

MWCapital, SJD Barcelona Children's Hospital and Boston Children's Hospital organize a hackathon to improve teenagers' hospital stays

- The goal is to design 5G and extended reality (XR) based solutions that reduce the negative impact of long hospital stays for 12 to 17 year-olds
- The online-format sessions will be held from the 21 to 23 May and will feature the participation of 50 interdisciplinary teams
- The hackathon will involve the collaboration of Garage Stories and the support of Cisco, IBM, GSMA, CaixaBank, Barcelona Tech City, MedVR, 5G Barcelona, Barcelona City Hall and the Regional Government of Catalonia

From left to right: CEO of Barcelona Tech City, Miquel Martí; CIO of Mobile World Capital Barcelona and CEO of 5G Barcelona, Eduard Martín; Vice president of IBM Technology Spain, Javier Valencia; Minister for Digital Policy and Public Administration, Jordi Puigneró; General Manager of Cisco Spain, Andreu Vilamitjana; third Tenure of the Mayor of Barcelona City Council, Laia Bonet; Commercial director of corporate banking at the Territorial Directorate of CaixaBank in Barcelona, Carlos Gramunt; managing director of the SJD Barcelona Children's Hospital, Manuel del Castillo; and CEO of Garage Stories, Marta Ordeig.

Barcelona, 10 May 2021.- “Hack the Hospital” is the first hackathon to be organized by Barcelona and Boston for the design of new innovative solutions to improve teenagers' stays in hospitals. Mobile World Capital Barcelona, SJD Barcelona Children's Hospital, Boston Children's Hospital and Garage Stories will bring together 50 multidisciplinary and international teams between the 21 and 23 of May.

Participants will work on ideas geared to reduce the negative impact of a long period of hospitalization on paediatric patients and their families. The technological developments proposed will be based on 5G and extended reality. The challenge will be focused on 12 to 17 year-old patients and teams may choose from among the following five main core areas: socialization, mental health, education, entertainment or an area addressed to family experience.

The event, which involves the collaboration of Cisco, IBM, GSMA, CaixaBank, Barcelona Tech City, MedVR, 5G Barcelona, Barcelona City Hall and the Regional Government of Catalonia, is expected to bring together 300 participants who will spend a weekend working in teams of 6 people of different nationalities. The complexity of the challenge will require the participation of a broad range of professionals, ranging from engineers to educators, designers, psychologists and health professionals, etc., who will develop solutions that are quickly applicable and include different perspectives.

Over the two days the teams will work together on designing their solution and will have the assistance of real patients from both hospitals, mentors and international speakers. During the two weeks prior to the hackathon, from 10 to 20 May, different online activities will be run for participants. These will feature internationally renowned experts from areas of research, innovation and technology such as Big Data, IoT and XR. These significantly include the presence

of Google, Walt Disney Studios and researchers from centres like MIT in Boston, Harvard University and NYU.

Eduard Martín, CIO of Mobile World Capital Barcelona and CEO of 5G Barcelona, highlights “the importance of international collaboration to carry out projects of this magnitude. Technologies such as 5G and augmented reality have a long way to go to offer new services and experiences in the field of health and entertainment. We are convinced that as a result of this hackathon ideas and projects will emerge that will help improve adolescent hospitalizations”.

In this sense, Marta Ordeig, CEO of Garage Stories, assures that “organizing this Hackathon between both sides of the Atlantic has been an incredible experience. Beyond all the great ideas that are going to come out, designing this project in collaboration with real patients and having brought together so many passionate creative minds to improve the hospital experience for children highlights the true value of innovation.”

In addition, the initiative also has community partners such as Barcelona Activa, Fundació i2CAT, EAE Business School, ESDi, Mass Technology Leadership Council, Barcelona centre de Disseny, CíC, Bitmap, AWE, Spark Boston’s Future, Tech Together, Barcelona Global, Parc de Recerca UAB, Creative Morning, Cultura Creativa, Venture Fizz, Associació Catalana d’Enginyers de Telecomunicació, Interaction Design Foundation, Col·legi d’Enginyers Industrials de Catalunya, Col·legi d’Enginyers en Informàtica de Catalunya, TAMID Group, Venture Café, MOB, TIC Salut Social, 22@NetworkBCN, Clúster Audiovisual de Catalunya, Espronceda Institute of Arts & Culture, Startup Grind, Hack Alumni and Hack diversity.

