



PRESS RELEASE
For immediate release

'Hackathon' engineers target new e-markers for balloon competitions

Lausanne, Switzerland, 3 July 2017 - **Hot air balloon competitions look set to be revolutionised if three science teams from the Ukraine get their way.**

Working as part of a collaboration between FAI and Noosphere, the Federation's Global Technical Partner, the three teams are racing to build an electronic marker that could radically change the way Hot Air Balloon competitions are scored.

The teams are competing against each other to build the e-markers. Their aim is to enhance the traditional method of scoring in Hot Air Balloon competitions, which although proven, is slow to score.

Many balloon competitions finish with a 'target practice' element – pilots must overfly a target and drop a sand-bag marker onto it. Whoever gets closest to the bullseye, wins.

Currently, those markers are measured by a measuring tape, with the results only collated after the last balloon has passed.

However, the new engineering contest supported by Noosphere could change all that – with the introduction of electronic markers that can give real-time live scoring. Pilots and spectators would benefit.

A hackathon held in the Ukraine at the end of May brought together six teams of engineers to work on developing the "Best device for the FAI". Their brief was to come up with an e-marker that could automatically measure, read and communicate the score.

The tournament brought together participants from Cherkasy State Technological University, Petro Mohyla Black Sea National University (Mykolaiv), National University of Water and Environmental Engineering (Rivne), National Aviation University (Kyiv), Zaporizhzhia State Engineering Academy, and the Noosphere Engineering School.

Each team saw their project judged by representatives of FAI, the Ukrainian Spacemodelling Sport Federation, and Noosphere. The panel of judges was chaired by Michael Ryabokon, Cofounder of Noosphere Association.

Following the hackathon three teams from the original six were selected to go through to the next stage. Cherkasy State Technological University, Petro Mohyla Black Sea National University and Noosphere Engineering School now all have three months to build and test their new electronic markers.

After that, real-world testing will take place, with the ultimate aim of building the first official FAI e-marker for Hot Air Balloon competitions.

Noosphere Engineering School is a joint project between Noosphere and leading Ukrainian Universities. The primary goal of the Noosphere Engineering School is the systematic interaction of researchers and practitioners with students and academic teaching staff.

Noosphere website: <http://noosphereventures.com/>

About FAI

FAI, the World Air Sports Federation (www.fai.org), is the world governing body for air sports and for certifying world aviation and space records. The FAI was founded in 1905 and is a non-governmental and non-profit-making organisation recognised by the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

FAI activities include Aerobatics, Aeromodelling, Airships, Amateur-Built and Experimental Aircraft, Balloons, Drones, Gliding, Hang Gliding, Helicopters, Manpowered Flying, Microlights, Parachuting, Paragliding, Paramotors, Power Flying and all other Aeronautic and Astronautic sporting activities.

For more details, please contact the FAI:

Faustine Carrera
Communication Manager
0041 21 345 10 70
communication@fai.org

###