Challenge IT News—February 2012

bcs The Chartered Institute for IT

Coventry Branch

This Issue
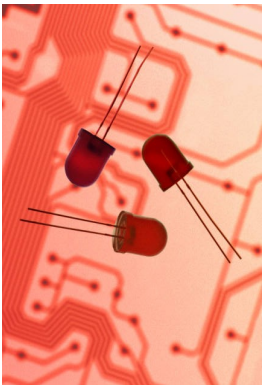
Congratulations!

Well done to all the teams who have made it though to the competition final. The competition committee and judges are looking forward to seeing all the different entries on 15th March 2012.

This newsletter aims to provide all the information needed for teams to prepare for the final and to present their results on the day.

Please note that teams may continue to work on improving their entries up to the point of judging.

Finals Exhibition

The finals exhibition will take place on the afternoon of Thursday 15th March in the Square One Arena at Coventry University's new Hub Building in Jordan Well, next to the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum.

This event is part of National Science and Engineering Week 2012.

The event will begin at 14.00 and end around 17.00. Judging will be between 14.00 and 15.30 and teams are welcome to arrive from 12.30 onwards to setup their displays.

NATIONAL SCIENCE & ENGINEERING WEEK

9–18 MARCH 2012

Who is invited to the Finals Exhibition?

All members of each finalist team are invited and expected to join us for the final.

Each team should be accompanied by one or two adult supporters (could be teacher, parent, youth leader; adults may support more than one team)

Representatives from the following organisations will be present:

- BCS Coventry Branch members and representatives from BCS Headquarters
- Academics and students from Coventry University and University of Warwick
- Local companies and organisations
- Sponsors for prizes and other supporters of the competition
- VIPs

Resources

Each finalist entry (team or individual) will be allocated a table (approx 70 cm x 150 cm) and one side of a large blue Velcro display board (approx 150 cm x 175 cm).

Power will be available, but please bring an extension lead and multi-plug unit. The adult supporter for each team will be provided with a temporary Wi-Fi account for the University's network, including Internet access.

Teams will be expected to provide their own IT equipment needed to exhibit and demonstrate their entry to judges and visitors, typically a laptop computer and perhaps mobile phone. However if anyone has problems with this please let us know, we may be able to help if we are given advance notice.

The display boards are provided for posters, designs, graphics, diagrams and pictures to explain about each entry, teamwork and activities. Please remember to bring

We will provide

Velcro Display Board

Table

Access to power and wifi
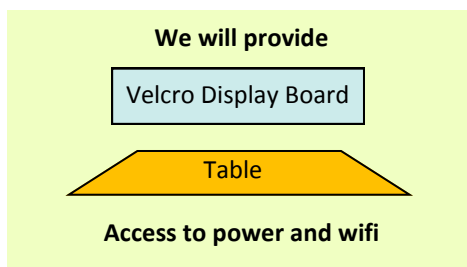
some drawing pins or Velcro stickers to attach display materials to the display board. You may also think about providing some small leaflets to hand out to the judges as a reminder of how interesting your entry was when they make their final decision.

The most important resource for exhibiting the entry is the team or individual responsible for creating the entry. The role of the team members is to convince the judges that their entry deserves to win the first prize.

Arrive from 12.30 onwards ready for judging at 14.00

Set up time

Teams are welcome to arrive at Square One any time from 12:30. The stands must be "dressed" and ready by 14:00, when the judges will begin to circulate. Helpers will be available on request to assist with unloading and setting up equipment and materials.

Light refreshments will be available from 12:30 in Square One. In addition the Hub has many food and refreshment outlets, including Costa Coffee and a supermarket on the ground floor and a food court on the first floor.
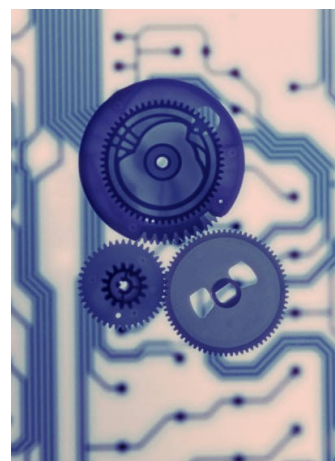
Judging

The judges will make use of all the evidence presented, including the displays and the accounts of the team members, to decide which entry to nominate as the winner for each category.

