The seven laureates of the 2019 edition of the Cartier Women’s Initiative were revealed at the annual Awards ceremony held at Fort Mason Center for Arts & Culture in San Francisco, the heart of the global start-up and innovation scene.

With the theme, “The Ripple Effect”, the 2019 ceremony paid tribute to entrepreneurs who serve as catalysts for change and growth within their communities and the broader society.

The 2019 ceremony programme started with the “Meet & Learn” sessions led by Influential speakers (among them Mélanie Laurent). The discussions focused on key topics such as women empowerment and the ecological transition with regards to economic transformation, while allowing participants to get to know each other better, to exchange ideas and to learn actionable tips and insights.

Just like last year in Singapore, the ceremony hosted a specially curated TED session featuring a series of live talks by microbiologist Karen Lloyd, urban landscape architect Kotchakorn Voraakhom, rural social worker and founder of Bodhi Tree Foundation Ashweetha Shetty and artistic duo Climbing PoeTree. Facilitated by Helen Walters, Head of Curation at TED, the discussion focused on how to make concrete contributions towards effective and affordable solutions to today’s most pressing challenges.

The TED session was followed by the Cartier Women’s Initiative Awards ceremony hosted by Hillary Kerr, co-founder and content editor of the multi-media brand Clique. Before announcing the 2019 laureates, two inspiring Panel discussions took place gathering, first, Lupita Nyong’o, Kenyan-Mexican actress, Maria Schriver, American journalist and writer and Cyrille Vigneron, President & CEO of Cartier International who keenly exchanged about women’s empowerment and gender equality. The second conversation took place between Oulimata Sarr (Acting Regional Director of UN Women for West and Central Africa), Kelsey Robinson (Partner at McKinsey & Company in San Francisco) and Ilian Mihov (Dean of INSEAD) and looked at practical realities linked to women’s entrepreneurship and women in the workforce at large.

Cyrille Vigneron then announced the seven laureates selected by an independent international jury amongst nearly 2900 applicants from over 142 countries (including Japan and Switzerland for the first time) and 7 regions given that Asia-Pacific has now been divided into two regions, namely East Asia and South Asia & Oceania.
EAST ASIA: YEON JEONG CHO, SOUTH KOREA
SAY Global
An online language service that trains retired seniors in Korea and connects them to Korean language learners worldwide.

SOUTH ASIA & OCEANIA: CARMINA BAYOMBONG, PHILIPPINES
InvestEd
An investment platform providing student loans to underserved youth using a proprietary credit rating algorithm.

EUROPE: ZINEB AGOUMI, FRANCE
EzyGain
An affordable space-saving and connected gait rehabilitation device that secures patients at the pelvis and monitors their progress.

LATIN AMERICA: LIZA VELARDE, MEXICO
Delee
A blood test that detects the presence of circulating tumour cells (CTCs) in cancer patients, enabling physicians to better monitor progress of the disease.

MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA: HIBAH SHATA, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
Maharat Learning Center
A learning centre offering behavioural therapy and educational support to children and young adults with special needs.

NORTH AMERICA: RAN MA, UNITED STATES
Siren
Smart socks for diabetics made of Neurofabric, a proprietary technology fitted with micro-sensors to monitor foot temperature and guard against foot ulcers.

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA: MANKA ANGWAFO, CAMEROON
Grassland Cameroon Ltd.
Services to enhance African food supply chains through affordable asset-based financing to smallholder farmers.

The 7 laureates will take home US $100,000 in prize money; the other 14 finalists receiving US $30,000. Finally, the 14 finalists will all benefit from media visibility, networking opportunities, as well as a place on an executive INSEAD programme.

After announcing the 7 laureates Cyrille Vigneron, President & CEO of Cartier International spoke about Cartier’s long-standing commitment to supporting women entrepreneurs: “With the Cartier Women’s Initiative, Cartier is reiterating its commitment to women entrepreneurs as well as the ambition to empower them to speak up and reveal their ideas. Their curiosity, audacity and openness mirror the values that are deeply anchored in the culture of our Maison. By showing us at which point the world is diverse, this community of conquerors inspires us to go even further in supporting them to make their dreams true and make our world better”.
“We are proud to partner with Cartier on the Cartier Women’s Initiative for more than 10 years. This partnership is a perfect fit for INSEAD, which was founded on values such as diversity and entrepreneurial spirit. As leaders and entrepreneurs who are driving change with creative business models, the laureates and finalists of the Cartier Women’s Initiative are contributing to solutions that address some of the world’s greatest challenges. Today, we congratulate and celebrate them all”, said Ilian Mihov, Dean of INSEAD.

For more information on the program and video footage of the finalists, please visit: www.cartierwomensinitiative.com

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