



EWSN'24 Sustainability Competition

Competition format & How to use the E-Cube Testbed Version 0.1

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15.04.2024

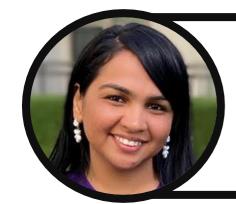


Outline

- EWSN'24 competition
 - Organizers
 - Why this new competition?
 - Challenge at a glance
 - Awards & Timeline
 - Challenge in detail / Hashcash
 - Reference solution
- E-Cube testbed
 - Scheduling an experiment
 - Available energy traces
 - Monitoring experiments
 - Experiment results
- Contacts



EWSN'24 Sustainability Competition Organizers



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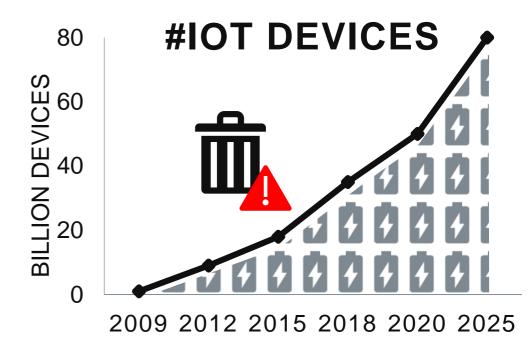


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EWSN'24 Sustainability Competition Why this new competition?

- By 2025, 78 million batteries used in IoT devices will be dumped globally each day [1]
- Several battery-free systems have been proposed by both academia and industry
 - Performance rarely benchmarked under the same settings
 - Let's bring together the community at EWSN to compare the performance of battery-free systems under the same settings
 - → Let's leverage <u>D-Cube</u> as infrastructure and modify it to benchmark battery-free systems





EWSN'24 Sustainability Competition Challenge at a glance

Different real-world traces of a given energy source (e.g., solar panel) are replayed by the testbed in a reproducible way

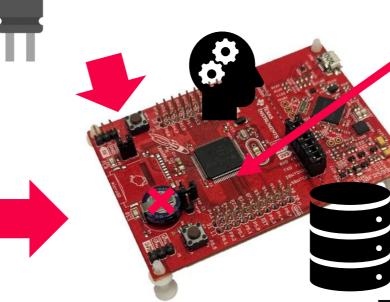
Trace 1
Trace 2
...

Simulated power supply charging a small capacitor powering the battery-free device (steered by the testbed)



Queue of Computation Tasks

(provided by the testbed, can be retrieved by the battery-free device at will)



Battery-free Device MSP430FR5994

Contestant's firmware

uploaded to the **E-Cube testbed**

Task: read a challenge from an **external** device (I2C FRAM task queue), perform the computation (which may take longer than the time available from the given energy supply!) and deliver proof of work to the **external** device



Proof of Work (collected by the testbed)

(collected by the testbed)

FRAM-Memory (internal) for checkpoints



EWSN'24 Sustainability Competition Evaluation

- Solutions will be evaluated according to proof of work (Hashcash):
 - At startup an external FRAM holds N challenges (varying difficulty)
 - → Compute the solution to a challenge and report the solution to FRAM (computation may require more energy than the capacitor can store!)
 - At the end the testbed reads back the solutions and awards points based on the number and difficulty of solved challenges
 - The current points on the website are a **placeholder** and subject to change! (the final metric as well as a leaderboard will be released during/after the informal testing phase)















Challenges (challenge for Hashcash)

Compute the solution to (ideally) each challenge

Store solved challenges (correct hash found for a given challenge in well-known format)

Award Points
(for each solutions based on difficulty)



EWSN'24 Sustainability Competition Awards

- Top three teams will be awarded
 - First place: 6.000 €
 - Second place: 3.000 €
 - Third place: 1.500 €
- Announcement of the results
 - During the main conference track
- → The top 3 teams will be given the opportunity to present their solution as a lightning talk
- → All participants will present their approach during a dedicated poster session





EWSN'24 Sustainability Competition Roadmap & Timeline

 To allow contestants to test their solutions without commitment, the E-Cube testbed is opened early with a reduced feature set (this also allows us to stress test E-Cube and scale the number of nodes)

Start 15.04.24

Informal testing phase 15.04 -31.05

Competition entry deadline 01.06

 Before the remote competition starts, all features will be enabled (leaderboard, more energy traces, final evaluation metric, etc.)

