

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Meghan Jensen
VP Marketing & Communications
mjensen@thewatercouncil.com
(414) 988-8754



THE WATER COUNCIL



The Water Council Launches New Competition for Water Technology Innovators

Global companies A. O. Smith Corporation, Badger Meter and Zurn Industries sponsor first round of the Tech Challenge Initiative

Milwaukee, Wisconsin – Nov 1 – [The Water Council](#) today announced the first round of the Tech Challenge, a new, international competition designed to identify cutting-edge freshwater technologies and ideas with high potential for commercialization or implementation. Challenge finalists will compete for prize money, access to corporate R&D resources and the opportunity to partner on the development, marketing, licensing or sale of their winning technology or idea.

Each Tech Challenge is sponsored by a combination of corporate partners from water-intensive and water technology industries. Inaugural sponsors include A. O. Smith Corporation, Badger Meter and Zurn Industries, a Rexnord company.

A series of Tech Challenges will run throughout the year and each Challenge is designed around a specific topic identified by corporate sponsors. Every Tech Challenge is open to anyone with a good idea and candidates can submit an application to as many of the Challenges as they like. Prospective technologies can come from entrepreneurs, university students or researchers, professionals already working in water-dependent industries, private sector and government labs or just inventive individuals.

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

- Sensing microbiological organisms or disinfection byproducts
- Detecting heavy metals (such as lead) and industrial chemicals in water and wastewater

For a complete explanation of Tech Challenge topics, application criteria and entry forms, go to watertechhub.com. Applications are accepted from Nov. 1, 2018 – Jan. 13, 2019 and finalists will be announced in February 2019.

“A. O. Smith is pleased to be in a position to help support entrepreneurs, researchers and promising startup businesses in assisting their water technology innovations to the next stage,” said Dr. Robert Heideman, senior vice president and corporate technology officer, A. O. Smith Corporation. “This is a unique opportunity for freshwater technology businesses, and we’re pleased to partner with The Water Council to help expedite the path to market for promising water technology innovators.”

“Zurn is leading in connecting the water systems in commercial buildings to improve water efficiency, reliability and safety,” said Tony Wilcox, Zurn vice president, engineering and product management. “We are excited to partner with The Water Council to sponsor this first Tech Challenge that is promoting innovation to proactively sense water safety issues.”

“Badger Meter is a proud partner and sponsor of The Water Council’s Tech Challenge. Since our founders invented the frost-proof water meter in 1905, we’ve been a leading innovator and manufacturer of water metering solutions. We’ve seen first-hand how our products result in overall water savings and conservation,” said Fred Begale, vice president of engineering for Badger Meter. “The Tech Challenge gives us the opportunity to work with other innovators in the water technology space, to design and develop solutions that help manage and conserve the world’s most precious natural resource. We encourage any person or any company around the world to submit their ideas.”

Within the first year of the Tech Challenge, The Water Council will run multiple rounds of challenges to match the needs of corporate sponsors. Water intensive companies that are looking for cutting edge freshwater technology solutions are encouraged to sponsor a challenge.

The Tech Challenge program was officially announced at the Water Environment Federation’s Technical Exhibition & Conference (WEFTEC) in New Orleans on Oct. 1 – 3. The Water Council is also accepting applications for the BREW Accelerator program and BREW Corporate Accelerator program powered by A. O. Smith Corporation on watertechhub.com. The BREW is designed to help support entrepreneurs and startups that are developing innovative freshwater technologies.

###

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 The Water Council

Headquartered in the Global Water Center in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, next to the world's largest freshwater system, [The Water Council](#) is a non-profit organization that drives economic, technology and talent development to support the global water industry. As the leading U.S. cluster, and one of the most powerful water technology hubs in the world, the organization convenes global water leaders and supports more than 190 members from small and mid-sized businesses and large global corporations to engineers, entrepreneurs, utilities, government agencies, education programs and non-profits, with valuable services, programming and networking opportunities.

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.