

Chairman's Award - Team 6025

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2021 - Team 6025

Team Number

6025

Team Nickname

Adroit Androids

Team Location

Istanbul, Istanbul - Turkey

Describe the impact of the *FIRST* program on team participants within the last 3 years. This can include but is not limited to percentages of those graduating high school, attending college, in STEM careers, and in *FIRST* programs as mentors/sponsors.

Our alumni use their knowledge of FIRST programs in their academic lives. They make a difference in terms of effective presentation & communication skills in prestigious universities such as Purdue, UBC, WPI, Sussex, Koc, and Bogazici. 85% of our alumni study in the field of STEM at their universities & 19 of them mentored FIRST teams. Using the entrepreneurship aspect of FIRST, they appealed to larger audiences by establishing a start-up called "1 Yasam Kutusu" & an AI developer "Artificaid".

Describe your community along with how your team addresses its unique opportunities and circumstances.

Volunisia is our pre-eminent word to describe our community. There's approx. 30K members in our community and most of them volunteer in foundations, charity days as well as FIRST events. This state of affairs benefited Team 6025 by providing unique opportunities such as various outreach events, partnerships with foundations, and Kuyu the Puppy. To this date, we have attended 72 outreach events and partnered with 20 foundations such as LOSEV, AFAD, Mor Cati, Kuresel Akil, and Hayata Destek.

Describe the team's methods, with emphasis on the past 3 years, for spreading the *FIRST* message in ways that are effective, scalable, sustainable, and creative. How does your team measure results?

In our 6 years of rapid expansion, we realized the need for a well-rounded strategic approach, in order to transcend our initiatives and develop large-scale projects with a definite impact. Thus, we created the Adroit Method. This method helps us to identify the issues of our community according to STEM & FIRST values. Having such a method not only helps us pursue these projects & receive dynamic feedbacks from target groups but chains together the values of 6025 and the needs of our community.

Please provide specific examples of how your team members act as role models within the *FIRST* community with emphasis on the past 3 years.

As the first Turkish FRC Team to win an award in the Champ, AA is a pioneer in the Turkish FRC community. It's vital for AA members to present and support FIRST in an inspirational way by forming, mentoring & assisting teams, volunteering in events, and organizing an FRC Kickoff in Sinop. AA incentivizes FIRST teams to achieve & sustain gender equality within their communities. For this matter, we're organizing the Girl Talk series to unite and empower girls from different FIRST teams.

Describe your team's initiatives to Assist, Mentor, and/or Start other *FIRST* teams with emphasis on activities within the past 3 years.

With our AA Turkey Camp initiative, we traveled all across the country to give workshops, form FRC teams in different cities, and mentor these teams. Our initiative created a virtuous cycle and Turkish FRC community growth exponentially from 27 to 89 teams. After the success of AA Turkey Camp, we widened our perspective with AA Global Camp and formed the first Italian FRC Team, encouraged to start the first Ukrainian FRC Team, and currently in the process of forming an FRC Team in Madagascar.

Beyond starting teams, what initiatives have you done to help inspire young people to be science and technology leaders and innovators? What results have you seen from your efforts in the past 3 years?

The mission of Team 6025 is to elevate interest in STEM & FIRST among youth. In this direction, we organized online experiment days, science festivals, open house days, and STEM workshops nationwide to emphasize innovation and promote science to 3500+ young people in the past 3 years. As a result, we have observed an increase in the number of FLL and FLL Jr. teams in Turkey, and the orientation of members of our community to the STEM field increased by approx. 75%.

Describe the partnerships you've created with other organizations (teams, sponsors, educational institutions, philanthropic entities, etc.) and what you have accomplished together with emphasis on the past 3 years

In order to fill the mentoring gap of FIRST teams, we composed a mentoring program for experienced engineers defining Basaksehir Living Lab as a joint collaborative center. Our patented Smart Tag project, which we were developing a prototype for our sponsor Voonka, was funded and supported by the company itself. We also collaborated with the UNDP-supported foundation "Htiyac Haritasi" to supply robot parts for different teams with a \$7000+ budget.

