

Chairman's Award - Team 7466

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2022 - Team 7466

Team Number

7466

Team Nickname

Cymurghs

Team Location

Istanbul, Istanbul - Turkey

Describe the impact of the *FIRST* program on team participants within the last 3 years. This can include but is not limited to percentages of those graduating high school, attending college, in STEM careers, and in *FIRST* programs as mentors/sponsors.

Our members gained real-world skills through field experience & peer-to-peer learning. The knowledge we acquired from FRC creates career opportunities for us thus %95 of our team members plan to pursue a career in STEM. Our alumni have been accepted by the world's leading universities: MIT, Hult IBS, Hong Kong Uni of Tech, Koç Uni, and all were granted scholarships. For our alumni who want to participate in projects, we created a role called assister. With this, they keep being a part of FIRST.

Describe your community along with how your team addresses its unique opportunities and circumstances.

Being the first independent team in our country, we have 11 local communities. Thereby we can bring different cultures together. Not being limited to our local cities, we reached France, Azerbaijan & 60 cities of Turkey with the merits of FIRST programs. Also, as a team that performs all our processes online since 2018, except for robot construction, we have established the world's first and only online student-based training platform for FIRST programs.

Describe the team's methods, with emphasis on the past 3 years, for spreading the FIRST message in ways that are effective, scalable, sustainable, and creative. How does your team measure results?

With Intercity Impactors conferences in each region of Turkey, we have inspired 2130 students since 2019. We annually organize Cyber Marathon to reach the programmers, & 85% of them learned about FIRST for the first time. With our internal structure, we use the city ambassador method in 11 cities, with this we can spread FIRST to 11 locals. After projects, we evaluate the feedback and analyze them before starting new projects. Thanks to this, we had been inspired to establish a Braille Library.

Please provide specific examples of how your team members act as role models within the FIRST community with emphasis on the past 3 years.

Every Cymurghian managed to represent FIRST in their own provinces thanks to outreach projects. We collaborated with FRC Turkey Community for our STEM Woment video and led other teams to raise awareness. Moreover, Cymurghians who received Dean's List Awards in 2019 & 2021 shows that our members' efforts were also recognized by FIRST. We made a presentation in Fikret Yuksel Foundation's official kickoff to help other teams with Chairman's Award submissions and reached +100 teams from 19 cities.

Describe your team's initiatives to Assist, Mentor, and/or Start other *FIRST* teams with emphasis on activities within the past 3 years.

We have been organizing FLL Camp for 2 years with 3 steps: instructor training, FLL in 5 minutes video series and FLL Off-season. With FLL Camps, we reached 30 instructors and 2580 students and motivated them to form new FIRST teams. We mentored a team from Gaziantep including refugee students in collaboration with Global Mind Association, Germany GIZ and Turkey's Ministry of Youth & Sport. In total, we formed 2 & assisted 5 FRC teams, and mentored 5 & assisted 6 FLL teams for the last 4 years.

Beyond starting teams, what initiatives have you done to help inspire young people to be science and technology leaders and innovators? What results have you seen from your efforts in the past 3 years?

We believe the best way to spark interest in a child is to show them STEM is everywhere in our lives. With the Cymurghian made STEM+A kits, CymKit, we reached 2500 children for them to explore the fields of STEM+A with 5 experiments. We established a Braille Library in Van, a disadvantaged city, to create an opportunity for disabled students to become STEM leaders as well. Accordingly, we gave block coding and FLL lessons to 290 children from 2 disadvantaged areas with Sinir Tanimayanlar.

Describe the partnerships you've created with other organizations (teams, sponsors, educational institutions, philanthropic entities, etc.) and what you have accomplished together with emphasis on the past 3 years

We cooperate with institutions to achieve our mission, therefore all of our sponsors and partners are critical for our success. Thereby, we organized conferences with the collaboration of 27 educational institutions and partnered with 8 foundations. We established a library consisting of both normal & Braille books worth 10000 TRY. We contacted our sponsor AAG Makina to fund the library and TURGED to publish Braille books. We aim to collaborate with the UN platform about our UNDP bulletins.

Describe your team's efforts in the past 3 years to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion within your team, *FIRST*, and your communities.

We embrace the cultural diversity within our team & celebrate our differences. To promote equality, we started a movement for women in STEM: Woment. Then we organized a webinar with woman leaders and shared a video in collaboration with FIRST teams. Within the scope of #lifeisfairwithFIRST, we donated 160 copies of M5 Magazine in the braille alphabet and designed a driver station for FRC students with orthopedic disabilities. We donated blue bottle caps to The Spinal Cord Paralytics Association.

Explain how you ensure your team and the initiatives you have created will continue to run effectively for the foreseeable future

We assign a leader to each project, in this way every member gains a sense of responsibility and ensures the project's sustainability. Also by using Trello, we led the projects' operations and delegated the tasks. To gather the data and keep them for future Cymurghians, we are using Google WorkSpace. In total, we have stored 60GB of data including our meeting notes, one-to-one member feedback forms, and the department reports that we write our accomplishments on weekly. So, we sustain ourselves.

