



Towngas and HKedCity launch the first “VR Games Design Competition” in schools

boosting eco-awareness and digital creativity among students

VR games by students showcased in “Towngas Green Flames VR Fun Fair”

on 7-9 September

(9 September, 2018) The Hong Kong and China Gas Company Limited (Towngas) joined hands with Hong Kong Education City Limited (HKedCity) to launch the “Green Flames – VR (virtual reality) Games Design Competition”. The competition engaged students of primary and secondary schools in learning activities integrated with environmental awareness to inspire their interest in the STEM disciplines of science, technology, engineering and mathematics, which have been gaining traction globally in recent years.

The initiative is in line with the HKSAR government’s efforts to promote STEM education, the younger generations’ enthusiasm for technology through interactive education, knowledge acquisition and effective learning. By stepping up STEM education, still considered to be at a developing stage, the city can reinforce its edge as one of the world’s top ten smart cities.

Towngas Managing Director Alfred Chan said: “Towngas is committed to promoting education about eco-awareness and sustainable development. We are delighted to partner with HKedCity in organising the ‘VR Games Design Competition’ for Hong Kong students. Through the competition, we hope to encourage primary and secondary students to show their creativity by designing VR games as well as popularise STEM education. We hope to impart environmental messages through the innovative activities and promote environmental awareness among students and, by extension, the general public.”

“The Hong Kong and China Gas Company Limited (Towngas) is not only an energy supplier, but also an ethical company. Towngas has been growing with Hong Kong since 1862, and especially concern the young generation. The “Green Flames – VR (virtual reality) Games Design Competition” is a meaningful event which contains creativity, technology as well as environmental protection. But most importantly, the project itself is very inspiring in order to raise our students' motivation and interest in technology learning. “Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, Chief Secretary for Administration shared.

The organisers held pre-competition briefings and VR games design workshops to prepare students for the competition. Students were taught about eco-messages and how to use programming tools to design VR games to equip them with knowledge to compete effectively.

HKedCity Executive Director Victor Cheng said “HKedCity is keen to promote creative teaching and self-learning and prepare students for the 21st Century through multifarious innovative activities. We are honoured to join hands with Towngas to host the VR Games Design Competition and develop students’ potential. By adopting a STEM learning framework, we hope to enhance students’ knowledge about environmental issues and help them develop innovative thinking for problem solving. As one of the judges, I am really pleased to witness students use educational software, programming tools and computational thinking effectively to deliver powerful educational messages in the games. The VR images also reflected their aptitude in game design and the competition has succeeded in heightening their concern towards the community and the environment.”

Yip Chun Sing, teacher at Yaumati Catholic Primary School, said: “We were excited about taking part in the competition and very pleased that we won with our “Low-carbon VR” game. Our students had only basic knowledge about VR and environmental issues at first, and they wondered if they were up to the challenge. Thanks to the workshops offered by the organisers, our students learned more about environmental issues as well as programming tools. This inspired them to use countering climate change as a theme to design their game, in which players take on challenges encountered in their daily lives and change their attitudes and habits to achieve a low-carbon lifestyle and contribute to battling climate change.”

Contestants could choose their own programming tools to design games based on three key themes – Battle Against Climate Change, Reduce Waste/Convert Waste to Treasure, and Nature Conservation. Students displayed their ingenuity throughout the process and created engaging interactive VR games that effectively delivered eco-messages.

Tang Bok Lam, student at Buddhist Sin Tak College, champion of the senior secondary division said, “Workshop instructors took us through VR gaming design step by step with hands-on demonstrations to show us everything from programme interfaces and basic programming, all the way to setting up scenes and defining roles and perspectives. We

learned how to interweave stories, special effects and words and progress to higher levels of applying logic utility and object aliases. They helped us evolve from being VR game players to VR game designers. We have gained a lot in the process.

“The organisers also gave us valuable insights to combat climate change, reduce waste and turn waste into useful substances and protect nature. We are motivated to do more to protect our environment by designing games that reinforce eco-awareness, as well as allow players to enjoy moving around in VR. Each of us in the team worked on what we were good at, be it design, multi-media production or programming, and we are chuffed that we won through team work.”

The response to the competition was overwhelming, with 83 teams participating, from 43 primary, secondary and special schools. The team from Yaumati Catholic Primary School won the trophy in the primary division with its “Low-carbon VR”, while Christian Alliance SW Chan Memorial College’s team prevailed in the junior secondary division with its “Eco Volunteer for a Day” and Buddhist Sin Tak College’s team took the honours in the senior secondary division with its “Environgers” game.

“We were thrilled by the level of creativity shown by the students. They proved that Hong Kong’s younger generations are full of fresh ideas, and we should make concerted efforts to nurture such creativity and let students shine to create a bright future for Hong Kong. It is hoped that we can raise more public awareness on environmental issues and they can take more active part in it,” added Alfred Chan, Towngas Managing Director.

The “Towngas Green Flames Fun Fair” was staged from 7 to 9 September at Sunshine City, Ma On Shan. The Prize Presentation Ceremony was held on 9 September. The general public was welcome to try the VR games and join eco-workshops during the fun fair to learn more about eco-friendliness through fun games.

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Photos:



1. Towngas Managing Director Alfred Chan (Left), Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, Chief Secretary for Administration (Middle) and Victor Cheng, HKedCity Executive Director (Right) attended the “Green Flames – VR (virtual reality) Games Design Competition” ceremony and presented prizes to the winners.



2. Yaumati Catholic Primary School's “Low carbon VR” won the competition, the game is inspired by the theme of countering climate change, in which players take on challenges encountered in their daily lives and change their attitudes and habits to achieve a low-carbon lifestyle and contribute to battling climate change.



3. Christian Alliance SW Chan Memorial College's team prevailed in the junior secondary division with its "Eco Volunteer for a Day", the game is designed to allow players to feel virtually "real" and be aware of the cause and effect of pollutions.



4. Buddhist Sin Tak College's team took the honours in the senior secondary division with its "Environgers" game. The design concept is based on "Protecting nature", and educates the public through the gameplay.



5. Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, the Chief Secretary for Administration visited the “Towngas Green Flame VR Fun Fair”, and listened to the student's sharing.



6. The public enjoyed the VR game a lot in the fair.



7. Participants learn how to turn old clothes into tote bag in the “Upcycling” workshop.



8. VR Game Design work shop which organised by Hkedcity allows public to learn how to create a VR game.



9. Public joined the “Story Telling with Auntie Choi” to learn the impacts of global warming through the fun stories.



10. Besides the VR games and workshops, activities such as upcycling drum performance and dancing show are also presented for the public.

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