Patient involvement from the start

The design of the challenges has involved close collaboration with around twenty teenagers who are taking part on the scientific committees both of SJD Barcelona Children's Hospital (a group named KIDS Barcelona) and of Boston Children’s Hospital. These young people will also accompany the groups in their hackathon experience and, with other existing groups from another hospital, will also be involved in the process of evaluating the submitted projects.

Manel de Castillo, managing director of the SJD Barcelona Children's Hospital, explains that “for a hospital like ours, which has always stood out for its interest in innovation, Hack the Hospital is a great opportunity to improve the care of hospitalized young people through technological solutions that allow our centre to approximate the contexts in which the interaction and participation of minors is merely affected, that is, the school, the family, etc.”

For her part, Kate Donovan, Innovation Education Technology Coordinator at Boston Children's Hospital, commented that “the spirit of discovery, innovation and collaboration at Boston Children's Hospital drives us to think differently to find answers. What makes the Hack the Hospital hackathon so important are the issues that we asked participants to solve and that were identified by the patients we attend to. What's so exciting is that the technology solutions these passionate innovators will create will ultimately advance and improve the health and well-being of children both here in our local communities and around the world.”

A project with a real application

From the 50 eventual projects submitted at the end of the hackathon, the 10 finalists will present theirs live in front of an international jury, which will choose the best two. The winners will be announced at the Mobile World Capital Barcelona stand at MWC Barcelona 2021 and will develop their solutions in collaboration with the innovation teams of Cisco, SJD Barcelona Children's Hospital and Boston Children's Hospital. Both hospitals, moreover, have agreed to test the projects in-house and with real patients.

Javier Valencia, vice president of IBM Technology Spain has pointed out that "digital innovation is undoubtedly key to improve the experience of patients in the hospital. We have all seen how telemedicine has developed and gained momentum with the pandemic, allowing the patient to continue being cared for despite not being able to travel to a health centre. We must continue to innovate and imagine new applications that help patients to experience their situation in the most satisfactory way possible. Initiatives like this hackathon are undoubtedly the way to generate this innovation".

"Combining the power of software, hardware and networks, Cisco is creating innovative solutions on 5G for communities to benefit from digitization, including applications such as tele-medicine, care for the sick or participation in family and social activities remotely", highlights Xavier Azemar, director of the Cisco Co-innovation Center in Barcelona. "We are delighted to collaborate in this hackathon and put innovation at the service of a more inclusive digital society."

For his part, Carlos Gramunt, commercial director of corporate banking at the Territorial Directorate of CaixaBank in Barcelona has indicated that "CaixaBank is proud to participate and get involved in this project, which seeks social progress through innovation, a formula fully aligned with our values as an entity. The fact that through technology and digitization it is possible to contribute to causes as sensitive and necessary as this one demonstrates the firmness with which innovation must be supported as a lever for progress. We are sure that "Hack the Hospital" will produce great initiatives that will help improve these difficult processes for young people and their families".

In the words of Miquel Martí, CEO of Barcelona Tech City, "Barcelona has a good base of companies working on technologies applied to health. For Barcelona Tech City they are fundamental due to their impact on society and because they are an indispensable growth vector for the ecosystem. This project allows us to visualize that we have local companies playing in the first world division of innovation".

Likewise, Laia Bonet, third Tenure of the Mayor of Barcelona City Council, stated that "this is a magnificent example of how to put technology at the service of people. Emerging technologies such as 5G should allow us to improve the quality of life for everyone, especially those who need it most. And this initiative is certain to improve the quality of life of adolescents who need long hospitalizations."

For Jordi Puigneró, Minister of Digital Policies of Public Administration of the Generalitat de Catalunya, "thanks to the mobility services contract of the Generalitat, San Joan de Déu will become a 5G Hospital where we can transform the ideas proposed in the hackathon into real and implementable projects that will be useful for the health system and for all citizens. Thanks to 5G, we will make these technological solutions that emerged from the laboratory a reality

because they reach the market, transforming the sector and producing a new economy that generates jobs.”

About Mobile World Capital Barcelona

Mobile World Capital Barcelona is an initiative driving the digital advancement of society while helping improve people’s lives globally.

With the support of the public and private sector, MWCcapital focuses on four areas: the acceleration of innovation through digital entrepreneurship, the transformation of industries through digital technology, the rise of digital talent among new generations and professionals, and the reflection on the impact of technology in our society. Collectively, our programmes are positively transforming the economy, education and society.

MWCcapital hosts MWC in Barcelona and founded 4 Years From Now (4YFN), the startup business platform, present at MWC events around the world.

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