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Newsletter

National Productivity and Competitiveness Council

The six grand winners will participate in the ICQCC 2019 in Tokyo, Japan in September

NPQC 2019 PROVES TO BE A TREMENDOUS SUCCESS

The National Productivity and Quality Convention (NPQC 2019) concluded on Friday 31 May with six grand winners selected to participate in the upcoming International Convention on Quality Control Circles (ICQCC 2019) in Tokyo in September. An award night was organized to announce and reward the winners in the Gold, Silver and Bronze categories.

More than 400 delegates from different public and private organisations that presented their projects attended the Award Ceremony. The panel of local jurors assessed a total of 106 projects related to productivity and quality improvement on 28 and 29 May at the Ravenala Hotel, Balaclava.

The six Grand Winners were as follows:

- **Small & Medium Private Enterprises including Micro Enterprises:** Neel Trading & Facilities Ltd (Efficiently Manage Process Area In Ewaste Department) and SS Business School Ltd (Increasing the employability rate of learners)
- **Large Private Enterprises:** Phoenix Beverages Ltd (Operational Excellence in Beverages Production) and Natec Medical Ltd (Growing Natec's Production Capacity, Productivity, Employee Engagement through Leadership Standard Work)
- **Government Bodies / Parastatals / Registered Associations:** Rajiv Gandhi Science Centre (Reduction of inefficiency in the organization of science promotion activities at the RGSC) and Employees Welfare Fund (Interaction without Intervention)

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DEVELOPING PEOPLE FOR A BETTER TOMORROW



The NPQC is a wonderful opportunity for us to come together, exchange ideas and best practices so that we can all benefit and improve our respective organisations and ultimately our country. I see the NPQC as an exceptional opportunity to re-invent, reshape and upgrade our businesses with a view to better serve customers, shareholders and the community at large.



Hon Dharmendar Sesungkur,
Minister of Financial Services and Good Governance

NPQC 2019

NATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY AND QUALITY CONVENTION
MAURITIUS

MEET OUR GRAND WINNERS

CATEGORY

SMALL AND MEDIUM PRIVATE ENTERPRISES INCLUDING MICRO ENTERPRISES



Neel Trading & Facilities Ltd

Project: Efficiently Manage Process Area In Ewaste Department

“This achievement has indeed increased our confidence that we can really bring a positive change in the way do things in the company. We have witnessed the emergence of a stronger team spirit and more readiness to accept changes. We want to pursue similar initiatives in other departments which will ultimately be beneficial to our company.” - Mr. Roumar Sidick Ramjan



SS Business School Ltd

Project: Increased employability rate through the inclusion of moral values in soft skills training

“We are really grateful to the NPCC to have created this platform and allow us to show the ambitious project that we have worked on. We took five months to study, examine and work out the whole project and implement it. We have put a lot of effort in it and the results, I must say, have been really positive.” - Mrs. Saada Shahid

CATEGORY

GOVERNMENT/PARASTATAL BODIES AND REGISTERED ASSOCIATIONS



Employees Welfare Fund

Project: Customer Journey towards a user friendly and interactive on-line loan application” Interaction without intervention

“The delivery of our services and the quality of services offered were our main concerns, for which we have worked on our project that we presented. We want to give a friendly experience to our customers and for this, it was important for us to revisit the areas where we could bring improvements and add more quality to our work. I must thank the whole EWF team to believe in this project and make it successful.” - Mr. Palsamy Reddy Sitanna



Rajiv Gandhi Science Centre

Project: Reduction of inefficiency in the organization of science promotion activities at the RGSC

“We have worked on our project since quite long. We wanted to bring improvements at all levels. The NPQC platform has allowed us to demonstrate our effort put into uplifting our operations. What was even more important to us was a change in the mindset of our staff and to promote a team spirit. And the implementation of our project has allowed us to see a positive impact on our team and their overall performance.” - Mr. Prakash Jhugaroo

NPQC 2019

NATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY AND QUALITY CONVENTION
MAURITIUS

MEET OUR GRAND WINNERS

CATEGORY
LARGE PRIVATE ENTERPRISES



Phoenix Beverages Limited

Project: Operational Excellence in Beverages Production

“This is our very first participation. And we decided to participate in it at a very short notice. We were pleasantly surprised that our project has got such a big recognition. We want to bring a big change in our floor level operations for which we have worked on this project. The beverages production department is at the heart of our company and it is important that we bring the right changes to make this department more productive.” - Ms. Yanessa Hurree