Describe your team's efforts in the past 3 years to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion within your team, *FIRST*, and your communities.

We organize Ladies in FIRST Conferences with up-to-date headings such as "Pandemic Inequality". With the aim of showing the importance of women in many different fields, we host women specialized in various fields as speakers every year & encourage our increasing audience to strive towards their goals. The importance of this diversity in our society matches with the gender equality in our team. 6025 prepares action plans to achieve & preserve gender equality in the team.

Explain how you ensure your team and the initiatives you have created will continue to run effectively for the foreseeable future

The Adroit Method is a system to maintain the team and run our projects in the manners and ideals we desire. Our Member-Mentor Cycle and FLL Development Program ensures sustainability with the flow of new members and mentors that internalized the values of FIRST and the culture of AA. The Method turns our projects into enduring initiatives that provide a framework for future plans by expanding their scope and we're integrating our projects & events into these initiatives.

Describe your team's innovative strategies to recruit, retain, and engage your sponsors within the past 3 years

For AA, being in a partnership is the key to an active relationship with sponsors. For instance, we provide interns for our sponsor Dostel through our alumni. We were funded with a \$2K budget by "Lumos Laser" to produce a prototype and R&D their new product. We created a "Catalog" to commercialize our 21 handcrafted gifts for our sponsors and its employees to build a mutual relationship. To preserve sustainability, we organize "Sector Meetings" to inform our sponsors of our latest achievements.

Highlight one area in which your team needs to improve and describe the steps actively being taken to make those improvements.

Due to Turkey's economic difficulties and the Covid-19 pandemic, it's becoming difficult to find sponsors and obtain financial security for future projects. In order to increase our influence and expand our community, we decided that Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality is the most ideal sponsor and partner for Team 6025. We contacted the IBB spokesperson through Istanbul Congressperson Onursal Adiguzel and we're currently in touch for a partnership.

Describe your team's goals to fulfill the mission of *FIRST* and the progress you have made towards those goals.

AA's utmost ambition is to make STEM & FIRST accessible for every kid in Turkey. In that regard, we're meeting with politicians for legislation to achieve our goal. We gained the support of 10 congresspersons and appointed a congressional leader as our team representative in the parliament. We also reached an agreement with the Turkish Ministry of Education to start FIRST programs in BILSEM's (Special Education Centers for Gifted Children) to make FIRST obtainable in every 81 cities of Turkey.

Briefly describe other matters of interest to the *FIRST* Judges, including items that may not fit into the above topics. The judges are interested in learning about aspects of your team that may be unique or particularly noteworthy.

AA is a family that clings to each other as all members & alumni regardless of circumstances. Our culture consists of the combination of action-taking and our unique perspective on GP. We're sharing, spreading, and carrying the FIRST values

all around the world & inspiring the next generations. Just open the black and blue door to see what it will be like to be a team, to strive for your dreams, to shine under the light of science, and find AA behind that door. This family is waiting for you!

Essay

Good evening ladies & gentlemen, welcome to a basketball game like no other! Game 6 is upon us so let's get right through to Team 6025. In 2015, their starting five gathered to continue their FIRST journey and form an FRC team. They envisioned a student-led team with a long-lasting impact and proved their potential by winning the Rookie Inspiration Award making them the "First Turkish FRC team to ever win an award in the World Champ." With 2021 marking the 6th season of AA, they operate on 100% student effort and build future leaders by establishing a sustainable FLL Development Program and Member-Mentor Cycle. We're all set to go, tip-off is next. Let's see how Team 6025 changes the game!

