

Media -Information
December 11, 2019

United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and BMW Group Announce the 10 Finalists of the 2019 Intercultural Innovation Award

- **Over 1,200 applications from 128 countries received**
- **Finalists come from ten different countries across five continents**
- **They will benefit from one year of in-kind support from UNAOC and BMW Group to expand and replicate their projects.**

Madrid, 11 December 2019 – Ten global grassroots initiatives have been named finalists of the prestigious Intercultural Innovation Award during an Awards Ceremony held last night in Madrid, Spain. A partnership between the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) and the BMW Group, the Intercultural Innovation Award supports grassroots initiatives that promote intercultural dialogue and understanding and contribute to peace, cultural diversity, and more inclusive societies.

The Awards Ceremony was chaired by the High Representative for UNAOC and former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Spain, H.E. Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos, and Mr. Bill McAndrews, Vice President Market Communications at BMW Group, and took place at the Royal Theatre.

“As the Intercultural Innovation Award enters its sixth edition, UNAOC and the BMW Group continue to collaborate to magnify the work of cutting-edge social innovators,” said Mr. Moratinos during his opening remarks. “In today’s global context, marked by conflicts of a complex nature, civil society organizations have the power to influence individual behaviors and foster the values of respect and inclusion, and therefore play a critical role in advancing these values among their communities.”

“With the Intercultural Innovation Award we celebrate outstanding initiatives implemented by extraordinary individuals. They are working to bridge intercultural divisions in innovative and impactful ways. We at the BMW Group believe that diversity not only enhances our company, it is the very foundation on which our success is built. That is why we are so proud of our strong partnership with the UNAOC. This collaboration and the Intercultural Innovation Award enable us to recognize some of the remarkable cross-cultural work being done worldwide,” said Mr. Bill McAndrews.

This year, the selection process was highly competitive, with over 1,200 applications from 128 countries. The first place went to “Milenial Islami,” a project of the Indika Foundation in Indonesia.

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The project engages leaders of various religions in conversations with the public, both online and offline, to promote interfaith dialogue and peaceful coexistence.

In addition to a financial grant, the recipients of the Intercultural Innovation Award will benefit from capacity-building and mentorship support from UNAOC and the BMW Group to help their projects expand and replicate to other contexts. They will also be invited to join the “Intercultural Leaders” network, a skill and knowledge-sharing platform for civil society organizations and young leaders.

Other awardees include (in alphabetical order):

180° Wende – 180° Wende (Germany)

180° Wende connects the youth community to support their disadvantaged peers and empowers them to reclaim their own lives by reconquering their social environment. 180° Wende works in abandoned neighborhoods, prisons, and schools to provide quick and informal assistance to youth and their relatives. More info: <https://interculturalinnovation.org/180-turn/>

Child Soldier Reintegration Project – Grassroots Reconciliation Group (Uganda)

The “Child Soldier Reintegration” project helps former child soldiers reconcile with war-affected communities in northern Uganda. More info: <https://interculturalinnovation.org/child-soldier-reintegration-project/>

E4D Entrepreneurs for Diversity – Ventana a la Diversidad (Spain)

The project “E4D Entrepreneurs for Diversity” empowers young entrepreneurs and creators from marginalized communities in the Ibero-American region to develop innovative ideas to overcome barriers, promoting a culture of peace, and transforming their communities. More info: <https://interculturalinnovation.org/e4d-entrepreneurs-for-diversity/>

Inclusive Intercultural Education for Social Cohesion – Kachinland College (Myanmar)

The “Inclusive Intercultural Education for Social Cohesion” project empowers and equips young leaders from different ethnic, linguistic, and religious backgrounds in northern Myanmar to become facilitators in intercultural dialogue, both online and offline. More info: <https://interculturalinnovation.org/inclusive-intercultural-education-for-social-cohesion/>

Life Into Lyrics: Bridging Cultural Divides Through Song – Darkspark (Canada)

The “Life into Lyrics” project invites youth to create pop songs and digital campaigns with social

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purpose, encouraging them to lend their voices to the change they want to see in the world. More info: <https://interculturalinnovation.org/life-into-lyrics-bridging-cultural-divides-through-song/>

MinorMatters: Rewind; Rebuild – The Alliance Development Trust (Sri Lanka)

The project “MinorMatters: Rewind; Rebuild” is a web-based platform with resources to equip and empower citizens, especially youth, to promote religious freedom and coexistence in Sri Lanka.

More info: <https://interculturalinnovation.org/minormatters-rewind-rebuild/>

Schools of Peace – Museo de la Palabra y la Imagen (El Salvador)

The “Schools of Peace” project offers a variety of workshops to young people, from music and theater to photography and audiovisual production, intending to promote youth leadership and responsible citizenship and foster a culture of peace through arts and culture. The project also targets teachers by teaching them about violence prevention at school. More info:

<https://interculturalinnovation.org/schools-of-peace/>

Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom Chapter Expansion – Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom (USA)

The Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom is a Muslim-Jewish grassroots organization in North America that helps young women and women develop relationships and gain the skills to react quickly to incidents in their communities in order to stand together in the face of hate. More info:

<https://interculturalinnovation.org/sisterhood-of-salaam-shalom-chapter-expansion/>

Women as Peace Champions – Women’s Rights Association (Pakistan)

The “Women as Peace Champions” project engages marginalized women groups to decrease the gap in the decision-making process and increase collaboration between different communities. It provides a platform for dialogue about peace and aims to foster tolerance amongst communities through the contribution of women. More info: <https://interculturalinnovation.org/women-as-peace-champions/>

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UNAOC

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The BMW Group

With its four brands BMW, MINI, Rolls-Royce and BMW Motorrad, the BMW Group is the world's leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles and also provides premium financial and mobility services. The BMW Group production network comprises 31 production and assembly facilities in 15 countries; the company has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2018, the BMW Group sold over 2,490,000 passenger vehicles and more than 165,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2018 was € 9.815 billion on revenues amounting to € 97.480 billion. As of 31 December 2018, the BMW Group had a workforce of 134,682 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action. The company has therefore established ecological and social sustainability throughout the value chain, comprehensive product responsibility and a clear commitment to conserving resources as an integral part of its strategy.

United Nations Alliance of Civilization

The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) is an initiative of the United Nations Secretary-General that aims to improve understanding and cooperative relations among nations and peoples across cultures and to reduce polarization at local and global levels.

UNAOC was established in 2005, at the initiative of the Governments of Spain and Turkey, under the auspices of the United Nations. The United Nations Secretary-General Mr. António Guterres appointed Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos Cuyaubé of Spain as his High Representative for the UN Alliance of Civilizations in January 2019. UNAOC is supported by the Group of Friends, a community of countries and international organizations that actively promotes the Alliance's objectives and work at the global, regional, and local levels.

Working in partnership with governments, international and regional organizations, civil society groups, foundations, and the private sector, UNAOC is supporting a range of projects and initiatives aimed at building bridges among a diversity of cultures and communities.