

PRESS RELEASE – Tuesday 3rd May 2022

OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL TO HOST THE OFFALY VEX ROBOTICS CHAMPIONSHIPS 2022

Offaly County Council is thrilled to present the “Offaly VEX Robotics Championships 2022” where the young people in Offaly will unite in person to celebrate STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) excellence and compete in exciting competition matches. The Championships will take place in O’Connor Park, Tullamore on Friday 6th May from 10:00 – 14:45. Students have been designing, building, and coding their robots since the start of the school year and the competition in O’Connor Park is the culmination of their hard work where they will get to compete against each other to become the Offaly champions for 2022.

The competition will see 50 primary school teams compete in the VEX Robotics IQ Challenge “Pitching In” and 13 post-primary school teams compete in the VEX Robotics V5 Competition “Tipping Point”. This STEM programme is delivered in partnership with primary and post-primary schools, Offaly County Council, Munster Technological University, Offaly Local Development Company, Offaly Local Enterprise Office and Government.

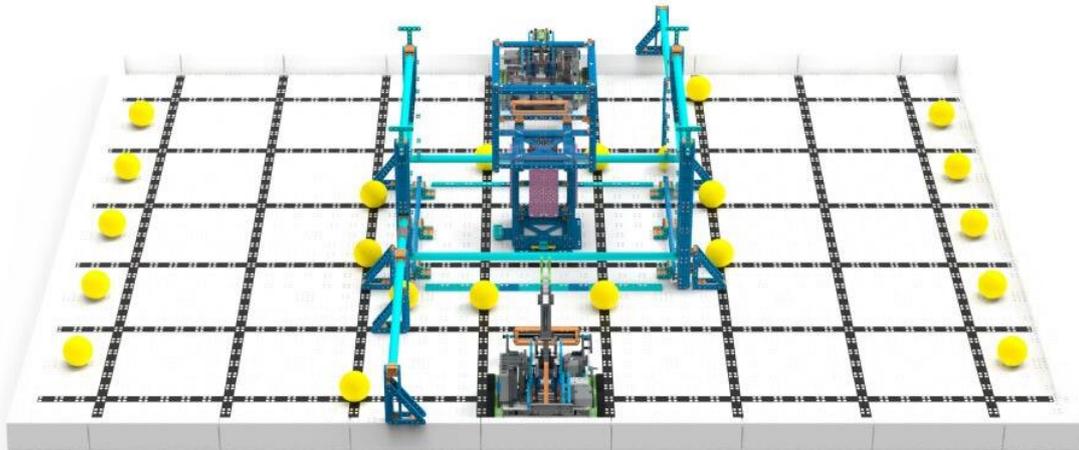
STEM education puts an emphasis on preparing future generations to be successful in their careers. The skills gained from STEM education extend beyond those needed to be successful in STEM fields, preparing children with varied interests who move into any industry to have valuable skill sets that allow them to be successful. This programme helps to drive Offaly’s economic ambitions, support innovation, and provide the foundations for future prosperity in the county.

Students will also get to experience other STEM-related activities at the event. Microsoft Dream Space will be engaging with students about microbits, programming-using minecraft, StarDome Planetarium Dome will let students experience STEM Lessons from Space, and there will be a gaming area including virtual reality for students to enjoy. Offaly County Council’s Fire and Rescue Service will have a fire truck and firefighters will be talking to students about what is required to become a firefighter, and there will be a robot demonstration area. The event will also showcase STEM activities from Offaly on the 25 sq. meter screen.

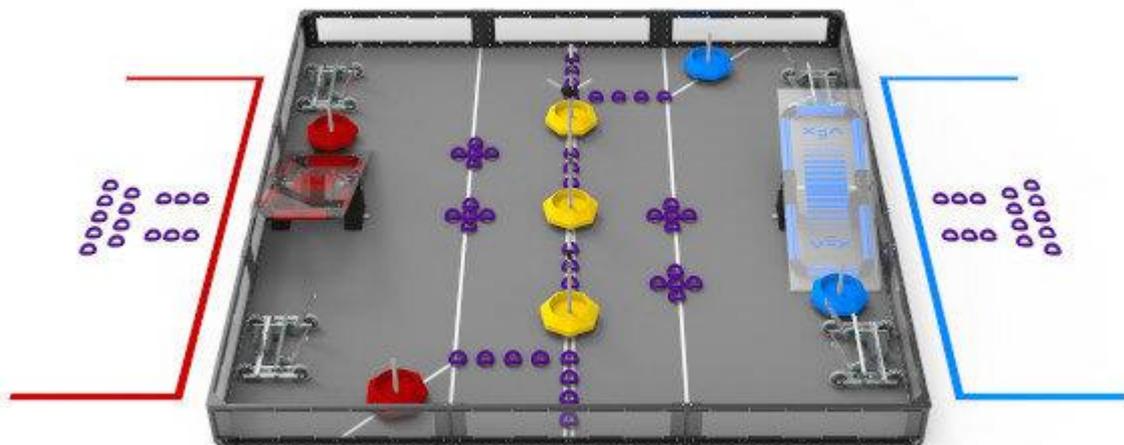
Speaking about the event, Cathaoirleach of Offaly County Council, Cllr Declan Harvey said, “We are delighted to host this event in O’Connor Park in Tullamore. It is a family event and we welcome you to join us. The competition will showcase our student’s creativity and innovation and credit has to go to the students and their teachers for all the work they put into this since the start of the school year.”

Chief Executive of Offaly County Council, Anna Marie Delaney, is looking forward to the event and said “VEX Robotics is just one of a number of exciting initiatives Offaly County Council is supporting to drive STEM education, research, and jobs. This programme really demonstrated the interest amongst our young people in Offaly to engage with STEM with over 2000 students involved this year. Students develop teamwork, critical thinking, project management, and

communication skills required to prepare them to become the next generation of innovators and problem solvers. It builds on Offaly’s strong heritage in science and engineering and it gives the students the skills for an exciting future.”



Primary schools compete in the VEX IQ Challenge “Pitching In” which is played on a 6’ x 8’ rectangular field configured as seen above. Two robots compete in the Teamwork Challenge as an alliance in 60-second-long teamwork matches, working collaboratively to score points. Teams also compete in the Robot Skills Challenge where one robot takes the field to score as many points as possible. These matches consist of Driving Skills Matches, which will be entirely driver-controlled, and Programming Skills Matches, which will be autonomous with limited human interaction.



Post-primary / secondary schools compete in the VEX V5 Competition “Tipping Point” which is played on a 12’ x 12’ square field configured as seen above. Two Alliances (one “red” and one “blue” — composed of two Teams each) compete in Matches consisting of a 15-second Autonomous Period, followed by a 1:45 Driver Controlled Period. Teams also compete in the Robot Skills Challenge where one robot takes the field to score as many points as possible. These matches consist of Driving Skills Matches, which will be entirely driver-controlled, and Programming Skills Matches, which will be autonomous with limited human interaction.

ENDS