

Class'Code Wins Informatics Europe 2017 Best Practices in Education Award

Award winner announced during ECSS 2017 in Lisbon, Portugal

Lisbon, Portugal – 24 October 2017 –

The winner of the Informatics Europe 2017 Best Practices in Education Award is the **Class'Code** project, proposed by a team of researchers, engineers and teachers in France.

Class'Code is an open participative training solution for members of the educational and informatics communities in France. It trains teachers and educators working with children aged 8 to 14 to basic programming and computer science. This includes creative programming, information coding, familiarization with networks, fun robotics, and the related impacts of technology in our society. It helps introducing young people to the concept of algorithms, computational thinking and thus allow them to have control over the digital world from an early age. As team ambassadors, **Colin de la Higuera**, chairman of Class'Code Steering Committee, and Unesco Chair for open educational resources at Nantes University, and **Benjamin Ninassi**, Chief engineer at INRIA, presented their project and received the award on behalf of the consortium on a special ceremony held during the European Computer Science Summit, on 24. October at the Universidade NOVA de Lisboa, in Lisbon, Portugal.

As the award-winners explain: *“Class'Code is based on a need, an analysis and a hope. The need is that of training the teachers to the basics of Informatics, coding and computational thinking. This need appears only when the government is convinced that these topics have to be taught to children. The analysis is that new methods are needed for this training, making full use of the new educational tools available: MOOCs, social networks, open education platforms and resources. This is the chance to rethink inclusion, professional training and to make it a shared cause. The hope is that the answer provided by ClassCode will live up to our expectation and that our choices will allow the project to help France reach its ambitious goals in other contexts, countries or topics. This hope is what allowed the SIF to unite so many of us into the ClassCode project, led by INRIA, with Magic Makers in charge of the pedagogy and Open Classrooms of the production”*. Since September 2016 the program has reached 15.000 subscribers and around 3.200 learners are attending the meetings regularly set up by more than 40 structures all over France. Visit <https://pixees.fr/classcode/accueil/> to learn more about Class'Code.

“Class’Code, a consortium backed by universities, companies, and the government, excels at educating teachers nationwide by going far beyond “just” providing teaching material: they are also offering a collaborative learning environment as well as a variety of dissemination events directed at educators and policy makers. This project is perfectly aligned with recent efforts of the Académie de Sciences to establishing informatics as a subject in French schools. We also commend the work of the team behind the “Cyber Security Base MOOC with F-Secure” proposal which received an honourable mention. In a cooperation between the University of Helsinki and F-Secure Cyber Security Academy as an industrial partner, a massive open online course for a very timely topic was developed and opened to over 5000 students”, comments **Jan Vahrenhold** (Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster), Chair of this year`s Award Committee.

“Microsoft is delighted with the strong nominations received for the Informatics Europe 2017 Best Practices in Education Award and congratulates the Class’Code members for their dedication to making computing a first class citizen in the educational and informatics communities through the development of a collaborative learning platform for teachers and students and their constant dissemination efforts with decision makers in education”, explains **Evelyne Viegas**, Director of Artificial Intelligence Outreach at Microsoft Research.

About the Informatics Europe Best Practices in Education Award

In line with its mission to foster and promote teaching quality in Informatics, Informatics Europe annually presents the "Best Practices in Education Award". The 2017 edition of the award was devoted to curriculum and professional development initiatives for making Informatics education available to all. The Award recognizes outstanding European educational initiatives that improve the quality of informatics teaching and the attractiveness of the discipline, and that can be applied beyond their institutions of origin. The Award is sponsored by Microsoft and carries a prize of EUR 5,000. Visit www.informatics-europe.org/awards/education-award.html to learn more.

About Informatics Europe

Informatics Europe represents the academic and research community in Information and Computer Sciences in Europe. Bringing together university departments and research laboratories, it creates a strong voice to safeguard and shape quality research and education in Information and Computer Sciences. With around 120 member institutions across 30 countries, Informatics Europe promotes common positions and acts on common priorities.

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