There are four entry categories, with a prize for the best entry in each category sponsored by different organisations.

- *Web site*
- *Digital Animation*
- *Mobile Phone App Design*
- *Post-16 (entries can be any of the above topics)*

We have a good number of interesting entries for all four categories, so the competition will be tough! The team members will need to stay with their stands during the judging.

We have appointed about 20 judges. You can identify judges by their hat, judge's badge and clipboard.

Each judge will visit all the entries for one category, look at the evidence, see demonstrations of software products or hear about the ideas from team members behind designs; they will look at the displays and talk to the team members, perhaps about how they worked together as a team.   They will then assign a score to each team and note some comments about the entries.

An adult supporter needs to stay near to the team stand to offer support and in case of any problems. However the judges have been advised to take the evidence for their decisions from the account given by team members rather than from the adults guiding them.

Judging (continued)

There will be some other guests and VIPs circulating at the same time as the judges. Some of these people may be prize sponsors or may have been asked to present the prizes.

Tea Time

While the winners are being decided there will be some interesting things happening:

- Sandwiches, snacks, cakes and soft drinks will be served

- Team members will be asked to visit other stands to vote for the best overall entry (see Entrants' Choice for more details)

- More photographs

Photographers will be circulating taking pictures of the display stands and (with your permission) the team members. These will be used for publicity after the event.

- Visitors, including John Dalziel from Mercia FM will be going around the stands talking to the teams about their view of Challenge IT

- Judges will visit stands to see entries for the categories they did not judge

- When the judging is over at about 15:30, the judges' score-sheets will be combined using a formula to generate an overall ranking and the winning entry will emerge for each category.

Entrants Choice

There is an extra prize: At Tea Time the adult supporter for each team will be given a voting form.

Each team has a single vote for their favourite entry out of all four categories - but they are not allowed to nominate themselves! The voting slips will be collected in and votes will be counted before the prize awards begin. The Entrants' Choice winner will be announced at the end of the prize awards.

Let us know who will attend by 5th March

Prize Awards

The Master of Ceremonies for the prize awards will be John Dalziel from Mercia FM.

Before each award John will ask teams to stand by their entries. The awarding team will visit the stands of each winning entry in turn.

There will be short speeches by sponsors and supporters, prizes will be awarded and more photographs.
The final award will be for the Entrants' Choice.

Finally certificates and small prizes will be presented to all the finalists. We expect the event to finish at about 17.00.

Practical Arrangements

We need to know no later than Monday 5th March:

- *Exact names* and details of who will attend on 15th March and any special arrangements we need to allow for (personal special needs, technical requirements etc).

- *Signed consent forms* with permissions for taking photographs of the non-adult team members or notification where consent has not been given.

- *Vehicle registration numbers:* we cannot guarantee free parking, but we will try to arrange for parking permits.

Contact Details

If you have any questions, or need additional information, the competition team can be contacted at:

Email: ChallengeIT.cov@bcs.org.uk

Our web site contains further details and documents to download:

http://coventry.bcs.org/competition.php

How to get to Square One, The Hub

Coventry University's Hub building is off Jordan Well in the centre of Coventry, opposite the Ellen Terry Building (used to be the Odeon Cinema) and adjacent to the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum.   It is shown in green on the map below.

The external entrance to Square One is at the "rear" of the Hub building: from Coventry Cathedral Square with your back to the Cathedral, the Herbert on your right and CU's Alan Berry Building on your left, go down the irregular stairs and turn right through the yellow gated entrance into a small courtyard. Helpers will be waiting there to welcome visitors from about 12:30.

The nearest public car parks are Grove Street (A) and Pool Meadow (B), entrances to these car parks are shown by yellow arrows. Coventry train station is about 15 minutes' walk or a short bus ride away and Pool Meadow bus station is a short walk away.