Notification of accepted teams 08.06

Remote Competition 15.06 -15.10

Submission of final firmware 1.06.24



Timeline Informal testing phase

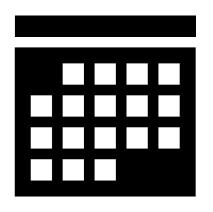
- The testbed infrastructure will be available remotely for 6 months
 - Informal testing phase: April 15, 2024
 - Teams can get familiar with the infrastructure
 - Open to "everyone" → no commitment to participate to the competition
 - Number and duration of energy traces limited
 - Allows potential contestants to tests their solution and as well as the competition infrastructure
 - This is meant also as a stress test for E-Cube, do not hesitate to contact us if something seems wrong or if you'd like additional features! (see last slide for e-mail contact and Discord group)





Timeline Remote competition

- The testbed infrastructure will be available remotely for 6 months
 - Remote competition: June 15 October 15, 2024
 - Access limited to the final teams selected as contestants
 - Over this timespan, we can beef up the challenge with
 - New energy traces
 (will be available for download along the original traces)
 - An increased difficulty of challenges
 (Hashcash allows for scaling of the difficulty for each individual challenge)
 - Goal: push the performance of your solutions to the limit!
 - "Holding back" your solution just means you may be surprised later! (we will try different traces/challenges for the final experiments)





Timeline

Evaluation of the final firmware

- After the remote competition phase, a final firmware has to be submitted
- Deadline is in October 15, 2024
- Using this firmware, the organizers will perform a final evaluations
- Includes unreleased energy traces to avoid engineered solutions
 - Will use different challenge seeds!
 - Will include longer experiments!
- Results will be kept secret until the conference (December 2024)
- → The goal is to find the best performing general solution, not the one best tailored to the provided traces!





EWSN'24 Sustainability Competition Challenge in detail

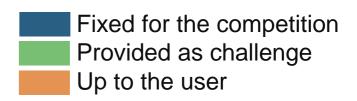
Goal: With the limited amount of (intermittent) energy, perform as much work as possible

- To verifiably prove that a certain amount of computations were performed, we employ a proof-of-work algorithm called Hashcash [3]
 - Based on the SHA1 hash algorithm
 - A given challenge contains a resource, e.g., "EWSN2024" and a difficulty in bits, e.g., 16:
 Find as string s which contains the resource in a well-known format with the hash h(s) having its most significant 16 bits (as per difficulty) zero





Hashcash Well-known Format



Well-known format [4] of a Hashcash **solution** (called "stamp")

ver:bits:date:resource:ext:rand:counter

ver: version (always 1)

bits: difficulty (provided alongside challenge)

date: fixed (use 240415 as the date)

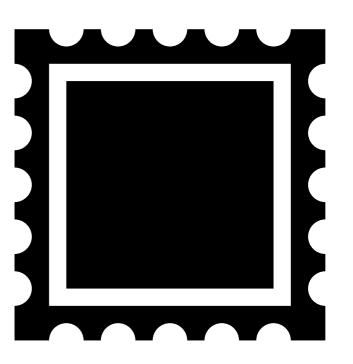
resource: challenge string

ext: always empty

rand: user-chosen random string

(mitigate multiple spending)

counter: a user-generated counter





Hashcash Solving the EWSN2024 Challenge

To solve the **challenge** "EWSN2024" with a difficulty of 16 bits:

- Create the string s = "1:16:240403:EWSN2024::WXhnFeDleN:1"
- Compute it's hash
 h(s) = 20db26cb6b1e17a2079fc3daf05fd01a7ed08cb5
 - Only the two most significant bits are zero (0x20=00100000 in binary)
 - (A SHA1 reference implementation is provided, others can be used)
- As per difficulty (16) this hash is <u>not</u> the solution, we increment the counter and retry hashing the new string until we find one with 16 leading zeros ...



Hashcash Solving the EWSN2024 Challenge

To solve the **challenge** "EWSN2024" with a difficulty of 16 bits:

- ...
- After 96620 attempts s="1:16:240403:EWSN2024::WXhnFeDleN:96620" has a hash h(s)=0000babe195c81d00ecec4cd8f0dc1572ebd46d4
 - This hash finally has the required 16 leading zeros (most significant bits of zero)
 - → "1:16:240403:EWSN2024::WXhnFeDleN:96620" is a solution to the challenge "EWSN2024" with a difficulty of 16 (others exist as well!)