1ST QUARTER: COMMUNITY

It's game time! Team 6025 started off strong with their "Solutions for Daily Headaches" initiative that has reached more than 300 people in their local community, solving the simple problems that they've faced in their daily life. It became a local hit in Bahcesehir with 8 pending & 5 confirmed patents. By adapting STEM to their court vision, they are taking their patented products to the rim with the support of their sponsors Voonka & Lumos, putting forward more developed prototypes.

As one of the point guards in the Turkish FRC community, passing has always been a crucial part of AA's game. They started the "Supply FIRST" initiative partnering with UNDP-supported foundation "Ihtiyac Haritasi", mainly focusing on rookie & disadvantaged teams. Through the Supply FIRST, they met the needs of 19 teams with a budget of \$7K+ & assisted 41 FRC teams by providing them resources including robot parts & design, safety, award, and business in both fundamental & advanced levels. They're setting screens for the Turkish FRC community to open up a clear path to the basket with their PortAAI forum where they answer the teams' questions & share their build season process. Sharing is caring!

We have a guest in the court, a puppy named "Kuyu" who was stuck in an artesian pipe for 11 days. AA prepared a robotic arm with Team 3646, just in 2 hours with the knowledge they gained from FIRST to save Kuyu. They collaborated with NGOs & Istanbul Fire Department and the arm which was used to rescue the puppy was inspired by 6025's design. After the story broke out, it became a viral hit. This reached over 20M people through all forms of media by showing how FIRST programs can transform students into game-changers. They received praises from J.K. Rowling & Stanford Uni's professor Oussama Khatib flew 11000 km to meet with AA in person. Turkey's Oscar Nominee Yigit Guralp is producing a movie out of the incredible story of Kuyu. "Hug" the movie will be coming out in 2022, making AA the first Turkish FRC team on the silver screen. It's a 4-point play!

Besides these initiatives, AA spreads the message of FIRST & STEM to thousands of people through 72 outreach events. They also reached millions of people through media and social media via campaigns, challenges & hashtags combining FIRST & STEM with current events such as their FIRSTquake challenge to raise awareness on Turkey's earthquake risk. As we are closing the 1st, AA goes to the quarter break on the high side.

2ND QUARTER: GENDER EQUALITY

2nd Quarter is underway with the Ladies in FIRST initiative to increase women's participation in the fields of STEM and robotics by inspiring them with the values & programs of FIRST. AA has started the "Ladies in FIRST" initiative to encourage girls of all ages to pursue careers in STEM & robotics, within and without. This year, they're pressing full-court with the team's second "5-year action plan" to create a conducive atmosphere for gender equality within the team. It's been a huge success hitherto; they've reduced the gender gap, accomplished gender equality in the team's leadership roles, and increased the number and percentage of girls mainly in robot division. They're really putting on a clinic this quarter!

After seeing the insufficiency of girls interested in the various fields of STEM, they are leading the fast-break with their Ladies in FIRST conferences on up-to-date topics such as "Women in Engineering", "Women Leadership in Business", & "Pandemic Inequality", inviting well-known women leaders & scientists to recognize their unique work and bringing them together with more than 1000 people. To advertise the LiF conference, they shared the "#EqualizeUs" video, which gives a chance to look at gender inequality from children's perspective, which became a hit with 20K+ viewers. This year, they started a new series called Girl Talk. Every week, they host girls from different teams to share their experience in FIRST & acknowledge their remarkable achievements. What an inspiring series to set an example for young girls, they chased down and blocked every discrimination out of the game!

3RD QUARTER: INSPIRATION

If you're wondering how to be an inspiration, you're in the right place because Adroit Androids is putting on a show this quarter! They inspired more than 5,000 children in the past 5 years. They organized an FLL Off-Season and formed & mentored 32 FLL and Jr. FLL Teams to change children's perspective on STEM & FIRST. At their Open House Days, Science Festivals, and STEM Days, they conducted various experiments, increased children's curiosity about STEM, and with the experimental booklet they published, they ensured that every child would benefit from this opportunity nationwide. They also moved science & inspiration to online platforms by organizing "Online Experiment Days". Nothing can hold from them inspiring this quarter, not even a global pandemic!