Natec Medical Ltd

Project: Growing Natec’s Production Capacity, Productivity, Employee Engagement through Leadership Standard Work

“We are indeed very satisfied with this achievement. One of the biggest changes that we have witnessed while implementing the project was the engagement of each and everyone in our team. We have tried to work in the context of the theme of NPQC 2019, that is developing people for a better tomorrow. This achievement has given a good motivation to our 250 staff and we are even more ready now to accept more challenges ahead.” - Mr. Shehezad Ghaboos



SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS



Honorary Partner

在モーリシャス日本国大使館
Embassy of Japan in Mauritius



NPQC 2019 PROVES TO BE A TREMENDOUS SUCCESS *continued*

On Friday 31 May, a panel consisting of four international jurors headed by Mr. Getahun Tadesse Mekonen, the former Director General of the Ethiopian Kaizen Institute, assessed the 11 best projects, out of which the six Grand Winners were selected.

The three other international jurors were:

- Mr. Iji Inui, Senior Sector Advisor, Industrial Development and Public Policy Department, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA);
- Mr. Tomoyuki Yamada, Coordinator for Africa KAIZEN Initiative, NEPAD;
- Ms. Grace Tan from Singapore, consultant in Quality Circles.

The NPQC encourages organisations to share their best operational practices, processes, systems, and initiatives and learn from the experience of others. It provides an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of teams that have been responsible for creating and/or managing productivity and quality improvements at their workplace.

The Grand Winners will now prepare to participate in the 2019 International Convention on Quality Control Circles (ICQCC) to be held in Tokyo in September. The event will be organized by the Union of Japanese Scientists and Engineers (JUSE) under the theme “Creating a Brighter Future Through Total Quality Management and Quality Circle Activities”.



“

It is always a pleasure to see that the NPCC not only motivates but gives organisations the necessary tools to adopt a culture of productivity, quality and innovation. As an honorary partner of the NPQC 2019, it makes me very proud to see so many public institutions, well-known companies and SMEs here today. This proves that Mauritius is continuously aiming for productivity.

”

His Excellency Mr. Yoshiharu Kato,
Ambassador of Japan to Mauritius



“

There should be more exchanges in terms of ideas and experiences among local organisations and crucial to continuously raise the benchmark. We should see more organisations in Mauritius participating in NPQC in the future. I would make an appeal to the Embassy of Japan to help us set up the ICQCC in Africa, which will be a very big feat for us.

”

Mr. Sanjiv Mulloo,
Chairman of the NPCC



“

NPQC 2019 has witnessed a growing enthusiasm among local organisations to showcase their productivity and quality projects. The assessment which were held earlier this week revealed some interesting observations. We could see a high level of dedication to the practice of continuous improvement at all levels. This is the very foundation of our Prime Minister's vision to make Mauritius a high-income nation.

”

Mr. Deepak Balgobin,
Executive Director of the NPCC

UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL WITH MR. GETAHUN TADESSE MEKONEN, FORMER DIRECTOR OF THE ETHIOPIAN KAIZEN INSTITUTE

What is your overall feeling of the whole NPQC 2019 event?

I understand that the NPQC has become an important platform for local organisations to showcase their productivity and quality projects. The NPQC is a great inspiration for other African countries to follow in the same footsteps as Mauritius, which can bring great results for these countries.

How did you find the presentation by the different teams?

I must say it was a very difficult task to differentiate the companies and the performance of the teams. If we were the only ones to decide, no doubt we would take all of them to Tokyo. Among the jurors, sometimes we agreed and sometimes we disagreed over the presentations. But our evaluations were not really on the difference of the performance or the contents of the presentations of each team. It was rather on the formalities which are very important. Although six teams were selected, we have to acknowledge that all the participating teams were the grand winners. All the six teams selected to participate in the ICQCC 2019 in Tokyo are not only representing Mauritius but Africa as well.

What struck you the most during the presentations?

Indeed, the thing that struck me was the Mauritian Police Force, which is one good example for Africa. It is not a secret for us how the police work in Africa. But here we have seen how the police wants to take care of the Mauritian people. It is really a good example for the whole African continent. The Mauritian police have set a good benchmark as we have seen in their presentation.

Another striking thing that I had observed as a Kaizen expert is the cohesion and team spirit that prevails at the NPCC, which is really impressive.