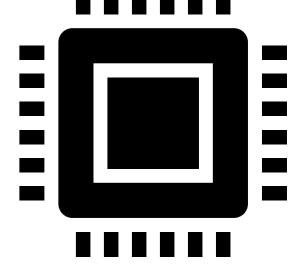


Hashcash

Reading Challenges and reporting Solutions

External I2C FRAM chip (MR44V100A) (128kB split into 2x64kB parts)

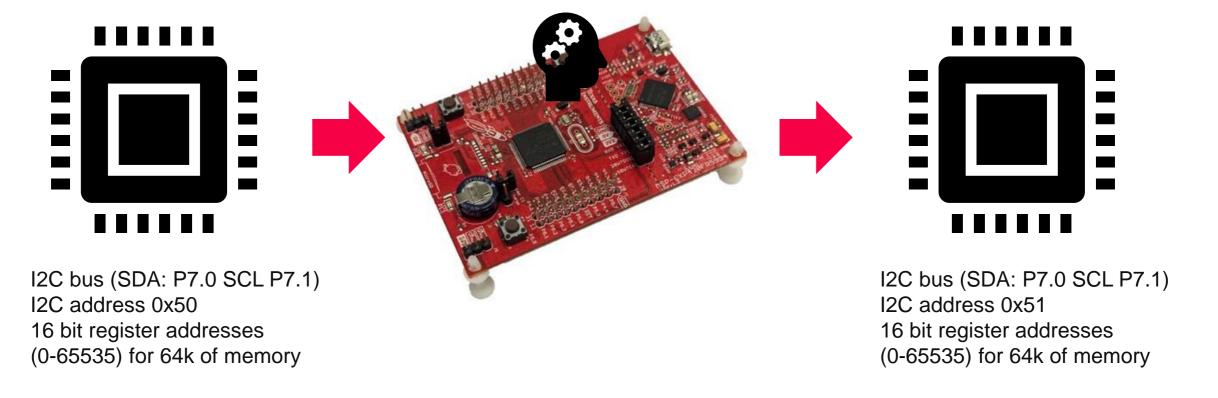
- A number of challenges are stored in the first part at address I2C 0x50 before startup by E-Cube → 64kB challenge image
- Each challenge has a fixed length: 1 byte of difficulty, 15 byte challenge
- Unused slots are zeroed (\0) out and indicate the end of the challenges (termination)
- At runtime the resulting solutions are stored on the second address (0x51) by the contestant's firmware
- At the end, E-Cube retrieves the entire FRAM content
 → 64kB solutions image





Competition Scenario Detailed Version

Read a challenge from the I2C FRAM (0x50), compute a valid solution using Hashcash (accounting for the intermittent energy supply), and write it to the solution as string I2C FRAM (0x51, as null aka \0 terminated string)





Competition Scenario Challenge Image Format

Upon start, the FRAM contains 16 byte challenges, with the first byte being the difficulty (e.g., 4) and the remaining 15 bytes the actual challenge string

```
Offset(h)
                           0.5
                              06
                                     0.8
                                        09
                                           0A
                                                                 Decoded text
00000000
                                                                 .FFcShC4ys7acaIo 1
00000010
                                                                 .1HIoSHTjffLlG4s 2
                                     6A 66
                                           66
                                               4C
00000020
                                                                 .33YY4ShERGAC435
                                     45
                                                                 .X4M3BjVfd4fjDY5
00000030
                              6A 56
                                    66
                                        64
                                            34 66
                                                                 .MWbsMq6iMVuj6Ht
00000040
                                     69
                                        4 D
                                                                 .06vgrDPim4oIxwb
00000050
                                     69
                                            34 6F
                                        6D
00000060
                                                                 .DUxQ2yQMfEp4eRJ
00000070
                                                                 .2d7NRpEjdOmCK8W
                                     6A
                                        64
                                            4 F
                                                                 .6cpcT6sajtUsbW0
08000000
                           54 36
                                  73
                                     61
                                        6A
                                           74
```

Note: While the challenges could be read in any order, solutions must be written in the same order as the challenges are in the FRAM - **skipping challenges is not allowed!**



