Here at the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET), we are super excited about this year’s FIRST® LEGO® League competition and we have no doubt you are too! The IET are delighted to be the operational partner in the UK and Ireland for this inspirational programme.

**Read all about it!**

Now it’s your school’s turn to compete with teams in your area for a spot in one of our National Finals, and we want you to shout about it to your local media. Regional newspapers, radio and television stations love stories like the FIRST® LEGO® League programme, because they show local students doing exciting and innovative new things with engineering and technology skills.

There is a template press release included in this toolkit, which you can fill in with your details and send out to your local media. Contact details can usually be found online, or we can send you a list of media contacts if you’d prefer (email slockhart@theiet.org for these).

**What do I say?**

Journalists are possibly going to want to talk about the school and the students taking part, but they may also want to hear about the bigger picture and why this competition is so important in inspiring children to think about STEM careers. Here are some points about the competition and the IET’s involvement:

- **FIRST® LEGO® League** gives students the opportunity to research, design and make prototype solutions to solve real world issues. Students experience working as an engineer over a period of several months as they prepare for their tournament. The competition is designed to help students build important life skills and practical, hands on experience that they can use throughout their studies and in their future careers.

- There are 75 tournaments happening throughout the CITY SHAPER season across the UK and Ireland.

- The students will showcase their skills in robotics, computer programming, teamwork, research, problem solving and communication, demonstrating the FIRST® LEGO® League Core Values, which include teamwork, problem-solving and innovation.

- The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) is the operational partner for FIRST® LEGO® League in the UK & Ireland and runs the programme as part of the IET’s commitment to show young people the benefits of careers within Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).

- The **FIRST® LEGO® League England and Wales Final** is taking place in at UWE Bristol on 22nd February 2020. The Scottish Final is taking place at Perth College on 29th February 2020. The All-Ireland Final is taking place at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Dublin on 7th March 2020.

**Sponsorship**
FIRST® LEGO® League simply would not happen without the support of all of our sponsors both at a National and Regional level. Our National and Headline sponsors are Bechtel and RS Components, as well as our programme sponsors – Airbus, Capgemini, Qualcomm, Balfour Beatty and Disney. You are more than welcome to shout about them on social media! We also suggest you thank your regional host/sponsors in any social media/press releases.

Photography

Photographs are a great pull for local journalists so make sure you take lots!

A few tips for taking your own photos:

- If you are taking the photograph yourself, use a good quality camera to take high resolution images – 1MB should be the minimum size.
- Try to hold the photoshoot in a place where you can ensure your school/organisation’s branding is visible.
- Think about how to make the photo interesting – newspapers love creative imagery and pictures that tell a story
- Make sure you get consent from anyone in your photos, by ensuring they have signed the photo permission form, provided by your tournament host.

Tweet, tweet

We would love to keep up-to-date with how your tournament is going, and social media is now the quickest way to do this!

Why not tweet a photo or video to the @FLLUK account or use the hashtag #FIRSTLEGOLeague or #CITYSHAPER. We’re hoping to get lots of FIRST® LEGO® League updates on social media, so that other schools and students can see what you’re up to and get inspired!

IMPORTANT NOTE: Please make sure that if you are tweeting photos or videos of the event, you have permission from all schools and pupils taking part.

Here is an example tweet you could use:

- Really looking forward to today’s tournament in [INSERT LOCATION] #CITYSHAPER #FIRSTLEGOLeague @FLLUK
  https://education.theiet.org/first-lego-league-programmes/fll/

You can also keep track of the competition on Facebook by uploading photos to show how you’re getting on and tagging our FIRST® LEGO® League page. (https://www.facebook.com/FirstLegoLeagueUk/). Remember to use the hashtag #CITYSHAPER as much as possible!

Help!

If you’d like any help with anything mentioned above, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us. You can email me at slockhart@theiet.org

Time to get your students in the paper and show what great things you are doing to create impact and inspire the engineers and technicians of the future!
PRESS RELEASE:

Local schools to take part in UK engineering challenge

Students from [SCHOOL NAME] are taking part in an IET FIRST® LEGO® League Tournament held at [HOST/VENUE NAME]. The tournaments are the culmination of weeks of preparation, where students have worked in teams to design, build and programme a robot, and create an innovative solution to a real-world problem. [SCHOOL NAME] are competing at the [NAME OF TOURNAMENT] on the [DATE].

75 IET FIRST® LEGO® League tournaments are taking place across the UK and Ireland. These are fun and exciting events where the teams have to put their robot through its paces, and communicate their ideas, sharing what they have learnt with the judges.

In the 2019-20 FIRST® LEGO® League CITY SHAPER Challenge, students age 9 to 16 will learn all about architecture and the spaces we live in. They will have to demonstrate their skills in robotics, computer programming, teamwork, research, problem solving and communication, as well as needing to demonstrate the FIRST® LEGO® League Core Values, which include teamwork, problem-solving and friendly competition.

Lowri Walton, FIRST® LEGO® League IET Education Manager, said: “Students who take part in FIRST® LEGO® League this year will experience engineering in action. The programme makes STEM subjects fun and accessible as the students get hands-on experience with robotics and designing innovative solutions. The teams develop computer programming, teamwork, problem-solving and communications skills in an incredibly exciting environment.

“It’s a fact that the need for engineers has never been greater. The IET supports FIRST® LEGO® League, because it equips young people with the skills that they need to become future innovators and engineers. FIRST® LEGO® League is the world’s largest STEM competition with 40,000 teams in more than 100 countries and the IET is proud to be the operational partners for the programme in the UK and Ireland."

FIRST® LEGO® League is part of a wider IET education programme, made up of a whole host of teaching resources and activities to inspire and attract the engineers of tomorrow.

For more information about this year’s FIRST® LEGO® League competition, please visit https://education.theiet.org/first-lego-league-programmes/fll/.

Ends

Notes to editors

About the IET

- We inspire, inform and influence the global engineering community to engineer a better world.
- We are a diverse home for engineering and technology intelligence throughout the world. This breadth and depth means we are uniquely placed to help the sector progress society.
We want to build the profile of engineering and technology to change outdated perceptions and tackle the skills gap. This includes encouraging more women to become engineers and growing the number of engineering apprentices.

Interview opportunities are available with our spokespeople from a range of engineering and technology disciplines including cyber-security, energy, engineering skills, innovation, manufacturing, technology, transport and diversity in engineering.

For more information, visit www.theiet.org

Follow the IET on Twitter.

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