The 8th World Sustainability Forum, coordinated by MDPI under the patronage of the University of Basel, the University of Geneva and the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (UN SDSN), is an annual event that brings together researchers, policymakers, and practitioners to discuss solutions to global sustainability challenges. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 event was held virtually, focusing on how to maintain momentum and guidance in sustainability efforts.

As part of the forum, the Virtual Festival for Our Planet was announced, featuring speakers such as Jeffrey Sachs (SDSN), Adenike Akinsemolu (Green Institute), and Hamad Bin Khalifa. The festival aimed to highlight the urgent need for accelerated action on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to reverse the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The event also featured the Global Innovation Fund, an open innovation competition seeking to invest in social innovations that aim to improve the lives of those living on less than USD 5 PPP per day. Innovations in any sector were welcome as long as they demonstrated a clear path to scaling up for impact.

The Civic Innovation Challenge was another highlight, a research and action competition in the Smart and Sustainable Cities domain. The challenge aimed to accelerate progress towards the SDGs by fostering innovation and entrepreneurship.

In terms of funding, the Mason Online Pandemic Modeling Forum was a joint initiative between Mason and the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), supported by a grant from the National Science Foundation. The forum aimed to share knowledge and best practices in pandemic modeling, with experts from around the world sharing their insights on the effects of the SARS-CoV-2 virus and COVID-19 disease.

Additional information can be found on the Mason Online Pandemic Modeling Forum website, including details on how to register and participate.

For more information on upcoming events and funding opportunities, visit the Mason Research Development Services website or contact the appropriate office for assistance.