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Calling Student Innovators: Registration Now Open for 2018-2019 Conrad Challenge

Aspiring, bright entrepreneurs compete to solve some of the world's most pressing issues

HOUSTON – Registration opens today for students around the world to enter the 2018-2019 [Conrad Challenge](#). Unlike any other STEM competition, this annual event unleashes the potential of students to leave their mark on the world, using their innovation and entrepreneurial skills to address some of the most pressing global challenges, and all before they even graduate high school.

"To address big challenges, we're often taught to think outside of the box. But, at the Conrad Challenge, we enjoy the freedom of thinking as though there is no box," said Nancy Conrad, founder and chairman of the [Conrad Foundation](#), which produces the competition. "This is an innovation competition that addresses real-world issues and becomes a master class to students in collaboration, creativity, critical thinking and communication. These students are designing their future. They are at the helm of changing the world."

"The Conrad Challenge played an incredibly formative role in my entrepreneurial career. The Challenge helped me develop a framework to take scientific concepts and translate them into innovative products; a framework I've used many times over the years. First, when I co-founded and ran technical development at Undercover Colors, a startup dedicated to developing products that detect date rape drugs; and later as a rubric to evaluate and screen startups at my current company," shared Ankesh Madan, Conrad Challenge alumnus. "My experience in the Challenge taught me to trust my imagination and to follow a structured process to develop innovative solutions to difficult problems. These are lifelong skills that I expect to use throughout the rest of my career."

The Conrad Challenge invites teams of 2-5 students between the ages of 13-18 to innovate new products and services that address global issues in one of six categories: Aerospace & Aviation; Cyber-Technology & Security; Energy & Environment; Health & Nutrition; Smoke-Free World; and Transforming Education with Technology. Along the way, coaches and judges from the best in business, industry, research and academia worldwide will be there to guide the teams' innovative ideas.

In February 2019, five teams in each challenge category will be chosen as finalists and travel to the annual Innovation Summit taking place April 23-27, 2019 at Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex. Finalist teams present their innovations before an esteemed panel of judges. Winning teams receive awards, independent product assessment studies, investment opportunities, patent support and business services to support the growth of their concepts into businesses that can make a real difference. Meanwhile, judges and corporate sponsors get direct exposure to a new kind of talent so many companies are trying to foster.

"From start to finish, the entire competition journey results in a transformative educational experience," Conrad said. "These are entrepreneurial problem-solvers, addressing challenging social, scientific and societal issues using their ingenuity and STEM education. Working together and with subject matter experts, they learn the importance of peer and mentor relationships. They walk away not only with an innovation, but with the skill sets they need to excel in today's workforce. That's transformation!"

The 2018-2019 Conrad Challenge is sponsored by the [Foundation for a Smoke-Free World \(FSFW\)](#) and [SMART Technologies](#), which are each hosting their own special challenge category. Other

sponsors include America's Navy, which will present its annual Gemini Award to the team that best demonstrates the Navy's characteristics of teamwork, innovation and hard work.

Interested teams should visit the [Registration Form](#) and [2018-2019 Conrad Challenge Overview](#) for more information on this year's competition. Registration will remain open until Friday, October 19, 2018 at 11:59 PM ET. Expert judges will then select teams in each challenge category to develop comprehensive business plans for their innovation in Round Two of the competition.

The Conrad Challenge is now in its 13th year. To learn more about the 2018-2019 competition, visit www.conradchallenge.org.

About The Conrad Foundation

The Conrad Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting collaborative, student-centered, real world-relevant learning that fosters innovation and entrepreneurship. Through its programs, the Foundation unleashes students' potential to create impactful solutions and a sustainable society for generations to come. For more information, visit www.conradchallenge.org.

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