Describe your team's innovative strategies to recruit, retain, and engage your sponsors within the past 3 years

We value win-win policy and believe that sustainability is the key in our sponsorships, thus we prepare monthly newspapers to inform them about our team's updates. We send gifts to our sponsors as a shown of our respects&thankings after the season. We assign a member to each sponsor to prevent miscommunication. We meet our sponsors in accordance with our specific requests rather than just financial support. Plus, we offer partnerships for projects by including our sponsors in our FIRST journey.

Highlight one area in which your team needs to improve and describe the steps actively being taken to make those improvements.

As the first independent team of Turkey, we have faced some difficulties at the beginning of our FIRST journey. Not being affiliated with institutions made it harder to find sponsors& partners. Thanks to our efforts and the awards we won, more people started to support us. At first not having an adult mentor seemed like a difficulty, but this led us to experience peer-to-peer learning. Having the same spirit as a junior mentor ensured us to manage the team with more student-based initiatives.

Describe your team's goals to fulfill the mission of *FIRST* and the progress you have made towards those goals.

Cymurghs has always aimed to spread robotics to everyone by setting the principles of FIRST as its mission. We developed our team values to fulfill the mission of FIRST& ensure the next generations maintain this movement. In this direction, we encouraged people to form new teams, volunteer& adapt FIRST values. We inspired 619,861 people to become STEM leaders and innovators with our social responsibility projects. And to build a better future, the phoenix of the Cyber Simurg will keep rising.

Briefly describe other matters of interest to the *FIRST* Judges, including items that may not fit into the above topics. The judges are interested in learning about aspects of your team that may be unique or particularly noteworthy.

We dedicated ourselves to solving global issues with engineering. We built a drone with a code that can locate fires. To decrease Covid-19 infection, we wrote a code to automate the air conditioner in crowded places. Within the scope of UNDP Goal 6 Clean Water&Sanitation and Goal 14 Life Below Water, we designed and prototyped a water purification filter and a vehicle that can collect the garbage in the seas. Ultimately, we harmonize engineering with our urge to change the world for the better.

Essay

The Legend of the Cymurghs

Simurghs set off on a long journey with the mission of making "robotics for everyone". To fulfill our mission, we needed to get help from Cyber ??Simurg, the wisest & most experienced of all. To reach the Cyber one, we had to pass through the 7 valleys, and then reach the tree of wisdom where Cyber ??Simurg lived.

The Birth of Simurghs

First valley was the place Simurghs realized we are stronger when together. Distance was not an obstacle for us, Simurghs flew from all around the world to achieve one common goal. In 2018, we started this journey with 1 girl & 3 boys as the first community team of Turkey. Now, we continue our path with 20 Simurghs from 11 cities. Spreading our wings even more, our alumni & members currently live in Germany, USA, England, Denmark, and China.

Discovery

The purpose that brought us together in the first valley continued to illuminate our path in the Valley of Discovery as well. To truly understand the importance of this valley not only do we discover ourselves, but also help others to realize their potential.

In order to broaden the horizons of future scientists and engineers, we trained a total of 8978 people in different levels of robotics, from block coding to topology optimization. We gave training by conducting face-to-face workshops and also using online platforms in cooperation with Erzurum Municipality, Fabrikafa, Bilge Çocuk Academy, Zemin ?stanbul, Bebar Science Community, and local high schools.

We started Intercity Impactors conferences in December 2019 to provide different perspectives to young people who have never heard of FIRST and STEM values. With our project, which started face-to-face and continued online during the pandemic, we have opened the horizons of 2130 students from 20 cities.

As a team formed by students from different cities, we were very experienced in using online tools. In order to help other teams during the pandemic, we prepared an Online Business Management Document for the entire FIRST community, available in 2 languages, and shared it with more than 3700 people in 3 different channels.

Have you met our old friend Professor Nazif? In our rookie year, we faced many difficulties accessing the knowledge because of the lack of FRC resources in Turkish. This process sparked the idea of the world's first and only online learning platform for FIRST programs that was founded by students. To have fun while learning, we used our team's giant teddy bear mascot as the face of this platform & established [professornazif.com](https://www.professornazif.com). We shared 60 videos that cover the basics of FRC & FLL in 12 sub-fields. We provided published resources for other teams on our website with the addition of a resource library this year.

Fun

Valley of Fun taught us to enjoy what we do & strengthen our bonds as a team. Getting inspired by the kids' excitement we worked with, we shared our photos from the moments we had fun during the season for 5 days. This is how #LaughterFIRST emerged as a social media trend reaching all programs of FIRST with 97 teams from 4 continents & 8 countries.

FIRST Dictionary is a social media project where we explain the FIRST jargon in a fun way. Since last year we introduced the world of FIRST to 450,000+ people, especially rookies. Expanding the scope of the project, we partnered with team 8861 to translate the captions into French.

To explain the importance of safety to kids we designed a Nazif the Safety Hero game on Scratch. By integrating fun into our teaching methods, we also taught how to create their own games on Scratch to 115 kids.

We started editing videos of falling robots in FIRST events starting with a video of our robot falling during a match to remind everyone not to forget to have fun even in difficult times! #FlownBots video series have 55,816 views in total with 10 videos.

