NASA, IBM to hold 'Space App Challenge'



New York: NASA has joined hands with IBM in sponsoring a worldwide challenge for participants to build apps that help solve issues around space exploration and earthly problems.

The ambitious event, called The Space App Challenge, would be held this weekend simultaneously in 162 countries with around 10,000 participants, TechCrunch reported.

The purpose of the contest is to not only come up with some creative solutions to real problems, but also to simply encourage creative and entrepreneurial thinking and the joys of programming, the organisers said.

The main themes of the challenge are outer space, Earth, humans and robotics. The participants could include developers, scientists, students, entrepreneurs and educators.

ABOUT THE EVENT

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IBM is joining NASA to offer participants access to a set of cloud services in its Bluemix Platform as a Service portfolio, Sandy Carter from IBM was quoted as saying.

While participants are free to use any cloud platform they wish, IBM plans to offer access to some of its most elite experts onsite in 26 cities.

In another 36 cities, participants get access to virtual support online or by phone.

In many ways, the contest is about taking advantage of sensors (the Internet of Things) and the data they produce. The participants will have access to 200 NASA data sources.

The idea is to use analytics tools on Bluemix to provide them with tools to take advantage of this data.

Two projects from each city will advance to global judging. IBM will offer 30 awards for the most innovative use of Bluemix.

NASA wants to use this event to incubate innovative ideas and IBM hopes to get developers interested in its Bluemix cloud development tools.

There will be events around the hackathon, such as a Women of Data event in New York City, which would be addressed by two women astronauts.

The event hopes to encourage women and girls to get involved with STEM fields. *IANS*

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