

PRESS RELEASE

ROLEX ANNOUNCES FINALISTS OF INAUGURAL YOUNG LAUREATES PROGRAMME

GENEVA, 15 February, 2010 – Twenty-seven young innovators have been named as finalists in the inaugural edition of the Rolex Awards for Enterprise: Young Laureates Programme, it was announced today.

An independent jury will meet in Geneva in March to examine the projects put forward by these 27 budding pioneers and to select a total of five Young Laureates whose names will be revealed in April. The five winners will each receive US\$50,000 to implement their projects.

Aged between 18 and 30, the finalists were singled out from almost 200 applicants and come from 16 countries worldwide. Their inventive ideas to solve tomorrow's challenges in the fields of science and health, applied technology, exploration, the environment and cultural preservation cover an impressive array of projects. These range from recycling waste in order to pay for health care in Africa, and using mobile phones to encourage volunteerism on a massive scale, to developing an airborne medical service for remote parts of India.

An awards presentation will be held in November at the new Rolex Learning Center, a cutting-edge knowledge hub located at one of Europe's top-ranking institutions for technology and computer sciences, the Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL), in Switzerland.

"For the first time in 12 years, we will hold our awards presentation in Switzerland," said Rebecca Irvin, director of philanthropic programmes at Rolex. "The EPFL is the ideal venue for the event as the institution promotes innovation and has long-standing links with Rolex. We share many of the same values: quality, excellence and technical expertise. In fact, many of the 300 engineers who work at Rolex are EPFL graduates and Rolex frequently commissions research from EPFL laboratories."

Adrienne Corboud Fumagalli, EPFL's vice president for Innovation and Technology Transfer, is a member of the jury that will choose the Young Laureates in March. Dr Corboud Fumagalli is a leading authority on technology and is active in spearheading visionary research projects that combine innovative business practices with the latest scientific advances.

The jury also includes eminent scientists, explorers, environmentalists and other specialists who are known internationally.

“I welcome the opportunity to work with such an illustrious group of people who are helping to foster the careers of young innovators,” Adrienne Corboud Fumagalli said of her participation. “Our research at EPFL promotes ingenuity and original thinking, in very much the same spirit as the Young Laureates Programme.”

Note to Editors:

Young Laureate Finalists

Most of the 27 finalists are between 25 and 30 years old. More than a third are from North America, while the remaining finalists are almost evenly divided between Africa, Asia/Pacific, Europe and Latin America, with one from the Middle East. Many of them are leading projects outside their home countries, so their work overall shows a wide range of geographical diversity.

Of the subject categories covered by the finalists' projects, science and health is most popular, followed by the environment, cultural preservation, applied technology and exploration.

Young Laureates Programme

Launched in early 2009, the Young Laureates Programme enables young pioneers to implement groundbreaking projects and bright ideas at a critical juncture in their careers. As well as receiving funds to implement their projects, award recipients will also profit from a growing educational support system, the network of Rolex specialists and achievers, including more than 100 former Laureates, who will be encouraged to provide expertise and guidance.

The Young Laureates Programme is an expansion of the Rolex Awards for Enterprise, which were established in 1976: The Awards will continue to be presented once every two years, the original Rolex Awards for Enterprise alternating with the Young Laureates Programme. Nominations for the 2010 Young Laureates Programme have now closed. In 2012, five Laureates and five Associate Laureates of the Rolex Awards will again be chosen. Anyone of any age or nationality can apply for the 2012 Rolex Awards. Application details will appear on the website in mid-2010.

For further information, visit: rolexawards.com, or contact:

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YOUNG LAUREATES PROGRAMME: 2010 FINALISTS AND PROJECTS

Mr Hadi AL HIKMANI (29), Oman: Train young, local conservationists to save the Arabian Leopard in Oman

Ms Erdenechimeg BAASANDAMBA (27), Mongolia: Promote environmental awareness in Mongolia through an educational outreach programme

Ms Laurianne BRUNEAU (28), France: Document and preserve rock art in Ladakh, India

Mr Preven CHETTY (28), South Africa: Produce a documentary about the Umgeni River in South Africa, using mobile phones

Ms Caitlin COHEN (24), United States: Recycle plastic trash to help fund health care in Mali

Mr Jacob COLKER (26), United States: Deliver micro-volunteering opportunities through mobile phones

Mr Mariano COLOMBO (29), Argentina: Design accessible instruments as a music therapy resource for handicapped people

Mr Filippo CUTTICA (26), Italy: Develop and test an inexpensive system for landmine detection

Mr Fernando Garcia DORY (29), Spain: Develop a shepherd school and cultural centre to preserve pastoralism in Spain

Ms Reese FERNANDEZ (24), Philippines: Establish an innovation and social entrepreneurship centre in the Philippines

Mr Shawn FRAYNE (29), United States: Establish an invention incubator in Haiti to develop wind energy technology

Mr Nnaemeka IKEGWUONU (27), Nigeria: Develop an interactive rural radio service for farmers in Nigeria

Ms Claudia Roxana JUÁREZ LÓPEZ (28), Mexico: Preserve and promote natural, cochineal dye production in Mexico

Ms Samantha LARSON (21), United States: Encourage young climbers through a book and a foundation

Mr Daniel MacCOMBIE (24), United States: Market indigenous herbal tea from Ecuador to benefit the Amazon

Ms Deborah McCracken (29), Canada: Expand medical care in the Mbeya region of Tanzania

Mr Grant MOORE (27), United States: Provide safety eyewear to workers in Nepal

Mr Tobias NOWLAN (22), United Kingdom: Study and preserve a coral reef in Indonesia

Ms Victoria PAM (29), Nigeria: Document and prevent parasitic infections in northern Nigeria

Mr Hari PRABHAKAR (25), United States: Develop an airborne healthcare service for remote parts of West Bengal, India

Ms Anna ROSE (26), Australia: Develop a climate change leadership training programme for young Australians

Mr Alexander SRODES (19), United States: Promote turtle conservation through a children's book and an education campaign

Mr Piyush TEWARI (29), India: Establish a network to ensure rapid medical care to road accident victims in Delhi, India

Ms Bruktawit TIGABU (28), Ethiopia: Develop a health education television programme for children in Ethiopia

Ms Judith Del Ángel VELÁZQUEZ SANTOPIETRO (26), Mexico: Promote Mexico's indigenous languages through a magazine and radio programme

Mr Travis WINN (26), United States: Establish a research and ecotourism centre to protect the rivers in Qinghai province in China

Mr Daniel ZOUGHBIE (25), United States: Develop micro-clinics to manage diabetes and HIV in Jordan, Kenya and India