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Tech Challenge to connect innovative water solutions with industry needs

New initiative of The Water Council helps water technology companies and large water users find new ideas, talent and investment opportunities

New Orleans – Oct 2, 2018 – [The Water Council](#) today announced the launch of its new Tech Challenge program, a series of global competitions to identify freshwater technologies and ideas with high potential for commercialization or implementation. Each Tech Challenge is designed around a single, specific topic identified by corporate sponsors and is open to any person or any company around the world with a cutting-edge technology or good idea.

Companies developing water technology and those who use a large amount of water in their manufacturing and operations invest significant time, personnel and money into new product development. The Tech Challenge will assist these companies by leveraging The Water Council’s network to find solutions in an expedited amount of time.

“Tech Challenge is similar to a matchmaking program. We bring innovators together with companies seeking breakthrough solutions for challenging water technology issues,” stated Dean Amhaus, president and CEO of The Water Council. “While we will be awarding cash prizes to the Tech Challenge winners, the big winners are any applicants and any corporate sponsors that, through the process, get connected and reach a business deal where a solution is sold and a product is delivered to consumers.”

In the first year, The Water Council will run multiple tech challenges focused on current industry needs including sensors, filtration and disinfection and in ensuing years will add more topics to match the needs of corporate sponsors. Applicants could include: entrepreneurs, university students or researchers, water tech professionals, private or government lab researchers, or inventive individuals.

Selected finalists will present in-person to the sponsoring organization 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.

“In our fast-paced ‘connected’ world, what is still lacking is a method that allows any individual or small business with an innovative water technology solution to get paired with a company that is trying to uncover that novel solution,” said Dr. Barry Liner, a technical advisor to The Water Council. “Over the course of a year Tech Challenge will be seeking proposals on a range of topics that Water Council corporate sponsors have identified as critical elements on products that they are working to bring to the marketplace or put into operation at a facility.”

In March 2018, The Water Council participated in a U.S. Department of Energy “Roundtable Discussion of Federal Prizes and Challenges” at the White House to explore how such initiatives can foster meaningful progress on solving some of the most pressing water challenges facing the United States. Since that meeting The Water Council and the U.S. Department of Energy have engaged in regular discussions on possible partnerships and have agreed to continue to cooperate and inform each other’s stakeholders about each other’s prizes and challenges programs.

The Founding Sponsors of The Water Council’s Tech Challenge include A. O. Smith Corporation, Badger Meter, Evoqua Water Technologies and Rexnord/Zurn. Companies and utilities looking for new ideas, talent or investment opportunities are encouraged to sponsor a challenge.

Applications will be accepted on watertechhub.com from November 1, 2018 – January 13, 2019. Finalists will be announced in February 2019.

The Water Council is at the Water Environment Federation’s Technical Exhibition & Conference in New Orleans in the Wisconsin Water Innovation Pavilion (Booth #3345) on October 1 – 3 from 8:30am – 5:00pm and is available for media interviews by contacting Meghan Jensen at mjensen@thewatercouncil.com.

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About Tech Challenge

Spearheaded by The Water Council, 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 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. Challenge finalists will present in-person to the sponsoring organization 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 Water Council competitions, potential Tech Challenge participants can submit their applications through www.watertechhub.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.