Competition Scenario Solution Image Format

Upon computing a valid solution write the solution to the FRAM (second address 0x51, not 0x50!) using the well-known format, terminated by \0

```
Offset(h)
                       04 05
                              06 07 08 09
                                          0A 0B
                                                               Decoded text
00000000
                          34 30
                                    32 36
                                                               1:4:240326:FFcSh 1
                                 33
                                           3A 46
                                                               C4ys7acaIo::8XkE
00000010
                                    49
                                 61
                                       6F
                                           3A 3A 38 58
00000020
                              3A 32 34 30
                                                               :2.1:4:240326:1H 2
                                          33
                                                               IoSHTjffLlG4s::e
00000030
                           6A 66 66
                                    4C
                                       6C
                                          47
                                                               6+U:22.1:4:24032
00000040
                                    3A 34
00000050
                                                               6:33YY4ShERGAC43
                              34
                                    68
                                       45
                                           52
                                                               5::ZjjW:8.1:4:24
00000060
                                                               0326:X4M3BjVfd4f
00000070
                       3A 58 34
                                    33
                                           6A 56
                                 4 D
                                       42
                                                 66
00000080
                                                               jDY5::XXJA:19.1:
                 59 35
                       3A 3A 58
                                 58
                                    4A 41
                                          3A 31 39
```

Note: While the challenges have a fixed width (16 bytes) the solutions do not and thus \0 termination is **required**



- We provide a reference solution based the Arduino fork for the MSP430: Energia (https://energia.nu/)
 - https://iti-ecube.tugraz.at/wiki/images/b/b0/Hashcash_example.zip (builds with software serial enabled, change `#define DEBUG 1' to 0 to disable)
 - Does not include any awareness for the intermittent energy supply
 - Includes a register level I2C driver and SHA1 implementation
- This solution (while computing correct Hashcash solutions) serves to illustrate the task, it is not necessary (or expected) to use it as is! (e.g., you are free to take the parts that are useful to you and integrate them in your own solution)



- The code implements the three steps to solve the task outlined in the competition scenario (read challenge, solve challenge, write solution)
- 1. It reads a new challenge from the FRAM (starting at register address 0x0000)
 - The provided I2C driver is taken from TI's examples found at (https://dev.ti.com/)
 - As the read call is non-blocking, we busy wait until it is finished (this is a good point to improve upon in your design)



- The code implements the three steps to solve the task outlined in the competition scenario (read challenge, solve challenge, write solution)
- 2. Using Hashcash we generate a solution to the challenge we have just read
 - Uses two functions, generate and validate to implement Hashcash
 generate creates the string using the well known format and keeps track of the counter
 verify computes the hash and checks if the difficulty is satisfied
 - The generate call repeatedly calls verify with an ever increasing counter until a valid solution is found, which is then copied to the provided buffer (third argument)

generate (challenge bits, challenge string, solution string);



- The code implements the three steps to solve the task outlined in the competition scenario (read challenge, solve challenge, write solution)
- 3. Using the same I2C driver we write to solution back to the FRAM (on the second I2C address, not the one we read it from!)
 - Due to limitations in the driver, we need to write in blocks/chunks of 32 byte
 - Before each write, we check if there is still space left in the FRAM (up to 64kB)
 - We remember the last write position as well as the now incremented number of solved challenges to go back to step 1. and fetch the next challenge



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Competition Infrastructure: E-Cube Build upon D-Cube

- E-Cube is a new benchmarking infrastructure created specifically for the EWSN'24 competition (accessible via https://iti-ecube.tugraz.at/)
- The goal is to provide a low barrier of entry to those wanting to explore and evaluate different solutions for intermittent computing
 - A key focus of E-Cube is on automation (including automatic setup, execution, and evaluation of solutions)
 - Built upon D-Cube (https://iti-testbed.tugraz.at)
 (the benchmarking facility used in the EWSN Dependability Competition series)



E-Cube Hardware Overview

- Observer modules
 - Raspberry Pi 4
 - Connected to target battery-free device and SMU providing power
 - Uses analog switches to control SBW (programming), UART (logging)
- Target battery-free device
 - TI MSP430FR5994 Launchpad
 - 16MHz MSP430 CPU, 8KB SRAM
 - 256KB of embedded FRAM
- Power
 - Open-source SMU called uSMU
 (https://github.com/joeltroughton/uSMU/tree/main
)
 - Energy Traces will be distributed freely



