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ASEAN-US Science Prize for Women 2019 Official Prize Rules

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Notification of National Finalists: 19 July 2019

Estimated Notification of Winner and Awards Ceremony: 10 October 2019

I. Introduction

The United States Government, in partnership with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and UL, aim to strengthen ASEAN science and technology capacity and gender equality and improvement through an annual ASEAN-U.S. Science Prize for Women (“Prize”). The 2019 Prize will provide promising, ASEAN-based, early-to mid-career female scientists with recognition awards from ASEAN and the United States government for their academic and professional achievements.

The 2019 Prize will emphasize the role of female scientists who use their work to better society in sustainable ways and act as role models for other women working in and pursuing careers in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

This year, the Prize theme will focus on the **circular economy** in the ASEAN region. The applicants will have to clearly demonstrate not only a strong understanding of the circular economy, but specifically how her research, technology or business model relates to the prize topic of circular economy. They must demonstrate how their work targets one or more of the following goals:

- Make the most efficient use of resources
- Create best available techniques for sustainable production
- Create best environmental management practice
- Promote the activities to end waste, ecolabel/green public procurement/eco design and others

Along with recognition for their achievements, the winners are eligible to receive cash awards of \$20,000 (first place) and \$5,000 (honourable mention), as well as separate provisions for travel and lodging to attend a pitch competition during the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Science, Technology & Innovation (AMMSTI) and awards ceremony in Singapore on 10 October 2019.

II. Eligibility

In order to participate in this Prize, applicants must meet all of the following criteria. An applicant must be a/an:

- Female professional working in applied science
- Citizen and resident of an ASEAN Member State
 - ASEAN Member States include: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam.
- Holder of a PhD or equivalent degree (i.e., a PhD level but with a different degree label)
- 40 years of age or younger at the time of submission
- Expert / practitioner in this year’s theme of circular economy

III. Prize Theme

The current population of ASEAN is currently around 640 million, and it is expected to grow to 660 million by 2025. There will be an increasing demand for all kinds of resources, some of which are renewable but many are not. Without strong action, the combination of population and economic growth tied to fixed resources may limit opportunities for future generations.

One approach to address this issue is to embrace the concept of the **circular economy**, which is defined as:

An economic development model that entails decoupling economic activity from the consumption of finite resources, and designing waste out of the system. Underpinned by a transition to renewable energy sources, the circular model builds economic, natural, and social capital. It is based on three principles: (i) design out waste and pollution; (ii) keep products and materials in use; and (iii) regenerate natural systems.¹

The concept of **circular economy** is not new. Long time ago people converted unused clothes into papers, fed their domestic pets with waste food, and built new houses with the remains of old houses². Nonetheless, the one thing that makes our situation today different is the type of material used. Currently, many materials that are discarded after being consumed are not degradable, and with the increasing amount, they have and will continue to pose a threat to the environment and people, and eventually to our economy. This is what happens in the **linear economy**, where materials that have been used at least one time will go directly to the waste bin. The case of plastic bags being thrown away after being used only one time is arguably the worst example of this problem.

Embracing the circular economy will require changing the way we do business, produce and consume. It requires that everyone in the economy reuse, recycle, refurbish, and reduce their utilization of the resources provided by the environment. From the producers' side, it may go all the way to redesigning the products and production process. Essentially, it requires some thinking and strategizing in ensuring more efficient use of the inputs and resources, at a larger scale.

While the circular economy can reduce environmental damage, it can also bring about significant economic benefits. A recent study³ found that implementing the methods of circular economy in the European Union may result in an annual net economic benefit of €1,8 trillion and cost saving of €600 billion a year by 2030. The study found that most of the European Union still follow the linear model: make, use and discard. Shifting to the circular model will incur some significant costs at the beginning, but if managed well, will pay off in the longer run.