What would you recommend to the teams for them to improve their presentations?

We have elaborated five points that project teams can put into place to improve their presentations.

1. Revise your presentation and put it in a flow as it is very important for jurors to follow.
2. Most of the teams have selected two or three tools. It is ok sometimes but selecting many tools cannot help in qualifying a team. It should be ensured that the tools selected are appropriate for the context.
3. We can present our results quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative representation is very important.
4. The fourth one is standardisation, which is a problem in Africa. We need to work as per the standards. This is known as daily Kaizen. Improving standards is also important.
5. The fifth point is a smart presentation. You should be able to explain them smartly.



About Mr. Getahun Tadesse Mekonen

Mr. Mekonen is a graduate in economics and studied management, HRD, quality and productivity. He has served in senior government positions in different ministries and agencies. He managed Kaizen projects as a counterpart to JICA's projects (Japanese expert teams) from 2009 to 2016. Mr. Mekonen established and led the Ethiopian Kaizen Institute from 2011-2016 in the capacity of Director General. He initiated Ethiopian Kaizen strategies and developed the TIISO model— a model to transfer Kaizen from Japan in 15 years timeframe—and provided leadership for their implementation. He has published three Kaizen books in Ethiopian local language. He was also involved in JICA-sponsored research projects and several public policy, strategy and reform studies.

SME MAURITIUS PARTNERS WITH NPCC TO BOOST PRODUCTIVITY OF SMALL AND MEDIUM COMPANIES



Mr. Peter Neubert, chairman of SME Mauritius, Mr. Ravin Rampersad, CEO of SME Mauritius, Mr. Deepak Balgobin, Executive Director of the NPCC and Mr. Sanjiv Mulloo, Chairman of the NPCC

The NPCC is offering its technical expertise to 60 Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). An agreement was signed between the NPCC and SME Mauritius on 17 May in Port Louis, paving the way for stronger collaboration between the two institutions.

This project will give the opportunity to the SMEs to revisit the ways they have been operating so far and to implement new tools and practices that will allow them to boost up their value creation and performance in the short, medium and long terms.

“We are really enthusiastic about this new collaboration as we believe in the role played by SMEs which contribute massively to the Mauritius economy. We also believe in their strong future and huge potential, which indeed motivates us further to give them the necessary boost so that they can continue growing, perform better and build greater sustainability and resilience,” the Executive Director of the NPCC, Mr. Deepak Balgobin said.

The collaboration between the NPCC and SME Mauritius will help the SMEs to implement a framework that includes enhancing sales revenue; improving output per unit cost of production; optimising labour utilisation and optimising capital utilisation.

According to Mr. Sanjiv Mulloo, the chairman of the NPCC, the Council will spare no effort in contributing to the advancement and progress of SMEs in Mauritius. For him, SMEs form the real backbone of the local economy and it is of utmost importance to continue boosting this sector of the economy.

Mr. Ravin Rampersad, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of SME Mauritius, explained that this project will consist of two important steps. “Phase 1 of the program will consist of an audit, including internal functions and proposals for improvement in the factory, while phase 2 will consist of the implementation of proposals which will be followed closely by SME Mauritius,” he pointed out.

The project emanates from a budgetary measure to be implemented by SME Mauritius, that is “an SME Productivity Improvement Programme to offer opportunities to SMEs to have access to technicians in order to review their operations for enhancing productivity and minimising waste.”

GRACE TAN IMPRESSES PARTICIPANTS IN INNOVATION THROUGH DESIGN THINKING WORKSHOP



The Innovation through Design Thinking course was attended by professionals from different public and private organisations

How to build ideas that are emotionally meaningful as well as functional, and help us express ourselves beyond words and symbols? This is what Grace Tan, training, facilitation, coaching and consulting expert from Singapore, discussed and explained to the participants of the Innovation through Design Thinking workshop that took place at the Voilà Bagatelle Hotel on 3 and 4 June.

Some 25 participants attended the course which garnered highly positive feedbacks for its unconventional and highly interactive approach. Ms. Tan provided the participants with a strong insight into the realms of Design Thinking and showed them how they can use the tools provided to bring innovation into their activities.

"The course, I must say, has been highly enriching for me, though I was myself the trainer. It was a great experience. I got the opportunity to learn a great deal about the way Mauritian professionals reflect on Design Thinking. The participants were very attentive and receptive," Ms. Tan said.



