April 26, 2018 - The six laureates of the 2018 edition of the Cartier Women’s Initiative Awards were revealed at the annual Awards ceremony held at the Capella Singapore, prime venue in Singapore.

In a spirit of engagement and empowerment, the 2018 ceremony celebrated women entrepreneurs under the theme “Bold Alchemy” which drove the evening’s conversations and celebrations. Presented for the second year in a row by Sandi Toksvig, the UK broadcaster famed for promoting gender equality in politics and society, the 2018 ceremony set the tone with a video address from Madame Sophie Grégoire Trudeau, Wife of Canada Prime Minister.

The event also unveiled the Cartier Awards’ new partnership with TED through a specially curated TED session featuring a series of live conversations between Matilda Ho (Founder and Managing Director of Bits x Bites), Meagan Fallone (CEO of Barefoot College), Zubaida Bai (Founder and CEO of Ayzh) and Halla Tósmadóttir (Entrepreneur, one-time presidential candidate for Iceland and Cartier Women’s Initiative Awards former laureate). The discussion focused on how to make concrete contributions towards finding effective and affordable solutions to today’s most pressing challenges. It was facilitated by TED Institute curator Bryn Freedman and completed by a performance from virtuoso violinist Gingger Shankar.

This discussion was followed by two captivating panel conversations gathering, first, H.E Sheikha Lubna bint Khalid Al Qasimi (President of Zayed University) and Cartier CEO Cyrille Vigneron who keenly exchanged about the Cartier Women’s Initiative Awards journey and the importance of cultural diversity in a time of global citizenship. The second conversation took place between Anousheh Ansari (CEO of Prodea Systems; first female private space explorer), Shinta Kamdani (CEO of Sintesa Group) and Ilian Mihov (Dean of INSEAD) on advancing practical support mechanisms for women to access entrepreneurial opportunities.

Cyrille Vigneron then announced the six laureates selected by an independent international jury amongst nearly 2800 applicants from over 130 countries (among them Austria, Cameroon and Pakistan were featured for the first time):

**ASIA-PACIFIC: SWATI PANDEY, INDIA**
Arboreal Agro Innovations
An industrial scale, vertically-integrated producer of stevia, a 100% natural substitute for sugar.

**EUROPE: KRISTINA TSVETANOVA, AUSTRIA**
Blitab Technology
A tactile tablet for the blind and visually impaired.
Cartier announces laureates for the 2018 Cartier Women’s Initiative Awards

CARTIER WOMEN’S INITIATIVE AWARDS 2018
LAUREATES ANNOUNCEMENT

• LATIN AMERICA: PAULA GOMEZ, BRAZIL
Epistemic
A device that alerts patients and caregivers of an oncoming epileptic seizure up to 25 minutes in advance.

• MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA: SIROUN SHAMIGIAN, LEBANON
Kamkalima
An online platform that uses artificial intelligence and data analytics to help learn and teach Arabic.

• NORTH AMERICA: YIDING YU, UNITED STATES
Twiage
A digital platform that enables the transmission of real-time data from ambulance to hospital.

• SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA: MELISSA BIME, CAMEROON
Infuss
An online blood bank that collects and dispatches blood donations to hospitals.

The 6 laureates will be awarded US$ 100,000 in prize money. As part of this year new enhanced package, the remaining 12 finalists will be awarded US$ 30,000 in prize money.

The 6 laureates and 12 finalists will all be receiving personalized business coaching, media visibility, networking opportunities as well as the option to attend an INSEAD Executive Program (ISEP).

Cyrille Vigneron, CEO of Cartier International, led the audience in applause in recognition of the laureates and spoke about Cartier’s long-standing commitment to supporting women entrepreneurs and creative excellence around the world and how it echoes the Maison’s values: “With the awards, our Maison aims to contribute to women’s empowerment efforts worldwide, and thus mirror Cartier’s values. Indeed curiosity, audacity, willpower to lead the change and openness to the world have been part of our DNA from a very early stage. Sharing with these women about their dreams and lives is both part of who we are and our responsibility”.

“INSEAD is pleased to host the Cartier Women’s Initiative Awards (CWIA) for the second time on our Asia campus in Singapore, after our long term partnership for more than a decade. CWIA resonates with INSEAD’s firm commitment and long history of promoting gender diversity. I wish to congratulate the outstanding laureates and finalists who have made a strong and lasting impact on the jury and audience with their extraordinary entrepreneurial spirit, talent, dynamism and vision for the future,” said Ilian Mihov, INSEAD Dean and Professor of Economics.

To conclude, Oliver Tonby, Managing Partner of McKinsey in Southeast Asia, stated “Asia Pacific is already a powerful engine of global growth, but advancing women’s equality can lift many more women out of poverty, unleash the economic potential of many others, and reinforce the region’s dynamic growth story. The economic dividend from advancing women’s equality is significant in every country of the region and could add $4.5 trillion to the collective GDP annually in 2025, a 12 percent increase over the business-as-usual trajectory,”
Founded in 2006, the Cartier Women’s Initiative Awards are open to women-run, for-profit businesses in any country and sector working to create strong social impact. Since their creation, over 16,000 women from around the world have applied, 198 businesses from 49 countries have been supported by nearly 400 jury members and coaches.

Discover the laureates' profiles on www.cartierwomensinitiative.com

For more information on the program and video footage of the laureates, please visit:

www.cartierwomensinitiative.com
https://www.digitalnewsagency.com/stories/12149

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