¹ www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org

² <https://countercurrents.org/2018/12/07/how-circular-is-the-circular-economy/>

³ <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/sustainability-and-resource-productivity/our-insights/europes-circular-economy-opportunity>

The European Union has been very active in transitioning to circular economic ways of doing business and consuming products. The benefits of improved environment, cleaner air, more efficient use of resources, and more sustainable economies are well known. ASEAN will greatly benefit from circular economic methods when collaborating with all stakeholders to achieve economic integration by ensuring that the whole process can bring about long-term benefits for everyone.

Against this backdrop, the 2019 ASEAN-U.S. Science Prize for Women will focus on circular economy, and emphasize how the circular economy can bring about positive outcomes for ASEAN. The Prize seeks female applicants who are engaged in research related to the circular economy in the region and who are role models for other women working in and pursuing careers in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields.

IV. Funding

The total amount of Prize funding available for winners will be \$25,000, and will be provided by UL. The Prize administrators anticipate awarding \$20,000 to the first-place winner and \$5,000 to the honorable mention. Separate provisions will be made for travel and lodging expenses as well as meal provisions for the winners to attend a pitch competition and awards ceremony in October 2019 during the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Science, Technology and Innovation (AMMSTI) in Singapore. Awards will be disbursed to the winners shortly after the ceremony.

V. Application Requirements

In order to be considered for the Prize, applicants should submit a **completed application form** online at: www.scienceprize4women.asean.org, or you can fill out and submit the application form (MS Word) which you can download from the website. If you are having trouble with your form, please contact scienceprize4women@gmail.com. Forms must be completed in their entirety. Along with a completed application, candidates must submit their **curriculum vitae (CV)** to the application platform.

Candidates must also have two letters of recommendation submitted on their behalf. The prize administrators recommend:

- A letter of recommendation submitted by an academic or professional contact
- A letter of support submitted by a mentee or other women who have been impacted by the applicant

Letters of recommendation must be sent directly to scienceprize4women@gmail.com by the referees with the candidate's name in the subject line. Letters must be received by **11:59 PM GMT +7 on 7 June 2019.**

Those three documents (application form, CV and two letters of recommendation) must be presented by the submission deadline for an application to be considered.

VI. Important Dates

- Deadline of submission: **11:59 pm GMT +7 on 7 June 2019.**
- Announcement of country finalist: **19 July 2019**
- Announcement of two winners: **September 2019**
- Award ceremony: **10 October 2019**

VII. Review Process

There will be **four phases** to the selection process:

1. Eligibility review to ensure all applicants meet the basic prize criteria
2. Selection of country finalists
3. Selection of the two finalists who will compete in a head-to-head pitch competition at an ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Science, Technology & Innovation (AMMSTI)
4. Winner and honorable mention selection

Please note that applicants **will only be notified if they make it to the country-finalist phase.**

A. Selection of Country Finalists

A committee of members from all the partner organizations will review all eligible applications. Prize administrators anticipate narrowing down the pool of applicants to **one finalist per country** for each of the ten ASEAN Member States (the selection process will be conducted by each AMS). Selection will be based on the evaluation criteria below. The decision of the committee is final. Prize administrators will notify each country finalist of her status by **19 July 2019**. Upon receiving word of her selection, each finalist will be asked to submit a short video to aid in the final Judging Committee's decision. Finalists will have **two weeks** from the time of notice to submit videos. These videos will also be utilized in a social media campaign to highlight the work of each of the anticipated ten finalists. Finalists will receive further detail of what should be included in their video upon notice of finalist status.

Evaluation Criteria

The criteria presented below has been tailored to the requirements of this Prize. A total of 100 points are possible with the completion of the application.

