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Knight News Challenge 2008 Winners Announced Today at E&P/Mediaweek Interactive Media Conference

Award recipients include World Wide Web inventor Sir Tim Berners-Lee

LAS VEGAS — Sixteen ideas to fund innovative digital projects around the world were awarded \$5.5 million dollars today from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. Sir Tim Berners-Lee, who invented the World Wide Web, accepted one of the awards for a project that will create a technology to give users more information about the origins and sourcing of digital content.

Berners-Lee's project is a partnership between the Media Standards Trust and the UK-based Web Science Research Initiative, of which he is a director.

- **Hi-res photos of winners:**
kflinks.com/knc-photos

- **Winner bios and project descriptions:** kflinks.com/bios-projects

- **Winners contact information:**
kflinks.com/winners-contact

- **General media contact:** Marc Fest, Knight Foundation vice president of communications, 305-908-2677, fest@knightfdn.org

This is the second year of the \$25 million Knight News Challenge, which funds digital information innovations that transform community life.

Announced at the Interactive Media Conference in Las Vegas, this year's projects will touch people in rural India, the townships of South Africa and on college campuses across the United States, among other places. The winners' ideas include:

- Using the Web to solicit funding from the public to pay for investigative journalism projects
- Creating software that allows a computer to become a digital radio transmitter, significantly reducing the cost of setting up community news stations in India
- Blogging to discuss the idea of interactive games where students measure and track their personal demand on natural resources.

The prizes ranged from \$15,000 to \$876,000, and were given to individuals, philanthropic organizations and for-profit businesses, including the Bakersfield Californian newspaper. Ten winners were from the United States, and six were from Canada, England, Lithuania, South Africa, Zimbabwe and Russia.

"Just as the Knight brothers used their newspapers to help create the conversations about improving life in their communities, we look forward to these projects that use new information tools to inform and inspire community," said Alberto Ibarguen, president and CEO of Knight Foundation.

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In 2007, the Knight News Challenge awarded \$12 million to 25 digital innovators.

This year, several projects focus on bridging the digital divide, such as one to deliver news by text message to inexpensive cell phones used in developing countries. Often these mobile phones are the only modern communications devices in a community.

Other projects sought to develop tools that make it easy for anyone, not just technology specialists, to join the digital conversation.

“More and more, if you’re not in the digital conversation about your community, you’re not in a conversation that matters,” Iburgüen said.

The number of applicants for Knight News Challenge increased 82 percent in its second year, to 3,000. The percentage of foreign applicants increased to 40 percent from 15 percent in 2007. The contest was advertised in 10 languages. It also featured a special “Young Creators” category to reward the ideas of those who are 25 and younger.

Six of this year’s winners were “Young Creators.”

“We’re excited that young people want to use their ideas and skills to help inform people in new ways and help those people create stronger communities,” said Eric Newton, vice president of Knight Foundation’s journalism program.

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Media Resources:

- **Knight News Challenge Web site:** <http://www.newschallenge.org>
- **Hi-res photos of the winners:** <http://www.kflinks.com/knc-photos>
- **Winner bios and project descriptions:** <http://www.kflinks.com/knc-bios>
- **Winners contact information:** <http://www.kflinks.com/winners-contact>
- **Knight Foundation fact sheet:** <http://www.kflinks.com/kf-factsheet>
- **Knight News Challenge fact sheet:** <http://www.kflinks.com/knc-factsheet>

- **This document:** <http://www.kflinks.com/knc-release>

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