Pacific FlyingLabs

Who

We are a Fiji-based knowledge hub that focuses on solving local and regional aid, health, development and environmental challenges through the use of appropriate robotics & AI technologies in the South Pacific region.

Why

The region presents geographic challenges and is subject to cyclones, floods, earthquakes, volcanoes and tsunamis - not to mention the growing impact of climate change.

We believe that the solutions to these problems should first and foremost be local, community-driven and supported by technology.

What

- We build local capacity to increase resilience
- We complement aid response with local technical capacity and resources, available at short notice and on the long term
- We empower youth to reduce the digital divide through training and projects and be part of the Fourth Industrial Revolution
- We foster strategic partnerships with national, regional and international organisations
- We engage in the process of baseline data creation and sharing
- We share knowledge and learn from other Flying Labs part of our global WeRobotics network

How

- We develop and implement a range of projects in the region, working with local, national and regional organizations that lead public health, environmental protection and disaster risk reduction efforts
- We run hands-on youth training programs incl.: *Fly Like A Girl* & *Aerial Adventures*, encouraging youth to enter STEM-related fields
- We are continuing to grow with new hubs popping up in Papua New Guinea and so forth.

Team

Amrita Lal, Regional Coordinator of South Pacific Flying Labs, holds a degree in Science with majors in Geospatial Science and Geography from the University of the South Pacific. She is well versed in drones for operations and aerial imagery.
Amrita is joined by a gender-balanced team of 4 certified local drone pilots (RePL), recognised by the Civil Aviation Authority of Fiji (CAAF) and the Australian Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA). This team includes pilots like Aleen Prasad, Semisi Ketenilagi, Waisale Rakusanavanua, Tarish Obed and a Youth Coordinator, Kolora Qativi.

Equipment

Pacific Flying Labs holds a fleet of multicopters including hexacopters in both the small and medium categories. This includes drones from the DJI Phantom 3, 4 and Mavic range with RGB and Parrot Sequoia multispectral and thermal cameras. In addition, the labs have fixed-wing drones from senseFly for large scale mapping projects and two underwater ROVs from PowerVision and OpenROV.

Achievements (2017-2018)

- First local drone pilot deployed with Fiji Red Cross
- Organized CASA Certification training of 4 Fijians and 1 Ni-Vanuatu individual
- Successfully partnered with the World Mosquito Program and the Ministry of Health & Medical Services to help reduce Dengue in Fiji
- Delivered a youth-centered project focused on solving both humanitarian and environmental problems with drones with participants from secondary schools in the central division
- Winner of the regional "People and Community" *Asia Pacific Spatial Excellence Award* 2018
- Held the first ever *Robotics for Good* conference in the region

Official Donors & Partners

Donors: The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade (DFAT) innovationXchange (iXc), Atlassian Foundation, University of the South Pacific.
Program Partners: University of the South Pacific, Red Cross, World Bank, SPC, MIT Solve Challenge & Innovation and local government agencies.
Tech Partners: DJI, Parrot, SenseFly, ESRI, Pix4D, DroneDeploy, OpenROV, PowerVision

Read more: www.flyinglabs.org/southpacific
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