TI MSP430FR5994 Launchpad



Open Hardware by Joel Troughton



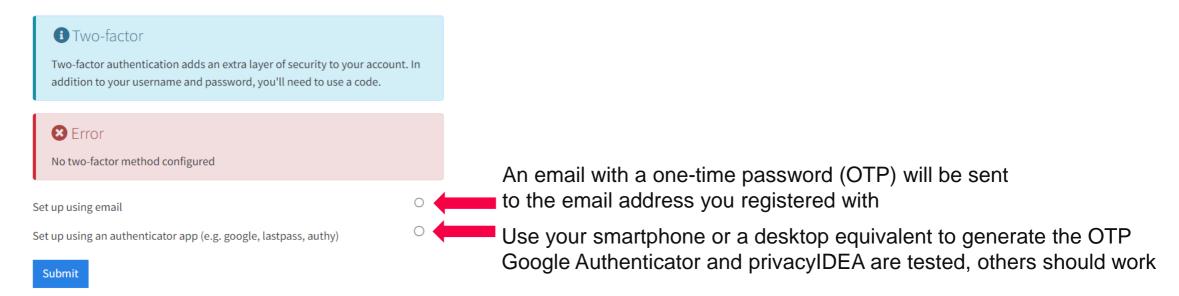
E-Cube Features

- Web-based user interface and several features:
 - Schedule new experiments (with selectable energy trace)
 - Watch measurements (voltage and current) during experiments live
 - Automatic evaluation after an experiment has finished
 - Retrieve FRAM images (64kB binary of challenges and solutions)
 - Download detailed evaluation results as PDF
 - Download serial logs (9600 baud UART RX:P2.1 TX:P2.0)
 (note: enabling serial logs affects the energy trace, use carefully!)



E-Cube Creating an Account

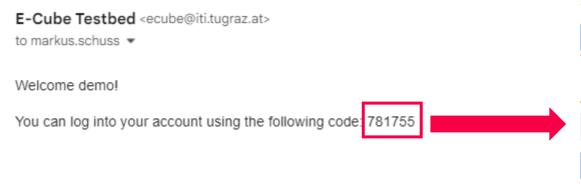
- Request an account by filling out the form https://iti-ecube.tugraz.at/wiki/index.php/Testbed_Access
- 2. Log in with the provided credentials https://iti-ecube.tugraz.at/auth/login
- 3. Follow the instructions to set up two-factor authentication

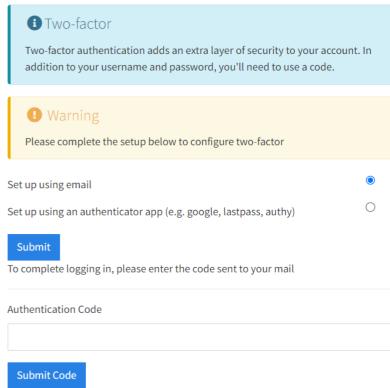




E-Cube Creating an Account

- To verify the selected option is working, enter the OTP you received via email or generated via the app
- For the app, you will be shown a QR code to scan with the app, email fallback can still be used







E-Cube Scheduling an Experiment

- Compile your solution for the MSP430FR5994 in the form of a .hex file (pure .bin/binary or .elf files are not supported by E-Cube)
- We provide a reference solution based the Arduino fork for the MSP430: Energia (https://energia.nu/)
 - https://iti-ecube.tugraz.at/wiki/images/b/b0/Hashcash_example.zip
 (builds with software serial enabled, change `#define DEBUG 1' to 0 to disable)
 - Does not include any awareness for the intermittent energy supply
 - Includes a register level I2C driver and SHA1 implementation
- Under File → Preference: check "Show verbose output during compilation"
 - The compiled firmware will be typically be placed at %TEMP%\arduino build xxxxxx (on Windows)

E-Cube Scheduling an Experiment

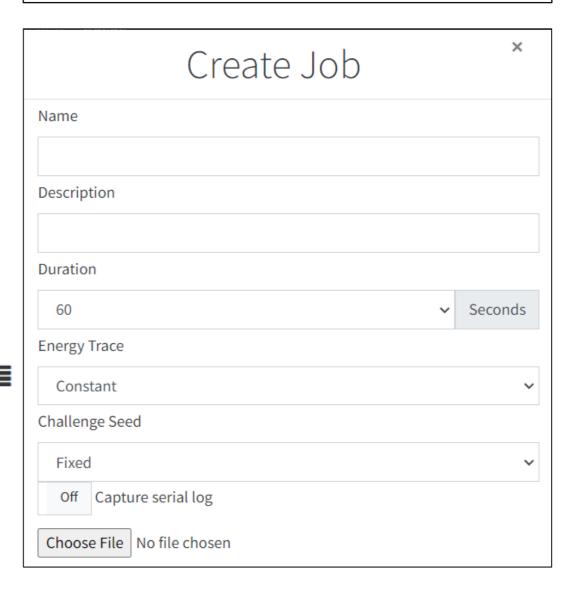


- On the E-Cube site under "Testbed Access", open "Access E-Cube" (https://iti-ecube.tugraz.at/overview)
- The testbed's main page (Jobs Overview) shows all experiments run on the testbed so far: as such, all results are public
 - The identity of groups is not published by the organizers, please do not disclose your group number either!
 - The detailed evaluation report as well as images are only available to the owner of the experiment, but performance metrics and coarse evaluation (Difficulty Breakdown) are visible to anyone
- Navigate to the "Queue Tab" on the top-bar of the testbed (not the Wiki!)