On request it may be possible to arrange some parking permits with Coventry University, although this may not be free it may be cheaper than the alternatives.
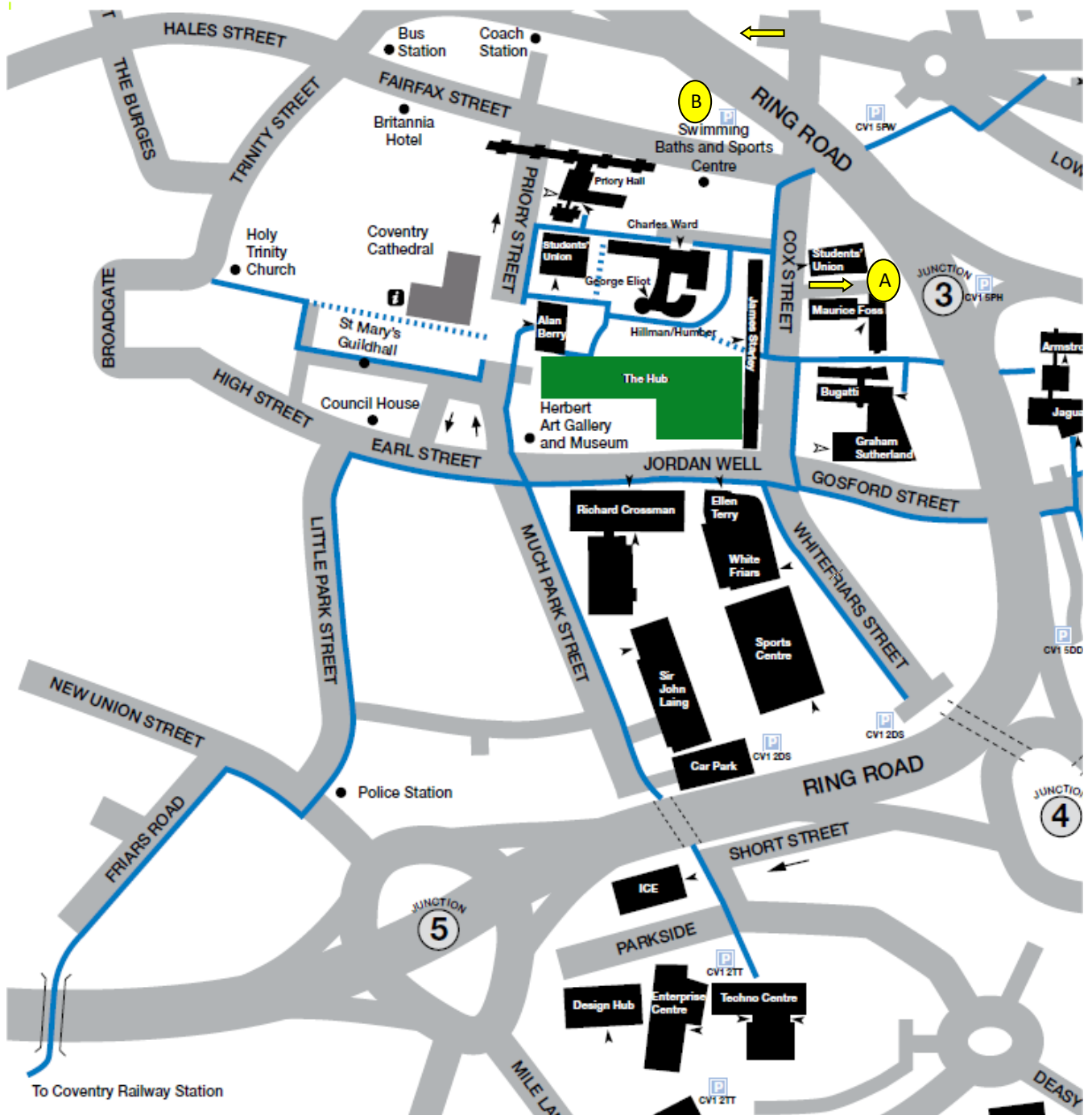
What Happens Next?

There is a lot for everyone to do before 15th March! Teams need to finish their entries and prepare their displays; the Challenge IT organisers need to make sure everything is ready for you on the day and that all the judges know what to do.

We are looking forward to meeting everyone at the Finals Exhibition, should be an exciting day for all of us.

After Challenge IT 2012

Challenge IT 2012 is the fourth schools competition organised by BCS Coventry Branch, this year we have introduced a new format for entries, timing, judging methods and final event.

