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Ton Schouten Award

Ton Schouten was not only a leading figure in the WASH sector, a champion of sustainability and supportive of government approaches to development, he was also a creative and passionate film maker and mentor to those he worked with and managed. Above all he believed in the power of communication to create change in the world.

The Ton Schouten Award aims to combine all these elements by targeting a specific group of -young communicators (under 35) within the WASH sector in low and middle-income countries. Identifying those who have a rare talent, a natural spark, and to whom this award will be a stepping stone to further developing their career in communicating around WASH issues.

The first Ton Schouten award year was in 2017. Now in its thirds year, the award will be made once again at the beginning of June, since the 2nd was Ton`s birthday.

Selection criteria

1. The nominee is a young (under 35) professional from and working in a low-or middle income country.
2. The nominee is dedicated to storytelling within the WASH sector.
3. The nominee has a portfolio of WASH related communication products (e.g. blog, video, cartoon, poster, podcast)

So what does the award entail?

During the year in which the awardee is a beneficiary of the Ton Schouten Award they will be asked to remain true to his legacy of being a leading communicator in the WASH sector and deliver the following:

1. At least two pieces of communications produced about WASH during the year. This can be a blog, a video, cartoon, poster, podcast. It should however be of a publishable standard. (IRC will support with some expert assistance if required.)

2. Ideally attend at least one event towards the end of the year of award to speak about the award and what they have been able to achieve with it. Appropriate events can be identified in conjunction with the awardee.
3. A final piece of communication summing up their year as awardee and any effect it has had on their career/work

The awardee will receive a cash prize of €2,500 to support them in pursuing their development in communications, to be invested in for example, new processing software, audiovisual material, courses etc. They will also receive expert mentoring support from IRC during the year, and, where applicable, be invited to spend time with IRC staff in the most convenient location.

How will we identify the winner?

From 2019 on applications for the award is an open process with announcements on IRC's website and social media channels. Submission criteria concentrates on inclusion and discovering storytellers who are potentially not on IRC's radar yet. WASH experts may nominate storytellers but individuals can apply as well with a motivation letter and portfolio containing WASH related communication activities (see detailed submission criteria below). Whether a person was nominated or applies individually will not have any influence on the application outcomes. Depending on the amount of applications, a shortlist will be created by IRC staff and presented to a small committee who determine the award winner based on a clear description of requirements.

Committee members

Member 1: IRC employee for either Netherlands office or a focus country.

Member 2: WASH expert from one of IRC's partner organisations (from nonprofit or public sector)

Member 3: Communications expert working with/for international development, from the WASH sector.

Member 4: Communications expert from the private sector or academia, not necessarily related to WASH.

Member 5: Optional

Timeline 2021

- Launch date: 9 April, 2021
- Deadline for applications: 7 May, 2021
- By 14 May, IRC completes an initial selection on whether applicants comply with basic criteria and sends applications to Committee
- Committee reviews and scores applications by 28 May according to IRC scoring model
- Announcement of winner: 2nd of June, 2021

Submission criteria

Please submit the following information about your nomination for consideration:

- Name of the nominee
- Country of the nominee
- Language(s) of the nominee
- Relationship with IRC (if any) - Current IRC staff members and their families are not eligible to apply
- Name of the nominator

- Communications portfolio: Notable WASH related communications highlights – links to online media / scans of print articles
- Optional: A short plan on what you would like to create, purchase or invest your award prize in.
- If nominated: A short paragraph on why you think this person is a deserving winner and how the prize would help this person's development as a WASH storyteller
- If individual applicant: A short motivation statement including why you think you are a deserving winner and how the prize would help your development as a WASH storyteller

Please ensure that you are in compliance with the terms and conditions and if others are featured in your communications materials, with GDPR.