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NEOM AND GLOBAL SPORTS INNOVATION CENTER POWERED BY MICROSOFT LAUNCH NEOM SPORT OPEN INNOVATION PROGRAM

Madrid, Spain – September 12, 2023 - The **Global Sports Innovation Center powered by Microsoft** (GSIC) and NEOM has announced the inaugural **“NEOM Sport Open Innovation Program”**. This initiative aims to identify and select five pioneering sport-tech companies worldwide, focusing on the areas of adventure sports and Artificial Intelligence (AI).

The NEOM Sport Open Innovation Program reflects NEOM's vision of becoming an innovative hub for global sport and a center for cutting-edge technology while promoting an active lifestyle by delivering exceptional livability for all NEOM residents and visitors. By partnering with GSIC, NEOM aims to attract the brightest minds and talent from around the world to shape the future of the sport and exceed the boundaries of imagination.

"The NEOM Sports Open Innovation Program represents a remarkable opportunity for startups and companies to shape the future of the sport and contribute to the transformation of the global sports industry," said Iris Cordoba, General Manager of GSIC. "By leveraging the synergies between technology, nature, and sustainability, we aim to create a unique ecosystem that fosters innovation and pushes the boundaries of human potential in sports."

NEOM is poised to emerge as a top destination for major sport events, with a commitment to collaborating with global sports brands and contributing to the region's innovative economy. As an accelerator of human progress, NEOM seeks solutions in both adventure sports and AI that align with its five fundamental principles: technology, nature, sustainability, community, and livability.

Jan Paterson, Managing Director, NEOM Sport, stated, "The objectives and goals of the NEOM Sport Sector include fostering an active living environment for communities through sport, developing high-performance facilities for athletes and hosting major sports events, spearheading the latest adventure sports, and establishing NEOM as a regional sports tech hub. Through this program, we invite startups and companies to join us in developing groundbreaking advancements in adventure sports and AI. Together, we will revolutionize the sport experience and create a lasting impact in the industry."

NEOM and GSIC invite startups and companies from around the world to participate in the NEOM Sports Open Innovation Program and contribute to groundbreaking advancements in adventure sports and AI. Selected participants will gain access to a unique ecosystem enabling them to explore innovative solutions that enhance sporting experiences, optimize performance, and unlock new possibilities within the industry.



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ADVENTURE SPORTS CHALLENGES

Challenge 1 - Visitor Experience: NEOM's is looking for innovative solutions to enhance the overall adventure sports experience by focusing on visitor experience – specifically pre and post experience. This could include creating immersive pre-experience activities or virtual reality simulations to drive audiences to visit, designing interactive post-experience platforms for sharing and reliving adventures, and developing innovative ways to engage and connect with adventure sport fans when the activity ends.

Challenge 2 - Capacity Building: Develop innovative programs, tools, or initiatives that supports capacity building in the adventure sports industry. This challenge could include creating online learning platforms, organizing training workshops and mentorship programs, or designing tools and resources to help adventure sports enthusiasts and professionals enhance their skills and expertise, while developing the local talent in the region.

Challenge 3 - Security Component: Create solutions that promote harmony with nature, in line with NEOM's livability objectives and ensure the safety and security of participants in adventure sports. This challenge could involve developing advanced safety equipment and technology, designing sustainable and eco-friendly adventure sports infrastructure, or implementing effective risk management strategies to minimize accidents and environmental impact.

AI CHALLENGES

Challenge 1 - AI-powered solutions: Optimize the development and construction of sports facilities in the NEOM region with the goal of enhancing connectivity, construction efficiency, inclusivity, security, and livability through sports infrastructure using AI technology. The aim is to create exceptional experiences for athletes and visitors by leveraging AI capabilities. The objective is to provide outstanding living experiences that align with NEOM's vision of offering sport facilities within a short distance from every citizen and encouraging physical activity.

Challenge 2 - AI-Enhanced Pure High Performance: Utilize AI technologies and video-tracking solutions to create an AI-driven living lab within NEOM focusing on high-performance sports, particularly football and team sports. The challenge is to leverage AI to analyze player data, enhance training methodologies, and provide personalized insights to optimize performance, foster innovation, and create a world-class sports environment within NEOM.

SELECTION PROCESS AND PRIZES

Applications for the NEOM Sports Open Innovation Program will open on August 29, 2023, and close on September 30, 2023. The winners will be announced on November 6, 2023.

The NEOM Sports Open Innovation Program offers an immersive experience, including tailored mentorship sessions, specialized content, and engaging activities, all aimed at maximizing the potential of startups and companies in the NEOM region.



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The prizes for the winners of the NEOM Sports Open Innovation Program include:

- Immersion Week at NEOM, an extraordinary opportunity to engage with various business areas within the Sports Sector and gain valuable insights into their operations.
- Participate in an exclusive industry event, organized jointly by NEOM and the Global Sports Innovation Center (GSIC) in 2024.
- The winners will be offered a free membership to the Global Sports Innovation Center (GSIC).
- Financial Prize: Up to 50.000 € for the development of a proof of concept (PoC) or project within NEOM and the opportunity to continue engaging in further potential commercial opportunities for the region's development.

If you believe your company has the potential to revolutionize the future of the sport through groundbreaking adventure sport and AI solutions, we encourage you to apply to the NEOM Sports Open Innovation Program. Embrace this exceptional opportunity to be part of a transformative journey and contribute to the global transformation of the sports industry.

For more information visit <https://neom.sport-gsic.com/>

About GSIC powered by Microsoft

The Global Sports Innovation Center powered by Microsoft (GSIC) is a non-profit association that works from the philosophy of a business cluster. GSIC was promoted by the Microsoft team in 2015 and brings together all kinds of sports entities (clubs, federations, associations), institutions, technology companies (from startups to companies), research organizations, investors, and key figures in the sports industry. to improve your value chain. We focus our activities and services on 7 main axes: entrepreneurship, networking, applied research, showcase, Microsoft Partners Solutions, digital transformation consulting, and Sports for Good. More than 500 companies from 51 different countries have already received support from GSIC through different activities, as well as its ambassadors and network of professionals from the sports industry.

More info: <http://sport-gsic.com/>

About NEOM

NEOM is an accelerator of human progress and a vision of what a New Future might look like. It is a region in northwest Saudi Arabia on the Red Sea being built from the ground up as a living laboratory where entrepreneurship will chart the course for this New Future. It will be a destination and a home for people who dream big and want to be part of building a new model for exceptional livability, creating thriving businesses, and reinventing environmental conservation.

NEOM will include hyperconnected, cognitive cities, ports and enterprise zones, research centers, sports and entertainment venues, and tourist destinations. As a hub for innovation, entrepreneurs, business leaders, and companies will come to research, incubate and commercialize new



technologies and enterprises in groundbreaking ways. Residents of NEOM will embody an international ethos and embrace a culture of exploration, risk-taking, and diversity.


For further information email media@neom.com or visit www.neom.com and www.neom.com/en-us/newsroom.

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