E-Cube Scheduling an Experiment

- To create a Job:
 - Provide a name and a short description (e.g., testing with parameter X=30)
 - Select a job duration in seconds
 - Select the energy trace (from a list)
 - The list will be updated continuously
 - Select the challenge image's seed
 - Fixed (0), Random, or custom (user)
 - Specify whether to log the serial output
 (note: this affects energy traces!)
 - → Wait for the testbed to run ► and evaluate ✓ your experiment





E-Cube Available Energy Traces



- A description as well as graphical representation are available for all current energy traces
 - You may download them in CSV format for local experiments
 - Over time, more traces will be added
 - For final evaluation, a new not seen before set of traces will be added
 - All traces are set to loop during an experiment (e.g., a 60s during a 600s will loop ten times)

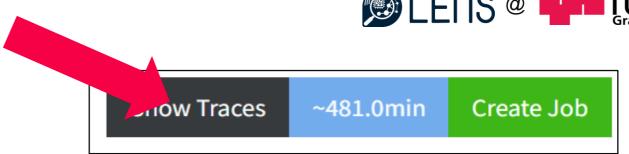
Show Trace 2 age of the state of the state

Traces

ID	Name	Description	Filename	ions
1	Constant	Trace for a constant 3.0V supply voltage (60s)	trace_1.csv	⊚ ±
2	Linear	Trace for a linear increasing supply voltage from 0V to 3.0V (60s)	trace_2.csv	⊙ ₹



E-Cube Available Energy Traces



- The traces available during the informal testing phase are fairly "nice"...
- Which traces to expect during the actual remote competition phase?
 - While we strife to limit ourselves to real-world traces such as https://github.com/TUDSSL/WARio/tree/master/traces we are constrained by the uSMU's replay capabilities (~40 samples per second, varying the full range of the MSP430 of 0-3.6V)
 - → As such, a theoretical "nightmare" trace would only pass brief bursts of power for 25ms at a time
- → Should you have a database of additional real-world traces (or just individual ones) we would be happy to integrate them into E-Cube (although we will not guarantee that they are used for the evaluation of the final firmware)



E-Cube Monitoring Experiments

E-Cube Jobs Overvic.. Queue

The Queue UI contains all the information about current, previous, and scheduled experiments Team name/number mpeting team number: de Jobs for team organizers **Show Traces** ~483.0min rogramming all nodes. ning all target nodes of Experiment currently in progress Show status **Flags** Description Scheduled Duration [s] **Actions** Name Trace Live measurements hashcash debug s=1 28800 183 Testrun Constant 14.04.24 11:59 ▶≣ hashcash debug s=1 **✓**≣ 182 Testrun Constant 12.04.24 19:47 28800 Download serial logs **✓**≣ 181 Testrun hashcash debug 12.04.24 11:51 Constant 28800 Show details (see Evaluation hashcash debug 12.04.24 11:51 **✓**≣ 180 Testrun Constant **Details** later on)



Experiment Results

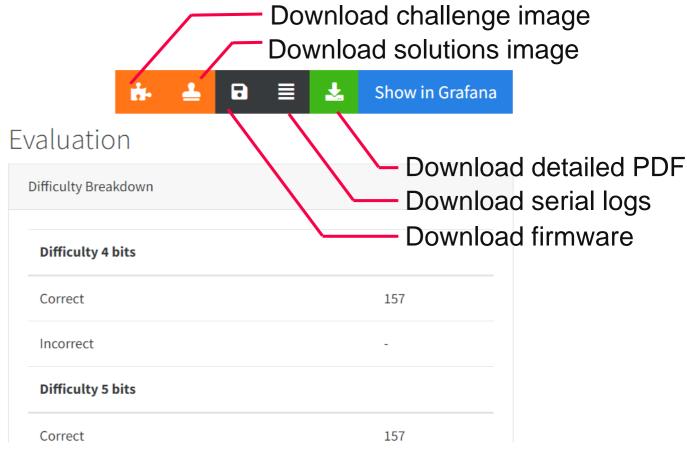
Automatic Evaluation of the Competition Scenario

