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Students to compete in Germany

TNA REPORTER

SEVEN students from Wits University will represent the country at the International Student Cluster Competition hosted at the 2018 International Supercomputing Conference in Germany.

The students came first at a national competition during the annual Centre for High Performance Computing (CHPC) conference in Pretoria last week.

They were part of 10 teams, with each team comprising four undergraduate students from universities across the country, who battled it out to demonstrate their cluster building and high performance computing skills.

The winning team will compete next year with 11 teams from different countries such as China, Singapore, Thailand, Poland and Germany.

In a real-time challenge, the students built small, high performance computing clusters on the exhibition floor, using

hardware provided by CHPC and its industrial partners and raced to demonstrate the best performance across a series of benchmarks and applications.

The CHPC is one of three primary pillars of the national cyber infrastructure intervention initiated by the Department of Science and Technology and managed by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).

Speaking at the event, the Department of Science and Technology's director-general, Phil Mjwara, said the department was committed to investing in science, engineering and innovation, including the establishment and support of institutes such as the CHPC.

"This kind of government help fosters the creation and dissemination of knowledge of innovation and has a strong influence on the long-term competitiveness of the country," Mjwara said.

"There's no doubt that a country's information, communications and

technology (ICT) sector is vital to its long-term prosperity. The globally competitive ICT structure creates a sustainable ecosystem and enables researchers and scientists to globally compete."

Last year, South Africa came second and is hoping to bring home another medal next year.

CHPC director Happy Sithole is confident that team South Africa will make the nation proud.

"We are proud of what we have managed to achieve as a country. Last year, our team competed with the best teams and we came second. We believe this team will make us proud," Sithole said.

Sithole said the objective was to create awareness of high performance computing and the impact it has on the country.

"Students receive a unique opportunity to learn, experience and demonstrate how high performance computing influences our day-to-day learning."

news@thenewage.co.za