

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **ROLEX ANNOUNCES ENTERPRISE AWARDS JURY FOR 40TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR**

#### **Eminent Judging Panel to select World-Changing Pioneers**

**Geneva, 25 January 2016**

Rolex today announced the names of the renowned scientists, environmentalists, innovators and explorers who will comprise the Jury to choose the 10 winners of a commemorative edition of the Rolex Awards for Enterprise.

The 2016 series of the Awards marks the 40th anniversary of this international philanthropic programme that has given vital support to 130 pioneers working on highly original projects on every continent with one objective – to make the world a better place.

The Jury members, who include an Olympic champion, a Nobel Prize winner, a celebrated underwater photographer and an astronaut who is also a best-selling author, will meet in Geneva in April 2016 to select five Laureates and five Young Laureates who have groundbreaking projects to improve life on the planet.

A total of 2,322 people of 144 nationalities applied to the 2016 Rolex Awards. For the first time, the highest number of applicants (24 per cent) were from Africa.

Launched in 1976 to mark the 50th anniversary of the iconic Rolex Oyster, the Rolex Awards support men and women who demonstrate the passion and the tenacity to advance human knowledge in five areas: science and health, applied technology, exploration and discovery, the environment, and cultural heritage. To encourage the next generation of leaders, an extension of the programme devoted to Young Laureates, aged between 18 and 30, was introduced in 2009.

Projects are evaluated based on their feasibility, originality, sustained impact on people and the environment and, above all, on the spirit of enterprise demonstrated by applicants. Laureates each receive 100,000 Swiss francs and Young Laureates each receive 50,000 Swiss francs, with the grants used to advance the projects.

The members of the Jury are: electrical engineer Ghada Amer (Egypt), marine biologist Antje Boetius (Germany), sustainability leader María Emilia Correa (Colombia), underwater photographer David Doubilet (United States), mathematician and science communicator Marcus du Sautoy (United Kingdom),



biomedical engineer and innovator David Edwards (United States), astronaut Chris Hadfield (Canada), physicist Stefan Hell (Germany), agricultural scientist Segenet Kelemu (Ethiopia), social entrepreneur Johann Olav Koss (Norway), philanthropist and social entrepreneur Rohini Nilekani (India), gastroenterologist and university Vice-Chancellor Joseph J. Y. Sung (Hong Kong).

“As we begin the fifth decade of the Rolex Awards for Enterprise, we welcome the outstanding group of Jury members who are giving their time to help us choose the latest winners of our long-standing, international philanthropic programme,” said Rebecca Irvin, Head of Philanthropy at Rolex.

“The demographics of the applicants they will be scrutinizing closely reflect the world at large: the growth of entrepreneurship in developing countries; the importance of innovative technology to our lives; and the increasing power and presence of women today.”

The 10 new Laureates will be announced and honoured at a special 40th anniversary ceremony in Los Angeles in November 2016.

#### **Members of the 2016 Rolex Awards Jury**

**Ghada Amer (Egypt)** is an electrical engineer known internationally for her pioneering work as an advocate of social and economic development. Singled out as one of the “World’s 100 Most Powerful Arab Women”, she is Vice President of the Arab Science and Technology Foundation.

**Antje Boetius (Germany)** is a marine biologist renowned for her contributions to the understanding of life in the Arctic Ocean. She is Professor of Geomicrobiology at the University of Bremen and leader of both Bremen’s Max Planck Institute for Marine Microbiology and the Joint Research Group on Deep Sea Ecology and Technology of the Alfred Wegener Institute for Polar and Marine Research in Bremerhaven, Germany.

**María Emilia Correa (Colombia)**, a leader in sustainability, has spent her life promoting the concept that business should be a positive force for sustainable development. She is co-founder and “choreographer” of Sistema B, a movement of Latin American entrepreneurs that supports companies using the power of business to solve social and environmental problems.



**David Doubilet (United States)**, one of the world's most celebrated underwater photographers and a *National Geographic* photographer, is an explorer, pioneering conservation photographer, marine naturalist and protector of the ocean habitat. He is a contributing editor and an author of a dozen titles, including the award-winning *Water Light Time*.