E-Cube automatic evaluates each experiment once completed and returns

results in different forms

Job number Details for job 182 Information **Parameter** Value Team organizers Testrun Name debug_hashcash_example.ino.hex **Firmware** hashcash debug s=1 Description 28800s Duration

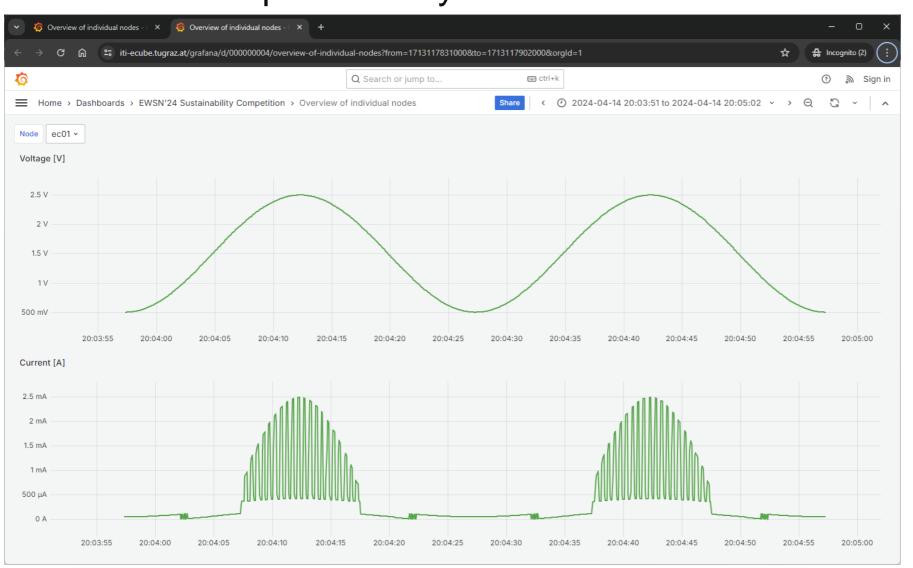
Job details, provided during experiment creation, start and end time of the experiment



Breakdown of correct and incorrect solutions based on the difficulty (only showing attempted difficulties, higher difficulties may be omitted)



Experiment Results Measurements powered by Grafana



Example: A simple LED-blink program that, as soon as sufficient voltage to start is available, will begin to toggle both the red and green LED on the board

Show in Grafana

Voltage according to the energy trace
A Schottky 1n5817 diode acts as "harvester", so the real voltage is ~0.2V less at the target

Current drawn by the MSP430 from the uSMU

Disclaimer: Current measurements during Energy Traces are on a best effort and may not be 100% accurate



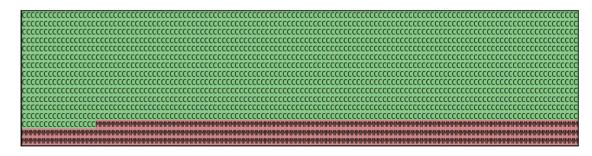
Experiment Results Detailed PDF Report

E-Cube returns a downloadable PDF containing all detailed (per challenge) results of the automatic evaluation

- 1. Quick view
 - To review the results at a glance
 - Colors to highlight correct & missed
- 2. Correctness of the solved challenges
 - Detailed breakdown per field
 - Showing which solution were valid, invalid, out of order, etc.

Evaluation for Job 182

Quick view



Solutions

	Ver.	Diff.	Date	Resource	Random	Counter	Reported Solution	Valid
0	1	4	240326	FFcShC4ys7acaIo	8XkE	2	1:4:240326:FFcShC4ys7acaIo::8XkE:2	Valid [0]
1	1	4	240326	1HIoSHTjffLlG4s	e6+U	22	1:4:240326:1HIoSHTjffLlG4s::e6+U:22	Valid [1]
2	1	4	240326	33YY4ShERGAC435	ZjjW	8	1:4:240326:33YY4ShERGAC435::ZjjW:8	Valid [2]
3	1	4	240326	X4M3BjVfd4fjDY5	XXJA	19	1:4:240326:X4M3BjVfd4fjDY5::XXJA:19	Valid [3]
4	1	4	240326	MWbsMg6iMVuj6Ht	qpS-	25	1:4:240326:MWbsMg6iMVuj6Ht::qpS-:25	Valid [4]
5	1	4	240326	06vgrDPim4oIxwb	MtjD	24	1:4:240326:06vgrDPim4oIxwb::MtjD:24	Valid [5]
6	1	4	240326	DUxQ2yQMfEp4eRJ	w4w8	7	1:4:240326:DUxQ2yQMfEp4eRJ::w4w8:7	Valid [6]
7	1	4	240326	2d7NRpEjd0mCK8W	i8HR	4	1:4:240326:2d7NRpEjd0mCK8W::i8HR:4	Valid [7]



