

Local tech projects win awards at global event

A low-cost sensor that detects phosphate levels in rivers and lakes to monitor algal blooms, and a smart window that turns clear or opaque depending on ambient temperature were among four local projects awarded at the TechConnect World Innovation Conference in the United States last month.

The awards place them in the top 20 per cent of all submitted technologies, ranked based on their potential industrial impact.

The sensor was developed by researchers from the National University of Singapore and the Shanghai Jiaotong University.

It is designed to operate automatically, with data stored or transmitted wirelessly.

The smart window was created by researchers from the Nanyang Technological University and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Apart from being able to change colour depending on the temperature, it is also shatter-resistant and reduces the transfer of heat indoors from outside. The other two projects awarded were a solid-state

fermentation technology to produce highly concentrated succinic acid – which is used to make a range of products including food additives, lacquers and perfume – from direct biomass waste; and a membrane module to treat oil-polluted water.

The annual TechConnect World Innovation Conference highlights innovations that can make a positive impact on the industry and brings together market-ready emerging technologies for commercialisation. It is meant to accelerate the commercialisation of innovations out of the laboratory and into the industry.