Scientific Excellence (50 pts)

1. Applicant clearly demonstrates not only a strong understanding of what sustainable development is all about, but specifically how her research, technology or business model relates to the prize topic of circular economy. Applicant demonstrates how their work targets one or more of the following goals:

- Improve efficiency of organizations/companies
- Demonstrate lower use of resources
- Create sustainability and improve environmental standards
- Show the benefits of circular economy on the overall economy

Applicant provides concrete examples of her work. **(20 pts)**

2. Applicant provides examples of relevant and impactful awards or merits for her work. Higher scores will be reserved for well-established awards. **(10 pts)**
3. Applicant's work appears to be highly esteemed. Think about: Has she been featured in media placements, policy briefs, or academic journals? Does her work suggest that she is an influencer in the space? **(10 pts)**
4. Applicant outlines clear areas for growth potential in her career. Applicant demonstrates excitement, passion, and motivation for her field of work. Higher scores will be reserved for applicants who specifically demonstrate how they'd like to continue to improve in the field of circular economy. **(10 pts)**

Mentoring, inspiring, and supporting women and up-and-coming female members of the STEM community (25 pts)

1. Applicant shows clear level of involvement in mentoring, supporting and/or empowering female students, colleagues or other women in STEM. Applicant provides specific examples when possible and demonstrates passion and drive to create a gender-inclusive STEM environment. **(10 pts)**
2. Applicant clearly demonstrates how her work accounts for gender in the practice of circular economy strategies. She explains how her work specifically targets or thinks about women have been able to become a change agent in this area. **(9pts)**
3. Applicant provides examples of how she strives to improve opportunities for women in STEM. Applicant should note any involvement or membership in/with organizations focused on gender inclusivity. Applicant provides details about the organization and her unique role/contribution. **(6 pts)**

Global Citizen (25 pts)

1. Applicant shows a strong connection between her work and improving the implementation of circular economy methods in ASEAN as a region. Applicant demonstrates how she uses science, technology and innovation to achieve these goals. **(10 pts)**
2. Applicant demonstrates an active role in scientific collaboration with scientists/scientific communities of practice across ASEAN to improve the regional value chain as a whole. Higher points will be awarded to applicants who provide concrete examples of collaboration. **(9 pts)**

3. Applicant shows how her work impacts her local community, country and the greater ASEAN region. Applicant provides examples where possible. Applicant sees a larger role for her work across the greater ASEAN region and the world. **(6 pts)**

B. Selection of Final Two

A committee of members from all the partner organizations will determine the top two finalists who are eligible to travel to the pitch competition in Singapore in October 2019 based on the candidates' original applications, as well as their video submissions. The committee's decision will be final. The two finalists will be notified of their selection and aided in their travel arrangements by mid- August 2019.

C. Selection of Winner -- Pitch Competition

The top two finalists will be invited to attend an ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Science, Technology & Innovation (AMMSTI) on 10 October 2019. They will compete in a head-to-head pitch competition, which will determine the winner and honourable mention of the prize. Finalists will be required to give **no more than a three-minute presentation** of their work and answer questions from the Judging Committee.

D. Transfer of Award

The transfer of the Prize funds will come directly from UL. The winner will receive \$20,000 and the honorable mention will receive \$5,000.

VIII. Publicity Consent

By submitting an entry application or accepting a prize, each candidate grants to USAID, the U.S. Mission to ASEAN, ASEAN, UL, and IGNITE the irrevocable right without any further notice, review or consent to print, publish, broadcast, distribute, and use, worldwide in any media now known or hereafter developed including, but not limited to, the World Wide Web, in perpetuity and throughout the universe, including without limitation, the entry and candidate's name, portrait, picture, voice, likeness, image or statement about the contest, and biographical information as news or publicity or information and for trade, advertising, public relations and promotional purposes without any further compensation, that are related to or pertaining to the 2019 ASEAN-US Science Prize for Women.

IX. Disclaimers

- The Prize administrators may cancel solicitation and not award
- The Prize administrators may reject any or all responses received
- Issuance of solicitation does not constitute an award commitment

- The Prize administrators reserve the right to disqualify any application based on a candidate's failure to follow solicitation instructions
- The Prize administrators will not compensate applicants for response to a solicitation
- The Prize administrators reserve the right to issue an award based on initial evaluation of applications without further discussion