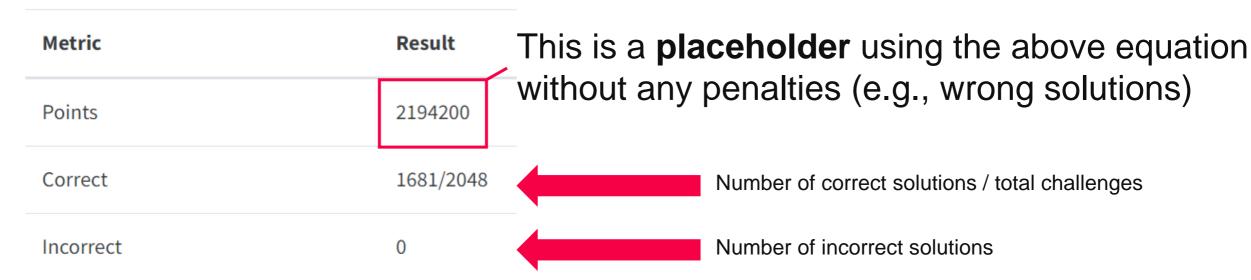
Experiment Results Performance Metrics

For each solved challenge, points *p* are awarded based on the difficulty:

$$p = \sum_{i} p_{i} \text{ with } p_{i} = 2^{bits-1}$$

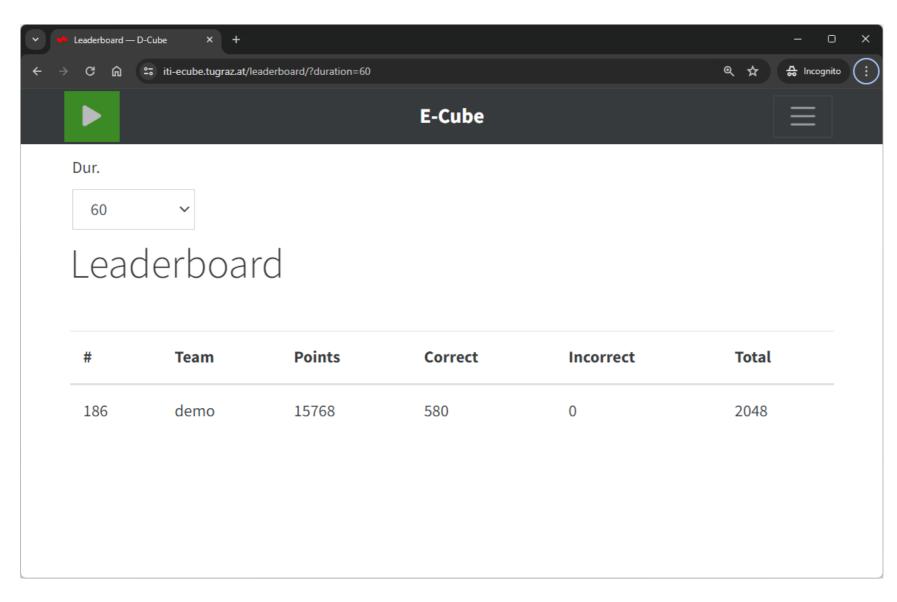
So a challenge of difficulty 1 bit = 1 point, 2 bit = 2 points, 3 bit = 4 points... **Disclaimer**: Currently incorrect challenges do not provide a penalty, this will change during later stages!

Performance Metrics





Experiment Results Leaderboard



Publicly visible leaderboard will be added in the "Remote Competition" phase **after** the informal testing has finished and the number of competing teams is fixed.

Lists the current best run for each team given a duration (and if needed other filters)



Contacts

- E-Cube is being improved and upgraded on-the-go!
- We look forward to interact with you!
- Questions? Feedback?
 - https://discord.gg/baBP2GbUvb
 Feel free to hang out and exchange ideas!
 - markus.schuss@tugraz.at
- Other general inquiries?
 - ecube@iti.tugraz.at

