ALAIN HUBERT TO RECEIVE PRESTIGIOUS BELGICA PRIZE ON JUNE 10TH



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Alain Hubert, Founder and President of the International Polar Foundation, is set to receive the Belgica Prize at a ceremony to be held at the Royal Academy for Sciences and the Arts of Belgium the afternoon of Monday, June 10th, alongside French glaciologist Dr Jérôme Chappellaz.

The highly anticipated ceremony will begin at 4:00 pm and will feature presentations from both laureates.

The prestigious Belgica Prize is awarded every five years to persons who have made exceptional contributions to polar science during their careers.

Alain Hubert will receive the prize in recognition of his record-breaking expeditions to the poles, realising the world's first zero-emission polar research station, the Princess Elisabeth Antarctica, and helping to establish important scientific research programmes at this groundbreaking station.

The construction of the Princess Elisabeth Antarctica has breathed new life into Belgian polar research. The zero-emission station not only significantly reduces the environmental footprint of conducting scientific research in Antarctica, but it also regularly attracts world-class scientists from both Belgium and around the

world, working in close collaboration to better understand our planet and its climate in fields such as glaciology, atmospheric sciences, biology, and the geosciences.

“It has been an honour and a privilege to have been able to contribute to the tradition of Belgian polar exploration and international polar research begun by Adrien de Gerlache, and to have helped Belgian polar researchers to benefit from a platform that fully exhibits their very considerable scientific prowess,” Mr Hubert commented upon learning that he will receive the prize.

Dr Jérôme Chappellaz, who is currently affiliated with the EPFL (Ecole polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne) in Switzerland, is receiving the award for his analysis of ice cores from Greenland and Antarctica, which have made it possible for scientists to reconstruct atmospheric methane concentrations over the last 800,000 years.

The EPFL is currently involved in a number of research projects being undertaken at the Princess Elisabeth Antarctica.

This year will be the twelfth time the Belgica Prize will be awarded. It was initially established in 1904 by royal statute to commemorate the first overwintering expedition to Antarctica aboard the *Belgica* research vessel, led by Belgian Navy Lieutenant Adrien de Gerlache de Gomery in 1897-99, which was also the first international research expedition to Antarctica. The first recipients of the prize were members of the *Belgica* expedition crew and the diverse team of scientists who contributed to the quantity of scientific information collected during that voyage and during the year the ship spent in the sea ice in Antarctica.

Since 1963 the prize has been awarded every five years in recognition of the work of polar scientists active in Antarctica. A variety of researchers from Belgium and other countries have received the prestigious award. Notable winners include the Belgian Antarctic research expedition of 1957-58 (which began construction of Belgium’s King Baudouin research station), Edgard Picciotto (Geologist from the Université libre de Bruxelles who took part in several Belgian and American Antarctic research expeditions in the 1950s and 60s), Claude Lorius (Glaciologist and former President of the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research), David John Drewry (former Director of the British Antarctic Survey), Dominique Raynaud (Glaciologist at the Centre national de recherche scientifique in France and 2007 Nobel Peace Prize winner), and Thomas Stocker (climatologist at the University of Bern).