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AA boxes out every disadvantage in the game with their Robotics 101 initiative. They're collaborating with foundations such as Hayata Destek & LOSEV to reach refugee children, orphans, deaf children, kids with autism, children physically handicapped, children with leukemia, and the ones with Asperger's syndrome. They've gone to orphanages & special education centers to run workshops and STEM Days & donated STEM gifts, emboldened & inspired 543 kids in total. This year, they are taking a part in the Next Generation Science program to mentor an FLL Team formed by refugee children. What a defensive performance today, they gave no chance to any kind of disadvantage!

4TH QUARTER: SPREADING FIRST

Team 6025 launched their AA Turkey Camp initiative to increase the number of FRC teams in Turkey by forming teams all across the country. They traveled 14000 km & started 12 FRC teams in 9 different cities. They assisted the teams by providing workshops in areas such as technical design, programming, and business plan preparation, as well as covering the expenses of the teams such as transportation & accommodation. This initiative created a long-lasting chain effect and the teams they formed (Team 6999), started other teams such as Team 7637 & Team 7010. Back in 2016 when AA launched this initiative, there were only 27 teams in Turkey, right now Turkey has one of the biggest FRC communities with 89 active teams. To increase their influence, AA collaborates with the Turkish Ministry of Education & Special Education Centers for Gifted Children (BILSEM) to achieve the team's main goal of making FIRST & STEM accessible for every kid in Turkey.

They dribbled past the borders with AA Global initiative and headed to countries without FRC teams. In the past 4 years, they formed the first Italian FRC team 7012, covering all expenses such as accommodation, transportation, and entrance fee for the 2017 Turkish Off-Season. In prior years, they had numerous meetings with a Ukrainian group (later known as Team 7851) & encouraged them to form the first Ukrainian FRC team. They're currently meeting with the Honorary Consul of Madagascar to form the first FRC team in Madagascar. AA aims to expand beyond European countries to the African continent, and is on its way to reaching people all over the world! It's been a close game all day, now we're heading to overtime.

OVERTIME: ADVOCACY

Here we are in the OT. This is where the leaders step up. This is where the real difference shows itself. This is where amazing happens. As AA is changing our culture through FIRST & STEM, diplomacy is their key to acculturation. They're tearing down the walls of bureaucracy, meeting with the most efficient leaders & politicians in Turkey, and inspiring Ankara. So far, they have gained the support of 10 congresspersons for legislation to make STEM accessible for everyone, including Congressional Leaders, Vice-Chairs, Deputy Chairman of the Assembly, and Consuls. They visited the Grand National Assembly of Turkey repeatedly to share the message of FIRST and their endeavors to increase awareness of STEM. Throughout their appearances, they reached out to many members of the Assembly and even to Mr. Onursal Adiguzel, the Vice-Chair of Turkey's leading opposition party to have FIRST & STEM recognized at the congressional level. Congressional Leader Ozgur Ozel agreed on being AA's representative to express FIRST values, the importance of STEM & their message in Parliament. With these works, the team has implemented being "FIRST's advocate" task, one of the most important roles that FIRST & Dean Kamen asked them to do.

The match is coming to a close. Clutch time is here. AA with the ball in their hands. Fans on their feet. 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, AA lets it fly from downtown! Is this the dagger? Bang! What a perfect ending to a historical match! I'm absolutely speechless ladies & gentlemen. Today you witnessed the advancing journey of Team 6025. A team of young entrepreneurs, who adopt FIRST values to their community, cooperate with institutions, not only spreading robotics in Turkey but also breaking down the borders. As they are heading to Game 7, "They have never been this close to the horizon." Let's end this spectacular game by applauding Team 6025 ladies and gentlemen, who brings technology and science Together to Achieve More!