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NEWS

City Blockchain Lab, an introduction for using a distributed database in urban life

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On Monday, June 19th, the session "Innovation in the metropolis' governance: City Blockchain Lab" was one of the highlighted training workshops of the XII Metropolis World Congress. Offered by DigitalCivix and CCEG (Center for Citizenship, Enterprise and Government), the workshop provided an introduction to the Blockchain General Purpose Technology in different urban and metropolitan contexts, with an opportunity to define consensual procedures to evaluate and rank mobile applications for different urban systems. The ideas generated in this activity spurred solutions for the cities of Barcelona, Montréal and Lima.

Cities can benefit from Blockchain potential to decentralize markets, remove middlemen, distribute

consensus, share tamper proof data registers, increase cyber security, empower trust, boost peer-to-peer digital transactions, encode Smart Contracts, write Apps with clear performance metrics, evolve decentralized autonomous organizations, and launch City Coins to promote Public Social Private Partnerships (PSPP).

The workshop consisted on an introduction to basic concepts of Blockchain and Crypto Currencies, a presentation of ongoing projects, a 360 panorama of opportunities, plus available resources and technological platforms to implement them, to give participants a set of skills for exploring, sandboxing and promoting pilot projects in their own cities.

Participants came from the city governments of Barcelona, Montréal, Lima, Merida, Miami and Northampton, as well as from the following institutions: Desjardins Group, Tencent Research Institute China, LGS an IBM Company, CCEG at Northampton University UK, Concordia University Montreal, School of Government at Sun Yat-sen University of Guangzhou, and DigitalCivix.

They were encouraged to engage in common exploration of areas of opportunities for urban innovation in new spaces for trusted transactions of value, for diverse city stakeholders through different city systems. They were invited to explore themes in the natural, built, social and economic environments, as well as in city government, governance, city management and corruption.

The workshop provided an experimental space to explore and spearhead meaningful innovation. It enabled testing pilot ideas, registering responses, developing metrics and evaluation methodologies, exploring business models, engaging partnerships, and opening new markets for innovation and entrepreneurship. As a result, they contributed to possibilities of exploring Blockchain in the following urban contexts:

1. A Platform to boost access of youth to First Housing in Barcelona
2. A Unique ID to attend Homeless Aboriginal Population in Montréal
3. An Open Market Platform for Public-Private Transport in Lima

By the end of the workshop, a network of City Blockchain Labs enthusiasts was proposed to be launched, in order to document and share best practices that promote these ecosystems for urban innovation and entrepreneurship.