

With the “Innovathon” challenge, Leonardo and PoliHub “put on track” young talent with an automated driving system project

Management of the technological and economic aspects of a new project, problem solving and teamwork: these are the skills that forty students demonstrated during a 48-hour non-stop business game. The challenge was won by the team “Palo” (Politecnico di Milano e Università di Pavia)

Milano, 10 giugno 2019 – How is it possible to demonstrate, through an automated driving system project, the possession of knowledge and management skills needed to work successfully for a high technology company like Leonardo, one of the world’s top 10 companies in the Aerospace, Defence and Security sector? This is the challenge given to forty selected university students and recent graduates from all over Italy who took part in the “Innovathon”, Leonardo’s hackathon held on Saturday 8 and Sunday 9 June in PoliHub (the “Politecnico di Milano” Innovation District & Startup Accelerator, the 3rd best World University startup Incubator).

During the realisation of a functioning prototype of an automated driving system, the young participants had to demonstrate they possessed several skills. For example: capacity for innovation, team working, management of technical and economic aspects of a project, quality control, ability to react, problem solving and stress management.

Leonardo’s engineers and PoliHub experts flanked the students as mentors, testing their capabilities at every stage of the technological and industrial project simulation. The teams had to manage the purchase of materials on a virtual eShop platform, the conception of the project, the concrete realisation of the prototype, the commissioning and finally testing on the track. During the competition the students had to demonstrate their skills in electronics and software development, as well as their management of the economic and financial sustainability of the idea. In fact, the final ranking was determined not only by the time automated driving systems covered the route, but also the budget, the quality of the final product and the presentation speech in front of the jury.

The challenge was won by the team “Palo”, composed by Davide Vairetti, Lorenzo Prandi, Simone Tomé, Angelo Falci e Riccardo Cantoni (Politecnico di Milano e Università di Pavia). A cash prize was given to the winning team. The business game lasted almost 48 hours. Many participants worked inside the PoliHub, even during the night between Saturday and Sunday, to complete the prototype in time. With the added surprise of facing a sudden change in the rules of engagement imposed just before the finishing line. This hackathon represented an opportunity for young university students, specialising in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) disciplines, to get in touch with Leonardo’s management who will consider the possibility of special integration programmes to further serve students and develop talent.

Leonardo, a global high-technology company, **is among the top ten world players in Aerospace, Defence and Security** and Italy’s main industrial company. Organized into five business divisions, Leonardo has a significant industrial presence in Italy, the United Kingdom, Poland and the USA, where it also operates through subsidiaries. Leonardo recorded consolidated revenues of €12.2 billion and **invested €1.4 billion in Research and Development**. Leonardo is the fourth company in the world in the Aerospace and Defense sector for R&D expenditure, with approximately 9,000 employees engaged in this activity. It has 200 research projects and partnerships with over 90 universities and research centers in the world, of which around 50 are in Italy.

PoliHub is the ‘Politecnico di Milano’ incubator, managed by Fondazione Politecnico di Milano, 2nd best European University Incubator and **3rd best World University Incubator**, according to UbiGlobal Index 2017-2018. Today PoliHub gathers over **100 entities (start-ups and companies)** acting in various areas of innovation such as Design, ICT, Energy and Cleatech. They develop high tech and creative products and services. 2018 PoliHub’s start-ups combined turnover was 31.7 million euro, with 28 million euro investments and 650 jobs.