

Press Releases: Coders, Technologists, and Conservationists Tackle Wildlife Trafficking Challenges at Zoonackathon 2018

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

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The U.S. Department of State will host the third annual Zoonackathon in Madrid, Spain; Mumbai, India; San Diego, California; and Entebbe, Uganda, September 15-16, 2018; and in New Delhi, India, September 22-23, 2018. The Zoonackathon events bring together coders, designers, university students, and conservation enthusiasts to combat wildlife trafficking through digital and technological innovations.

Wildlife trafficking—the poaching, illegal transit, trade and sale of wildlife—decimates the world’s most iconic species and generates more than \$10 billion a year for transnational organized criminal networks that profit from the illicit sales of exotic pets, delicacies, jewelry, and traditional medicines. The problem is global in scope, it is pervasive, and it has devastating impacts: it threatens security, undermines the rule of law, fuels corruption, spreads disease, robs local communities of their natural resource bases and livelihoods (including the economic benefits derived from nature-based tourism and hunting), and pushes species to the brink of extinction.

At each Zoonackathon site, participants have 24-48 hours to code apps and other programs in response to challenge statements provided by conservation experts, who are fighting against wildlife trafficking on the frontlines. At the end of the hackathons, teams present their work to a panel of judges, and the judges nominate a winner; each site winner is eligible for a global prize.

This year’s Zoonackathon is organized by the Department of State’s Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs in conjunction with the Association of Zoos and Aquariums and other international entities. For further information about Zoonackathon, please visit www.zoonackathon.com/. Follow Zoonackathon on social media at @StateDeptOES, #Zoonackathon, and #EndWildlifeTrafficking.

For media inquiries, please contact Zoohackathon@state.gov.

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