"The times are changing fast. If you cannot drive the change, the change will drive you. We need to accept the fact that we have to adapt to the needs of the user, for which we have to use both the right and left brains so that we can deliver results," she added.

The workshop enabled the participants to move from the conventional problem-solving practices to one focused deeply on the human process that taps into attitudes often overlooked. Ms. Tan was in Mauritius at the invitation of the NPCC to act as member of the international jury for the National Productivity and Quality Convention (NPQC 2019).



"The course has allowed me to challenge my own perception about user experience. It triggered my curiosity to look into and learn more about how we can continuously improve the delivery of our services by innovation through Design Thinking. No doubt that this course is going to help me a lot in my professional tasks which indeed encompass the complete journey of the customer. We have to put ourselves in the shoes of the customer and this is what exactly the course taught me." Karen Louis, Customer Experience Supervisor at Bank One



"I think this course can be applied in several areas. The trainer drilled down into the subject and gave us all a good insight of Design Thinking. Most importantly, she explained to us step by step how to understand customers through emotive faculties such as empathy. The course is definitely going to be a breakthrough for me as I am in the field of graphic designing. I am sure I will get a lot of inspiration to give better solutions." Dharmesh Beeharry, Graphic Designer at the National Computer Board

ENCOURAGING FIGURES FOR PRODUCTIVITY AND COMPETITIVENESS



The productivity level for the local economy has observed an upward trend since the past decade.

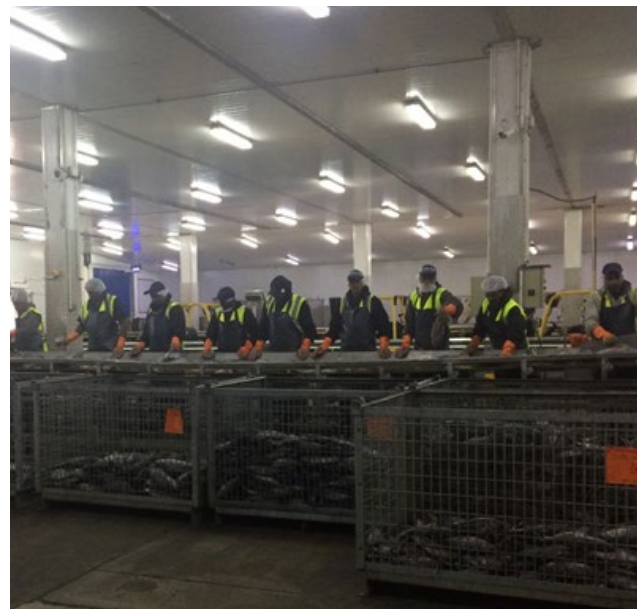
Statistics Mauritius came up with encouraging figures relating to productivity and competitiveness in May. Labour productivity, as measured by real output per person engaged, grew by an average of 2.6% annually for the whole economy during that period. The upward trends indicate that there has indeed been an increase in the productivity level during the past ten years.

During the same period, the real output of the Manufacturing sector grew at a rate of 1.6% per annum and that of Export Oriented Enterprises (EOE) decreased at an annual rate of 0.1%.

On the other hand, capital productivity increased by 0.4% in 2018. According to Statistics Mauritius, Gross Value Added (GVA) in real terms grew by an annual average of 3.6% during the period 2008 to 2018.

Presently, several major economies across the globe are facing productivity issues in different sector of activities. For instance, the brief on productivity by the Conference Board stated in its recent observations that global productivity growth has remained weak in 2018 and will continue to be slow through 2019.

This brief is based on data from The Conference Board Total Economy Database, which are comprised of measures of labour productivity (including output per worker or per worker-hour) and total factor productivity growth (which takes account of investment in capital and labor force skills).



It mentions further that “emerging markets still have a substantial productivity growth advantage over mature economies. Taken together all emerging and developing economies saw an increase in output per worker at 2.6 percent in 2018, compared to 1 percent on average for the mature economies”.

For more updates on the Conference Board, you may visit the following website: <https://www.conference-board.org/data/economydatabase>

BUDGET 2019/2020 BANKS STRONGLY ON PRODUCTIVITY, COMPETITIVENESS AND INNOVATION



The national budget focused significantly on innovation which are the means to achieve higher productivity and competitiveness.

“Globally the innovation race is on. We must imperatively be among the leaders in that race if we want faster economic growth,” the Prime Minister said in his budget speech, stressing on elements such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and FinTech and biotechnology.

