
10th February, 2018: Unusual presentations and testing of an initial result of the EU research project BEACONING in 15 European cities and Singapore | BIBA to participate as a German partner

Researchers issue an invitation to a special treasure hunt in Bremen: Learn by playing detective

Bremen. From Porto to Singapore, and also including Bremen: on Saturday, 10th February, 2018 sixteen cities in 9 countries will simultaneously stage a very special fun event, a treasure hunt through the respective cities. This will take about an hour and can be completed anytime between 9 am and 6 pm. The only German venue is Bremen. The tour of detection will transverse the city centre. With a call to "Be a hero and protect the environment!" the engineering research institute 'BIBA –Bremer Institut für Produktion und Logistik' at the University of Bremen invites everyone to get involved. The institute is a research partner in the EU project BEACONING, which developed the educational game in the course of its work.

For all ages and free of charge. The only equipment needed is a mobile phone with Internet access and GPS

Anyone who enjoys games, fancies doing a bit of detective work and has a mobile phone with Internet access and GPS can join in. No other equipment is needed. At a later date the educational game is to be used in a school context to engage adolescents and young adults. But there is no age limit on Saturday's hunt for environmental polluters in Bremen. The game is even suitable for children and participation is free of charge, although researchers do ask for an assessment of how the game could be improved in a questionnaire at the end.

Participants use their mobile phones to access the website <http://beaconing.eu/cross-eu> and select "Bremen". Here they will find instructions on how to play and the clue to the first location in the treasure hunt. This is close to the city centre (not at BIBA!). The link to the game will go live on 10 February at 9 am and can be accessed from anywhere at any time until 6 pm.

In the game participants become part of a fictional story. They must identify locations in Bremen's city centre and go there to progress through the story. They work their way from place to place and constantly gather information on various environmental topics. With built-in tourist information on Bremen you will also learn some interesting facts about this old Hanseatic city. Along the way you will solve riddles and can also play some minigames. Participants also get some physical exercise while progressing digitally. They will be supported by informants willing to share their knowledge. The objective of the game: to gather facts and recognise connections from various disciplines within the field of environmental science – and to have fun.

The fictional story: pursue an environmental polluter and find his secret facility

The concept of the treasure hunt: a mysterious businessman manages a respected enterprise. But there is something odd about it. According to its public image the enterprise is dedicated to research and development of renewable energies, but there are rumours that the firm has secret laboratories in which it stores highly poisonous products and it is from these that it actually makes its money.

Several secret service sources have confirmed the information that there are secret facilities. These are spread all over Europe. Now the exact positions of these facilities in the individual cities must be found in order to expose them and thus protect the environment.

The EU research project BEACONING stands for different methods of teaching and learning in the future

As well as in Bremen there will be treasure hunters abroad in Paris, Lyon, Strasbourg, Madrid, Barcelona, Milan, Marseille, Edinburgh, Coventry, Porto, Vila Real, Tergowiste, Ankara, Haywards Heath and Singapore – invited by the 15 partners from 9 countries involved in the EU research project BEACONING. This started at the beginning of 2016, concludes at the end of this year and has an overall volume of almost 6 million Euro. The only German partner is BIBA. For some time now, the institute has been researching “serious gaming,” the name given to games intended to inform and educate.

Presentation of initial research and development results

The treasure hunt is only one initial result of the project BEACONING (Breaking Educational Barriers with Contextualised, Pervasive and Gameful Learning). The researchers are presenting the treasure hunt as one result of their research with the intention of testing it in practice and also collecting opinions on it. The game was created using the tool developed in the course of the project, and is intended as an example of the type of thing the tool can be used to produce.

The intention in future is to use games like this in teaching. Its content is focused especially on what are known as the “MINT” subjects, i.e. mathematics, informatics, natural sciences and technology. The presentation of educational content through games is intended to motivate pupils and make learning easier for them.

BEACONING offers the opportunity to learn anytime and anywhere. This is made possible using gamification, situational & context-related technologies and is supported by the methodology of problem-based learning. “Gamification” represents the use of game-design elements and principles in non-gaming contexts. The platform developed in the project enables learners to gamify educational content and lend it a context.

(Sabine Nollmann)

Attention editors:

Pictures regarding this press release can be found at
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Further information and contacts:

<http://beaconing.eu> (project)
<http://beaconing.eu/cross-eu> (game)
www.biba.uni-bremen.de
Hashtags: #BeaconingSaveTheWorld and #BEACONINGEU

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