WC2 results: what the world's leading universities offered to cities

 On August 2, the final Plenary Session of the WC2 Symposium, the key event of the World Cities World Class University Network, WC2 took place at SPbPU. Within 4 days, participants from 9 universities in the world conducted intensive work. Under the guidance of experts, students and young scientists worked in the theme clubs "Transport", "Global Health / Healthcare", "Knowledge, Culture and Urban Development", "Eco-Campus" and "Business" under the same theme "Smart City and Digital Society"

 "During this busy week, we all could see the full potential that the participants of the symposium demonstrated. Integration of specialists from different countries into the workflow is certainly a difficult task, but it is thanks to it that we are able to receive innovative solutions and bring them to life. Therefore, international student collaboration is the key goal of the WC2 Association. And I am very glad that here, at Peter the Great St. Petersburg Polytechnic University, we saw such a comprehensive support for our ideas. The Polytechnic ship is moving along the course of internationalization - and that's great," Professor Stanton NEWMAN, Chairman of WC2 Association, Vice President of City, University of London for

Internationalization, said at the Plenary Session.

 The high level of the organization of the Symposium was appreciated by the coordinators of thematic clubs and the students.

 "*Each university has social responsibility. What can we offer to society? What tasks can be solved now, and which ones in the near future? Today, the digitalization of education has gained maximum relevance. For almost a week, participants of the WC2 symposium worked on the topic of "Smart City and Digital Society," and many ideas really impressed us. I don't exclude the possibility that soon we will witness the implementation of these international projects into reality,*" said Nikita GOLOVIN, Deputy Head of the Department for International Cooperation.
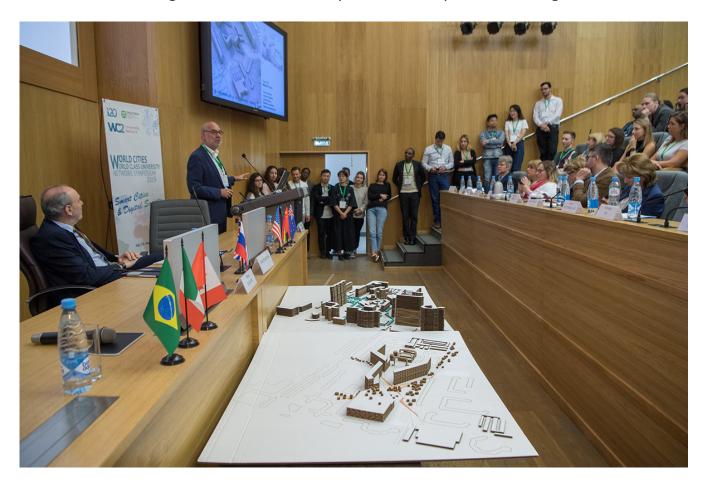
 Digitalization in the project activities of the participants intertwined with another important direction of the 21st century -- gamification. Several clubs proposed projects related to the introduction of elements of the game in serious, at the first glance, processes. So, members of the "Knowledge, Culture and Urban Development" Club presented a quiz, at the example of which they spoke about how the game can improve knowledge about culture. And students from the Global Health / Health Club created mobile application projects, the use of which will help to better know human body and reduce the risk of excess weight; adapt in society and overcome self-doubts, as well as improve time management skills and, thereby, get rid of stresses. Other club members approached telemedicine issues - the use of modern means of communication for the remote provision of counseling and medical services.

 "We focused on aging issues in the transition of humanity to a digital society. We talked about telemedicine, the possibilities, advantages and disadvantages of this technology. What is interesting: students from some countries are sure that everyone uses digital technologies. However, a symposium participant from Mexico shared the results of a study that says the opposite: more than 50% of people in the world do not have regular access to the Internet, and do not use modern technologies that they would need," said the coordinator of the Global Health / Health Club, professor City, University of London Victoria JOFFE.

 The "Business" and "Transport" Clubs studied the possibilities of developing

unmanned public transport systems. In addition, the "businessmen" examined the impact of digitalization on business processes, and members of the transport club studied the challenges that smart cities pose to transport technologies.

 In 2019, the "Eco-campus" Club had an ambitious task. Participants presented their ideas regarding the infrastructure of the largest federal project, i.e., the Technopolis Polytech Complex. In the future, it will be a whole infrastructure complex with research laboratories, dormitories and leisure centers. Justifying the name of the club, the participants of the Eco-Campus talked a lot about ecology and environmental protection, and presented designs of reservoirs for accumulating rainwater; roofs equipped with solar panels; and greenhouses on the upper floors of buildings. For better visualization, students created models of the future complex - in a short time they were able to implement their project in the Fablab workshop.

 The WC2 symposium at Polytechnic University came to an end, but left both experts and students with a lot of new ideas and opportunities. Ahead are new challenges that participants will be solving in a new city: the next point on the map of the Association will be Royal Melbourne University of Technology (RMIT; Australia). See you soon!

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