

UK project wins 2nd prize at European Parliament Charlemagne Youth Prize

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The London Festival of Europe took second prize at the end of last month in the brand new European Parliament Charlemagne Youth Prize.

Awarded in Aachen, Germany on 29 April by the President of the European Parliament, Hans Gert Pöttering MEP, 1st prize went to Hungary for the "Students without Boundaries" project. Third prize went to Greece and the Byron School of Athens.

Heats in all 27 EU Member States, organised along the lines of the Eurovision Song Contest, sent national winners through to the grand finale.

The UK winner, the London Festival of Europe, is the brainchild of Niccolo Milanese (Welsh) and Lorenzo Marsili (Italian) and a team of young Europeans living in London. The second London Festival of Europe took place in March this year, with a third Festival planned for March 2009.

On receiving the second prize of 3000 euros Niccolo Milanese said:

"When we set up the London Festival of Europe in 2007 it was to try and bring together Europeans in London and Britain and create a genuinely pan European event which reflects both a mobility of the imagination and the nomadic way many young people live now. The most rewarding thing about receiving this prize is meeting other young people from all the 27 Member States and talking to them about setting up collaborations across the Continent. Working across borders is what the future of Europe will be all about. The Charlemagne Youth Prize is all about our Utopianism and Energy and sometimes we can be a little impatient and somewhat frustrated at how slowly things seem to move in European politics :) !"

The Charlemagne Youth Prize is for people aged between 16 and 30 who have been involved with projects helping to promote understanding between different European countries. Judges were looking for projects that would serve as role models for young people living in Europe. They wanted to see practical examples of Europeans living together, whether through the organisation of youth events, youth exchanges or internet projects with a European dimension.