A newly set-up company involved in innovation-driven activities will benefit from a tax holiday of 8 years on income derived from its intellectual property assets developed in Mauritius.

According to the Prime Minister, the Université des Mascareignes will offer a Masters in AI and Robotics in collaboration with the Université de Limoges and Université de Nice to promote innovation. A 6-month AI Skills Development Programme for 100 students with the support of the local universities and international experts is also in the pipeline.

A “Post-Study Work Visa” will be introduced to allow international students to work for 3 years in Mauritius after completion of undergraduate studies in sectors where there is scarcity of skills such as ICT, Fintech, AI and Biotechnology.

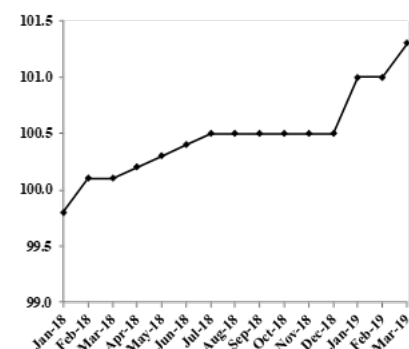
The 2019-2020 budget presented by the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Honorable Pravind Jugnauth, on Monday 10 June has laid strong emphasis on productivity and competitiveness. Different sectors of the economy have been provided incentives with the objective to increase their productivity and ultimately improve their performance. This in turn will help them contribute even more significantly in the economy.

Right from a National Skills Matching Platform to the Support for Trade Promotion and Marketing scheme, the budget, themed “Embracing a brighter future together as a Nation”, encompasses a host of measures that intend to raise the productivity level in different economic sectors.



The Prime Minister announced ten avenues to embrace a brighter future together as a nation:

- Strengthening the pillars of economic growth;
- Consolidating the productive sectors while shaping a more democratised economy;
- Expanding our economic space while deepening regional integration;
- Building the infrastructure that matches our development vision;
- Deepening our national reform agenda;
- Reaching a higher social development path with a focus on gender mainstreaming and improving quality of life;
- Promoting a safer and more secure living environment;
- Facing the challenge of climate change and further building the resilience of our environment;
- Building stronger foundations for the infrastructural development of Rodrigues, Agalega and Outer Islands;
- Securing sound public finances and sustainable debt.



The construction sector has witnessed a significant growth during the past years, contributing strongly to the overall economic growth of the country

WINNERS TO BE ANNOUNCED IN NLE CONVENTION



National Leadership Engine

The National Leadership Engine (NLE) project crossed another milestone on Saturday 15 June when the 11 selected teams presented their community projects to a panel of assessors. The teams were selected from the 11 Youth Centres where NPCC consultants, trainers from the Ministry of Youth and Sports and private trainers were involved in coaching them. The selected projects for the national assessments included the following:

Youth Centre	Project
Bambous	Leave no one behind
Flacq	Wild Dumping
Floreal	Implementation "E-Smart project" at Cite Joachim
Helvetia	Literacy Numeracy
Montagne Blanche	Pren Konsians L'Avenir Nu Zenfan
Pamplemousses	Sustainable Household Waste Management
Port Louis	Barefoot
Riviere Du Rempart	Make Learning Fun
Rose Belle	Saklocal
Souillac	E-Manners
Trefles	Waste Management to decrease risks of floods and spread of diseases

The teams were given 15 minutes to present their projects through PowerPoint slides in front of the panel of jurors that comprised Mr. Stephen Naicken from the African Leadership University, Mr. Clive Auffray from the National Empowerment Foundation and Mr. Satyajeet Ramchurn from the United Nations Development Programme.

During their presentations, many of the teams, seeing the success and positive impact of their initiatives, expressed the desire to register their teams as Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). They want to pursue further their initiatives and even extend their presence in other communities.

The training of participants involved a 12-week face to face interaction between the trainers and participants followed by brainstorming sessions and implementation of the different projects.

A panel of three assessors assessed the projects in the 11 centres on the 25 May and 1 June. The winners will be announced during an NLE Convention that will be organised by the NPCC in the coming weeks.

The NLE is the first of its kind in the Republic of Mauritius and strongly involves the young generation to learn and adopt leadership skills, which will in turn have a positive impact on our economy and society as a whole. The overall aim of the project is to influence the youth of today to emerge as self-confident leaders in the Mauritius of the future, thus creating a new breed of leaders at all levels, who can operate seamlessly in the public and private sectors and civil society.

