

PRESS RELEASE: INNER-CITY YOUNGSTERS REWARDED FOR THEIR ENVIRONMENTAL ACHIEVEMENTS

Young people from inner-city Dublin and inner-city Belfast were rewarded for their environmental achievements at a ceremony in The Digital Hub this morning (30.07.08). The teenagers received awards at the event, commending their participation in the iTrek summer project.

iTrek is an initiative of [elevate – Learning at The Digital Hub](#) and the South West Inner City Network. The project aims to promote environmental awareness and digital media skills amongst young people. Teenagers from Belfast Computer Clubhouse were guest participants in this year's iTrek project.

According to Philip Flynn, Chief Executive of the Digital Hub Development Agency, iTrek builds on young people's enthusiasm for technology to increase their interest in environmental issues.

“Young people today are big into gadgets,” said Mr. Flynn. “They are used to playing computer games; they use social networking sites to maintain contact with their friends; they have mobile phones and other digital media devices from an early age.

“What the iTrek project does is to build on this interest in technology to foster an interest in the environment. By combining the creative use of digital media tools with environmental challenges, this project increases young people's levels of digital literacy while simultaneously increasing their ‘green’ credentials.”

Participants in the iTrek project carried out a series of environmental challenges over the course of a week, using 3G mobile phones, laptops, digital cameras and other technologies. Activities included visiting shopkeepers in the Liberties to assess their commitment to recycling; a trip to Dublin Zoo to explore the topic of biodiversity, and a video conferencing session with the young people from the Computer Clubhouse in Belfast.

According to Tony O'Rourke, Secretary of the South West Inner City Network, the young people involved in the iTrek project benefited hugely from the experience.

“The concept behind iTrek is to create a summer project that uses technology in an educational way, but – crucially – that is also fun. The participants in this year's summer project had a really enjoyable time, as well as learning lots of new things. We covered topics such as renewable energy, recycling, climate change and cultural diversity, but at all times, the emphasis was on learning in a fun environment.”

The iTrek summer project was supported by [3](#), Ireland's mobile media network, which provided the very latest 3G mobiles for use by project participants. “We were delighted to support this very worthwhile project,” said Rachel Channing, Head of PR and Communications at 3. “3's mobile technology is cutting-edge and the iTrek project really took advantage of this by using a range of different applications from mobile internet to skype calls on the move. It's an excellent project, highlighting the importance of green issues in a fun and informative way.”

This morning's ceremony was hosted by two of the participants in the iTrek project, 13-year-old Megan Lynch and 17-year-old Oumarou Hamadou.