector and government labs or just inventive individuals. Challenge finalists will present in-person to the sponsoring companies to compete for prize money, access to corporate R&D resources and the opportunity to partner on the development, marketing, licensing or sale of the winning technology or idea. As with all TWC competitions, potential Tech Challenge participants can submit their applications through [WaterTechHub.com](#).

About The Water Council

Headquartered in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA next to the world's largest freshwater system and home to one of the most influential freshwater technology hubs in the world, [The Water Council](#) (TWC) is recognized as a global center for advancing water technologies and stewardship. At its heart, TWC is a non-profit, membership organization that connects, convenes and showcases the hub comprised of more than 238 water technology businesses and the diverse water leadership network of 200 members it is linked to from around the world. While TWC's mission is centered on driving economic development, attracting and connecting world-class talent and supporting water-focused technology innovation, its larger goal is to help secure freshwater resources for the world by driving solutions to the numerous industries that need and use a large amount of water.