We would very much welcome constructive feedback from all participants (team members, teachers, youth leaders, parents, judges, sponsors, guests) to direct our decisions about future events for schools and youth organisations.

Please complete the evaluation slip and pass it to us before your leave the final event.

Challenge IT 2012 Newsletter 3 is planned for early April. This will provide details about the Finals Exhibition in general, but give a full account of the winning entries and runners-up. We very much welcome contributions to this publication from all participants involved in Challenge IT 2012.
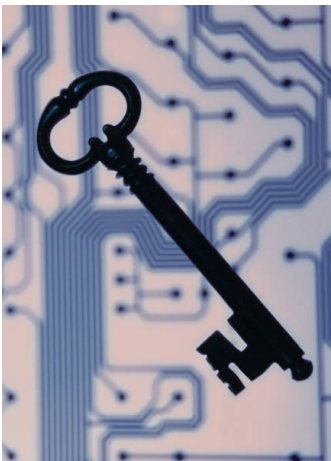
What about the entrants?

It goes without saying that we would not have a competition without entrants! Thanks you for entering the competition. We know you have all been working very hard, and hope you have gained a great deal from the experience. But the best bit is still to come....

We must also not forget the supporters, teachers, youth leaders and parents, who have helped to inspire you and kept you motivated to finish. We must all remember to thank them for their help.

Thank you for taking part in Challenge IT

Sponsors and Supporters Challenge IT 2012

The Challenge IT 2012 committee very gratefully acknowledges generous contributions from the following organisations:

What to expect from the judges

The judges will come round to meet the teams in small groups or individually. They will be easily recognised as judges and will probably make a few notes on a clipboard. They will want to look at your stand, talk to you and understand the work you have done. There may be other visitors walking around and you can take the opportunity of practising your presentation on them – some may even be VIPS!

Give the judges time to look at your stand and read through anything you are presenting. However, they may not have time to read everything if you have put a lot of text in your posters.

Be prepared to demonstrate your project and to explain everything. You have probably worked on your project over a period of several weeks and are very familiar with it but don't forget to start right at the beginning for visitors – including who you are and what category of Challenge IT you are entering.

The judges will be interested in the whole of your project as well as the end result so make sure you can show them how you developed the work. The judges will ask questions, such as:

> *What is this?*
> *Who will use this?*
> *Who have you tried this out on?*
> *Is it easy to use?*
> *Can I try it?*
> *How did you get the idea?*
> *How did you share out the work?*
> *Have you learnt anything new doing this?*
> *What problems did you find?*
> *What's the best bit?*
> *Is there anything you'd like to carry on with to make it even better?*

Don't worry if a judge doesn't ask questions – your display may have made everything easy to understand.

BCS Coventry

The Coventry Branch of the British Computer Society runs 8 open meetings throughout the year with presentations on computing topics likely to be of interest to our members.

All are welcome to attend, not just Branch Members, and meetings are free, booking is not normally required, just turn up.   They normally are scheduled for the third Wednesday of each month from September through to May and pre-meeting refreshments are provided.

The meeting programme is available online at the branch website (see below). Future meetings include:

21st March 2012: Posters Presentation Event. Research Students at Coventry and Warwick Universities present their research work.

18th April 2012: Massively Parallel Computing.

16th May 2012: Scratching with Sensors. An introduction to the freely available Scratch programming language (produced by MIT), and having fun with home made sensors.

Branch Website: http://coventry.bcs.org

Why run a competition?

This competition is a regular event, running every two years and organised by a team of volunteers, most are members of the BCS Coventry Branch.

The competition aims to encourage young people to use IT in creative applications and to support the development of a range of skills including teamwork, project planning and specific technology skills.

The competition activities has led to the creation of an effective informal network in the Coventry, Warwickshire, South Leicestershire and Solihull areas.

Representatives from local government organisations, universities, professional bodies and schools work together for mutual advantage to organise and support initiatives to encourage and facilitate the teaching of computer science and information and communications technology in schools.

If you are interested in finding out more about our activities and initiatives, come along to one of our branch meetings, or email Irene Glendinning, BCS Coventry Chair for more information. (ireneg@coventry.ac.uk)