Own LEGO tournament

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There are many activities you can do to support STEAM education in schools. You can build cross-curricular activities, workshops, call external lecturers, etc.

I teach at a small village school (about 200 students). 5 years ago, we started building LEGO robotics here, and we quickly realized that unless other schools from the surrounding area joined us, we would have a harder time than if we had competition in the immediate vicinity.

As the students enjoyed LEGO robotics, we decided to support their development by participating in various competitions.

Since most competitions take place in winter or spring, we decided to establish our own autumn tournament of programmable LEGO robots - this year in mid-October we will implement the 4th year.

When you go to organize a competition, you have to manage to solve several things: budget, contestants, jury, place and audience.

We are organizing the tournament at our school and the audience are mainly our students, who are freed from 1 hour of teaching (since we hold the tournament on a school day in the morning), so the place and the audience have been decided.

In order to save costs, we decided that the judges will be the competing students and their teachers, and to support the development of soft-skills, we left it up to the students and their teachers to choose the criteria (technical design, program, idea, usefulness). Of course, due to objectivity, no student or teacher can evaluate their team. Also, in order to give students maximum freedom, our tournament has only 1 category. "Show what you know".

We obtained the competition teams by directly contacting the surrounding schools, or schools that have been successful in some grant challenge focused on STEAM education.

When you have 3 or 4 other schools, you will have a sufficiently full gymnasium and you will also be able to manage it in 3 hours.

We have had 3 years, the maximum budget was €1400, the minimum was €400. As rewards, you can give out shopping vouchers to e-shops that sell programming devices (LEGO, Arduino, microbit, ...) but also the possibility of an excursion to IT companies (industrial robots, PC recycling, creation of PC games, ...). But the key thing is that each participating school receives a reward!!! Because the school tournament is mainly about fun and skill development and not about tough competition.

Finally, let's look at some photos from the 1st year of the tournament, which was offline in our gym - the other two years were online.