**Marcus du Sautoy (United Kingdom)**, widely considered to be one of the UK's leading scientists, is known worldwide for his work in popularizing mathematics through his articles in Britain's leading newspapers, appearances on BBC Radio and TV programmes and his well-received books. He is currently a Fellow of New College, Oxford, and has held the Simonyi Professorship for the Public Understanding of Science there since 2008.

**David Edwards (United States)**, is celebrated for his technological advancements. A chemical engineer and Professor of the Practice of Biomedical Engineering at Harvard, Edwards has developed numerous innovations, including pioneering drug delivery methods, as well as new approaches to learning through the collaboration of artists and scientists at Le Laboratoire in Paris.

**Chris Hadfield (Canada)**, astronaut, engineer, military pilot and author, has brought the marvels of science and space to millions during his three historic space flights and 2,600 orbits of Earth, harnessing the power of social media to make outer space more accessible. He was the first Canadian to walk in space and to command the International Space Station.

**Stefan Hell (Germany)**, a Romanian-born German physicist, shared the 2014 Nobel Prize in chemistry for the development of super-resolved fluorescence microscopy. Since 2002, he has been a director of Germany's Max Planck Institute for Biophysical Chemistry, where he heads the Department of NanoBiophotonics. He also directs the Optical Nanoscopy division at Heidelberg's German Cancer Research Center.

**Segenet Kelemu (Ethiopia)**, an agricultural scientist who specializes in molecular plant pathology, is passionate about solving ecological food-crop production challenges. After decades of directing world-class laboratories and applying cutting-edge science both outside and in Africa, today she heads one of Africa's largest insect research institutions, the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology, in Nairobi, Kenya.

**Johann Olav Koss (Norway)**, a four-time Olympic gold medallist and an internationally recognized social entrepreneur, has drawn on the skills and determination that made him a great athlete to create Right To Play International, a non-governmental, humanitarian organization that uses sport and play as a tool for the development of children in disadvantaged areas worldwide.



**Rohini Nilekani (India)**, hailed for her path-breaking initiatives in areas ranging from water conservation to education and environmental sustainability, has parlayed her wealth into championing philanthropic endeavours throughout India, including as Chairperson of Arghyam, a foundation that implements water and sanitation projects in more than 7,000 villages.

**Joseph J. Y. Sung (Hong Kong)**, the Vice-Chancellor and President of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, is a renowned gastroenterologist whose pioneering research has earned him the reputation as a world leader in his field. A popular Vice-Chancellor, he believes in the value of holistic education. Sung was named a *Time* "Asian Hero" in 2003 for combating SARS.

#### **Rolex Awards applications 2016**

- ▶ Those projects with an applied technology component rose from **18** per cent in 2014 to **27** per cent
- ▶ **26** per cent of applications were in the environment category
- ▶ The top five source countries were the **United States, India, Nigeria, Brazil** and **Egypt**
- ▶ The proportion of women applicants was **33** per cent
- ▶ Age of the youngest candidate: **19**
- ▶ Age of the oldest: **87**

#### **Rolex philanthropy**

The Rolex Awards for Enterprise and its sister programme, the Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative, comprise the two major international philanthropic programmes run by the Rolex Institute. The Arts Initiative brings together emerging artists with masters in architecture, dance, film, literature, music, theatre and the visual arts for a year of intensive collaboration. The aim is to help ensure that artistic excellence is passed on to the next generation. Both programmes foster innovation and advance the work of those who exemplify the vision, ingenuity and excellence that define the Rolex brand.

**For further information on the Rolex Awards for Enterprise, visit:**  
[rolexawards.com](http://rolexawards.com)

#### **MEDIA CONTACT:**

**Anne-Sophie de Guigné**

The Rolex Awards for Enterprise

T: +41 22 302 22 00

T: +41 22 302 76 88 (direct)

[anne-sophie.deguigne@rolex.com](mailto:anne-sophie.deguigne@rolex.com)