The young people worked on projects for the community through innovative problem solving related to challenges such as illiteracy, unemployment, entrepreneurship, obesity, drug addiction, self-esteem, teenage pregnancy and poverty.

The NLE project aims at building leadership capabilities among youth in Mauritius. Leadership is a stepping stone to building effective, accountable and inclusive communities in which Mauritian youth has a key role to play. It is based on "The Leadership Brand", consisting of four differentiators: Together, Innovating, Trusted and Excellence. The project was implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

As a first step towards its implementation, a "Training of Trainers" programme was launched on 17 October 2018 at the Hennessy Park Hotel in Ebène by the Minister of Financial Services and Good Governance, Honorable Dharmendar Sesungrur. Some 100 persons were trained as from Friday 19 October in different batches to become trainers in leadership. The training also included staff of the NPCC and Youth Officers from the Ministry of Youth and Sports who were expected to disseminate their knowledge to young people in Youth Centres across the island.

The second leg of the project consisted the training of the participants which kicked off on 12 January this year. The launching of this second part of the project was done at the Montagne Blanche Youth Centre by Hon Dharmendar Sesungrur. Some five hundred youth were registered for the training. After two months, they were gathered into teams that had chosen a community based project for implementation.

Floréal Youth Centre



Bambous Youth Centre



Helvetia Youth Centre



Montagne Blanche Youth Centre



Flacq Youth Centre



**National
Leadership
Engine**

Rivière du Rempart Youth Centre



HIGHLIGHTS OF ASSESSMENT

Souillac Youth Centre



Pamplemousses Youth Centre



Rose Belle Youth Centre



Port Louis Youth Centre



Trèfles Youth Centre



INNOVED 2019 IN FULL SWING



InnovEd 2019 promises once again to take the benchmark higher this year. The project which kicked off in March has crossed different milestones and is now heading towards the awards ceremony on 11 July.

From 17 to 20 June, 47 final projects were presented in the context of the national assessment which was conducted by a panel of experts. The experts were requested to select the best projects which they would assist further for InnovEd 2019. A total of 31 projects were selected to go through the Creathon, which took place on 27 June at the MGI, Moka.



During the Creathon, the experts assisted the teams to uplift their projects and prepare a pitch presentation to market their products. The panel of jurors consisted of a representative from the Mauritius Innovation and Research Council, the Institut Francais de L'Entrepreneuriat and CREAD.

For the 2019 edition of InnovEd, NPCC again built on the theory of Multiple Intelligences along with themes targeting the creative industries. The themes included Interactive Media, Cultural Heritage, Performing Arts, Visual Arts and Craft, Design and Languages and Publishing. The new elements for implementation of InnovEd 2019 are (1) an Innovation Club at the school level, (2) a MasterClass on Innovation in Education and (3) a CREATHon to convert projects into prototypes.



Innovation for the Education Sector (InnovEd) is a project organized by the NPCC in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Scientific Research and Tertiary Education and the Mauritius Institute of Training and Development (MITD). The objective is to promote and instill creative, critical and innovative thinking among students. InnovEd aims to evoke and foster creativity in schools which will better prepare students for further education and employment. InnovEd targets all Secondary schools and MITD Centers in Mauritius and Rodrigues.



InnovEd projects were submitted by students in the form of prototypes through their Innovation Clubs. The prototypes were further improved by experts in a Creathon. The Creathon was a full day event involving a pool of experts to assist each team to further develop the prototypes into product or services.

A MasterClass was delivered by IBM through their Digital Nation Africa (D-NA) initiative which aimed at enabling African citizens, entrepreneurs, and communities with the knowledge and tools to innovate, design, develop, and launch their own digital solutions. D-NA provides a free, self-paced learning and enablement platform that sparks innovation, and supports the new kinds of careers needed for a 21st century workforce in Africa.

The InnovEd 2019 Award Ceremony will be held in July for the 31 shortlisted projects. The best pitch presentation for each theme will be awarded a cash prize of Rs 20,000 and the runner up with a cash prize of Rs 10,000 per theme.

The Innovation Club, which was one of the innovations in InnovEd this year, was set up and managed by schools. NPCC provided online training to the clubs. An Innovation Club served on the one hand as a think tank on creativity and innovation and on the other hand, provided a framework for students to develop their skills in creativity and innovation.



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