Call for Submissions Launched for Second Laurence Trân Arctic Futures Award

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The International Polar Foundation and the Trân Family Foundation have the pleasure to announce the call for submissions for the second annual Laurence Trân Arctic Futures Award.

Established in 2022 by the Trân Family Foundation and the International Polar Foundation (IPF), the Laurence Trân Arctic Futures Award seeks to promote and support sustainable innovation in the Arctic. To encompass the Arctic's diversity and infinite possibilities, a prize of 7500 Euro is allocated to one person or project every year at the annual Arctic Futures Symposium in Brussels, Belgium, which will take place on November 28th and 29th this year.

The winner of the award will have the opportunity to travel to Brussels to present their project at the symposium in-person, giving them a public platform in the Capital of Europe to discuss their project and the opportunity to network with EU policymakers and stakeholders from across the Arctic.

A designated panel of experts will give the award to the project or entrepreneur that best embodies the future of innovation in the Arctic. This award serves to fund and develop the business of the winning project.

“To remain resilient and attractive places to live, Arctic regions need young entrepreneurs,” according to Paul Trân Van Thinh, who represents the family whose foundation is financing the award. “We’re proud to help the next generation of innovators develop business ideas that will bring added value to the Arctic communities where they operate.”

The first Arctic startup to win the award in 2022, Containing Greens SE from Luleå, Sweden, has benefited greatly from the award. Not only has the prize money allowed the business to upscale, but the company has also benefited from the International Polar Foundation’s network of Arctic stakeholder contacts to gain additional visibility.

The startup uses excess heat generated by data centres in northern Sweden to grow produce for local consumption, thus reducing the need to import vegetables and herbs from further south and making local Arctic communities more self-sufficient and food secure.

“Containing Greens are truly grateful for the contribution and support from Laurence Trân Arctic Futures Award,” the company’s spokesperson, Andreas Eklund, stated. “As a direct outcome of the contribution, it has encouraged us and provided the means to expand our production to a larger scale. The expansion will allow us to further explore waste heat cultivation techniques as a core foundation of our company and allow us to produce five times more locally-grown vegetables and herbs compared to our previous capacity. For the northernmost area of Sweden, this development will help provide an easily accessible circular option for locally-grown produce, reducing the reliance on imported groceries and minimising our carbon footprint.”

The Arctic Economic Council, an independent organisation based in Tromsø, Norway that facilitates Arctic business-to-business activities, is glad that another source of funding is available for young entrepreneurs in the Arctic.

“We need more young entrepreneurs in the Arctic, and this award supports this objective,” argued Executive Director at the Arctic Economic Council, Mads Frederiksen. “Last year’s winner is a role model of what can be done when combining the Arctic’s natural resources with technology and adding talented young people who can execute an idea. We need more role models to inspire other entrepreneurs in a region where mainly larger industries dominate. The Arctic is not only at the top of the world, it is also top of mind for many policymakers, so now it is even more important to foster and showcase sustainable innovation in the North!”

Conditions

The award is open to young entrepreneurs under 35 whose business is registered in and has its primary activity in the Arctic (one of the regions specified in the application description)*.

A jury of experts from across the Arctic specialised in from organisations specialised in fostering young entrepreneurs will select the winning candidate based on the following five criteria:

- How environmentally sustainable the business is
- To what extent the business helps the Arctic community where it is based and the broader Arctic (social sustainability)
- How innovate the business idea or model is
- How mature the business is (scalability potential, cross-border expansion)
- To what extent the Laurance Trân Arctic Futures Award will have a positive impact on the business and the local Arctic community where it operates

The award will be given on November 29th in Brussels during the second day of the 2023 Arctic Futures Symposium.

All applicants meeting the criteria outlined on the dedicated award page on the Arctic Futures Symposium website may apply. Applicants not meeting the criteria will not be considered for the award.

Applications must be received no later than **Friday, September 8th, 2023 at 23:59 (11:59 pm), Central European Summer Time (GMT+2)**. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

If you have any questions about the Laurence Trân Arctic Futures Award, please contact us at events@polarfoundation.org.

The International Polar Foundation and the Trân Family would like to recognise the Director of the Arctic Economic Council Mads Frederiksen and the members of the award selection committee for taking time out from their busy schedules to assist with the grading of candidates for this award. We would also like to thank the Arctic Futures Symposium partners for helping to spread the word about this initiative.

The Laurence Trân Foundation and history of the award

The Laurence Trân Arctic Futures Award is named after the oldest daughter of Mr and Mrs Trân Van Thinh, Laurence Trân, who died at the age of 26. Laurence was a gifted young woman who was passionate about dance and literature, and was a talented writer.

In loving memory of their daughter, in 1986 her parents and close friends created the Laurence Trân Foundation, which awarded a biannual literature prize aimed at young writers who, through their work, brought cultures together, defended freedoms, and showed solidarity with the marginalised.

After thirty years and more than twenty literary awards given, the Trân family decided the focus of the prize should shift towards more urgent contemporary issues such as environmental protection and climate change. After meeting IPF Founder and President Alain Hubert, the Trân family decided to join forces with IPF to create the Laurence Trân Arctic Futures Award to support young Arctic entrepreneurs working to find sustainable solutions to the challenges they face in the Arctic.

About the International Polar Foundation

The International Polar Foundation (IPF) was established in 2002. It acts as an interface between science and society by encouraging scientific research, infrastructure support, and awareness on the importance of the Polar Regions, including their contribution to the understanding of the global dynamics that drive climate change.

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