Institute of National Remembrance

You will find contemporary history data without any trouble

The bards.ai and 'Archiwiści' are two teams that came up with the best concept of a browser for the open resources of the Polish Institute of National Remembrance (IPN). The winners will receive 50 thousand PLN and the best solution will be implemented by the Institute. The result will be a practical and easy-to-use knowledge database on Poland's contemporary history. The tool is specifically aimed at the young generation.

During HackYeah — the biggest programming marathon in Europe which took place over the weekend,10— 12 December 2021, over 1500 programmers competed in 10 different tasks, creating solutions for current economic and social challenges.

The New Technologies Office (BNT) — the youngest department of the Institute, responsible for the digitalization of its resources and technological dialogue with the youth — invited the hackathon participants to create the concept of a browser of IPN's open resources. The tool is to enable young people to discover Poland's current history more easily. It's a big

challenge, because IPN, together with its local branches, runs as many as 49 websites devoted to various aspects of Poland's most recent history, being the only place in possession of such rich resources. The teams were required to develop a creative mechanism enabling effective data screening and attractive presentation of results. The assigned sum for prizes for the authors of three best solutions amounted to 60 thousand PLN.

> *IPN's challenge has drawn our attention because of the potential scale of the solution. Designing a tool for virtually everyone to use is an interesting issue to us*
>
> said the representatives of the bards.ai team after the announcement of the results.

In the solution created for IPN, the programmers used their experience in devising solutions in the scope of artificial intelligence, including in particular intelligent content search with the use of modern language models. The fact that the team selected this particular project was significantly influenced by one of its members, Michał Swędrowski, who, although

professionally invested in IT and AI, is passionate about history in his everyday life.

History like a computer game

The contest winners admitted that previously they had associated IPN mainly with exhibitions and clips on YouTube, but they didn't know about the wider educational activities of the Institute. This shows that their solution is going to fill the gap in IPN's educational offer for the youth.

> *We hope that the implementation of our solution will increase interest in history, especially among the youngest generations. Young people nowadays acquire knowledge mainly from the Internet. It seems that the priority is to create products simplifying the access to historical knowledge in the form of games or dedicated tools*
>
> added the programmers from bards.ai

The prize — 30 thousand PLN for the winner — will be used for

further development of the bards.ai startup, including the development of calculation infrastructure necessary for designing modern machine learning models.

Institute's memory expanded

The participation of IPN in HackYeah was coordinated by the BNT. Its task is to acquire and develop of original technologies. The modern tools will help historians to manage the ever-increasing stores of available data and to reach youth with historical knowledge.

> *Thanks to the great skills of the programmers from bards.ai and the commitment of IPN's mentors, we managed to develop a solution that will help us reach the young, very demanding audience. The digital world has accompanied them their whole lives and they do almost all that's important to them online. Historical education has to meet these expectations*
>
> said Magdalena Hajduk, director of IPN's New Technologies Office

The New Technologies Office is the youngest cell of the Institute, established to answer two enormous challenges that historians are facing nowadays. The first one is the growing amount of historical data. Researches have long stopped worrying about collecting material. Right now, their greatest problem is to effectively navigate among its giant bulk. This renders it is impossible to study history, especially the latest events, without the aid of comprehensive IT tools and – ever more often – artificial intelligence.

The second challenge is the fact that only a few per cent of primary and secondary school graduates know the basics of Polish history. Meanwhile, recent history includes not only the turmoil of the first years after the collapse of communism, but also the growing impact of technology on our lives, the development of artificial intelligence, and new environmental challenges. The Institute wants to invite the youngest generations to understand the times we live in, because they are the ones who are going to take responsibility for the shape of our country in a short while.

HackYeah — Europe's biggest hackathon — is open to all enthusiasts of innovative solutions. The stakes were high — over 570 thousand PLN PLN in prizes and the opportunity to practically implement the developed ideas. The tasks were defined i.a. by Bayer, IPN, GovTech, the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development and the Polish Ministry of Finance. The programmers could choose from 10 various tasks formulated for this particular edition of the hackaton by the organizers and Partners. The participants worked for 40 hours non-stop. Apart from the task presented by IPN, the programmers and their teams worked at creating:

- an educational game

- a mental health care app

- a browser of support programs, donations and investors, designed for companies

- an app enabling sharing surplus pet food and accessories

- a solution aimed at a maximal simplification of fulfilling reporting obligations by entities on the financial market

- a digitally-friendly tax document editor

- a solution suggesting the best place to live or run a business

- a tool for monthly reporting on the course of business activity

- a solution enabling the coordination of production, storage, distribution, and end use of hydrogen

See also: **The President of the Institute of National Remembrance has established the New Technologies Office**

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