Innovation

To fly over the Valley of Innovation, we blend creativity with our engineering skills to generate solutions to real-life problems. In the way of our vision, we conducted these engineering projects towards the UN's 17 sustainable development goals.

Based on UNDP Goal 15 and being affected by the forest fires that broke out in our country last summer, we developed a project that can detect fire with vision processing on a quadcopter with a range of 1.5 km. We plan to prevent possible fires by flying the drone in forest areas next summer.

After the Covid19 pandemic, we developed a vision processing project with our sponsor Systemair, an air conditioning company, that automatically operates the air conditioner in regions where the number of people increases. As the only student group in the stands, we displayed our project at an International fair, ISK-SODEX, with 86,217 visitors from 95 countries.

Implementing UNDP's 6th goal, we designed & prototyped a water purifier with a three-stage filter that can purify 1 liter of water in just two minutes. We used the cleaned water to feed stray animals.

In addition to our efforts of protecting the oceans, we produced a marine garbage collector with a capacity of 50 cm³ to complete UNDP's 14th goal. We are planning to bring the project to life on a pilot beach by going into mass production.

Inclusion

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Valley of inclusion is the place where every Simurg embraces all colors and celebrates our differences. We wanted to include everyone on our FIRST journey, therefore we started the initiative "#LifelsFairWithFIRST". With the aim of spreading the FIRST programs to larger communities, we designed an FRC driver station, Driverly, for students with orthopedic disabilities. Plus, we collected blue bottle caps collaborating with local restaurants and donated all the caps to The Spinal Cord Paralytics Association of Turkey to help donate a wheelchair to people with walking disabilities. To share the excitement of science with everyone, we wrote a technology magazine for our visually impaired friends and donated M5 Magazine to 1071 students. Upon the feedback we got from the school we donated M5 last year, we learned the need for a library for visually disabled students in the area. We contacted Turkish Association for the Blind to work together on the solution.

We established a Braille library in that school with 70 books worth 10000 TRY funded by our sponsor AAG Makina. With the cooperation of the Association for Child Education, we gave a workshop to 20 hearing-impaired students. We organized a webinar for the gifted students selected from 128 science and art centers of Turkey.

Teamwork

Teamwork Valley was not a place we could cross alone. When we say "team" we do not just mean 20 Simurghs but also the whole FRC community. We took part as speakers at the Chairman's Award Workshop for Fikret Yuksel Foundation's official kickoff with the participation of 100+ teams from 19 cities. The workshop we gave with team 6025 was featured on FYF'S website & had 7000+ views. We've been organizing FLL Camps for 2 years in which we give training to FLL coaches, publish our FLL in 5 Minutes video series and organize an online FLL Offseason. We joined team 7285's coalition for Natural Disaster Unity to raise awareness about the topic. Our motivation in our partnerships has always been gracious professionalism. By cooperating with the teams around us, we both received & gave support.

Impact

Valley of impact is where we make our voices heard and reach out to everyone. So how can we make it louder? It begins with spreading the recognition of STEM and raising awareness for global issues.

Within the Road to Sustainability initiative, we serve a useful purpose to UN'S 17 development goals with our social responsibility & engineering projects. Accordingly, we uploaded 11 videos highlighting the importance of these goals with 5574 views.

It was the moment for a movement for women in STEM, so we started a new project: STEM Woment! We invited 2 women leaders in the STEM fields as speakers to our webinar. Then, we collaborated with other teams by making a video to make girls realize their potential. We aimed to encourage girls to take more part in STEM by posting girls' FRC teams on our FIRST Dictionary account. Finally, we developed a product that can prevent violence against women with an ideathon.

Sustainability is the key to our team's success, we strive to continue our former projects along with coming up with new ones. Since 2019, we organize an online programming contest Cyber Marathon in cooperation with Galatasaray Uni. IEEE Club every February. So far we have reached 356 people & introduced FIRST programs to the competitive programming community. To highlight the importance of safety in FRC regional events, we organized a safety-themed hackathon with the participation of 113 students from 23 different cities.

What is the best way to learn something? Is it reading, listening, or observing someone? As Cymurghs we believe the most effective learning method is "hands-on experience"! To share our excitement with kids, we came up with the idea of Cymkit & reached 2500 students by donating our kits to 6 schools.

This STEM+A kit now includes 5 experiments with the addition of an art & robotics experiment to last years' kit.

Within our outreach projects, we have touched the lives of 15.254 people to be future innovators by working directly with them. By moving along the path shown by our mission we reached 619,861 people from France, Azerbaijan & 60 cities via social media and other platforms for 4 years.

And that brought us to the ultimate destination, the Simurghs had finally reached the tree of wisdom. The roots of this tree extended to the 7 valleys we passed, and its branches covered the sky. It was very soon before we reached the Cyber ?? Simurg that we had been looking for from the inception. When we reached the top of the tree and looked down, we could see how big the tree was and 7 valleys. But Cyber ??Simurg was not there. At that moment, we realized that we are Cyber ??Simurg. Now each of us is a "Cymurghian".