



IP 14

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Agenda Item: 9.2  
Person Responsible: R Badhe

# **Martha T Muse Prize for Science and Policy in Antarctica**



## Executive Summary

**Title:** Martha T Muse Prize for Science and Policy in Antarctica

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**Relevant URLs or references to other reports**

<http://www.museprize.org/>

<http://www.tinker.org/content/martha-t-muse-prize>

**Introduction/ Background:** The Martha T. Muse Prize for Science and Policy in Antarctica is a prestigious US\$100,000 unrestricted award presented to an early or mid stage career researcher in the fields of Antarctic science or policy. The award recognizes and honors individuals with the potential for sustained and significant contribution that enhance understanding and/or the preservation of Antarctica. The Prize is a legacy of the International Polar Year 2007-2008. It is administered by the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) and awarded by the Tinker Foundation. The Selection Committee for the Prize consists of six members of the Antarctic Community representing as highly respected and diverse backgrounds (geopolitically, by discipline and by gender) as possible.

**Important Issues or Factors:** Established in 2009, the Muse Prize has gained global recognition within the Antarctic and general science community. Prize recipients have had international representation with winners from South Africa (2009), the USA (2010), Portugal (2011), and Australia (2012).

**Recommendations/Actions and Justification:** The Tinker Foundation has provided 5 years of funds for the Martha T. Muse Prize. Other activities being discussed with Tinker are the possibility of organizing a colloquium for the fifth year of the Prize.

**Expected Benefits/Outcomes:** The contribution of the Muse Prize towards honouring early and mid career leaders in Antarctic science and policy is in line with SCAR's aims. The SCAR mission is to "be the leading non-governmental, international facilitator and advocate of research in and from the Antarctic region, to provide objective and authoritative scientific advice to the Antarctic Treaty and others, and to bring emerging issues to the attention of policy makers". The Muse Prize allows SCAR to contribute towards its mission by meeting strategic plan aims to: i) encourage excellence in Antarctic and Southern Ocean research, II) developing the capacity of early career scientists, and III) identify evolving issues and emerging frontiers in Antarctic science.

**Partners:** Tinker Foundation

**Budget Implications:** The Muse Prize contributes to the salaries of EO and AA, a total contribution of USD 13,102 for 2012

# **Martha T Muse Prize for Science and Policy in Antarctica**

## ***Introduction***

The Martha T. Muse Prize for Science and Policy in Antarctica was established by the Tinker Foundation in honour of the Foundation's long time President Ms. Martha Twitchell Muse, and as a lasting legacy of the International Polar Year 2007- 2008 (IPY). The Prize recognises outstanding early and mid career researchers whose work increases the understanding and/or preservation of Antarctica, and who have potential for significant creativity and leadership in the future. Recipients of the Prize receive US\$ 100,000 of unrestricted funds from the Tinker Foundation.

The Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) administers the Prize on behalf of the Tinker Foundation. The intent of this substantial, unrestricted financial prize is to allow the recipient to pursue intellectual, scientific, and/or personal activities at a critical time in his or her career. The award aims to identify tomorrow's leaders of Antarctic science and policy and to improve their chances of realizing their potential.

## ***Selection Committee***

The Selection Committee for the Prize consists of six members of the Antarctic Community representing as highly respected and diverse backgrounds (geopolitically, by discipline and by gender) as possible. The Selection Committee ensures that four main goals are met in their consideration of nominees. They ensure that: I) the IPY goals are promoted; II) a broad range of Antarctic science and policy topics are considered; III) the diversity and perspectives on Antarctic issues are broadened through time; and IV) the importance of international collaboration in Antarctic science and policy is emphasized.

Prize winners recommended by the Selection committee are reported to SCAR and the Tinker Foundation. The final selection of Prize winners is made by the Tinker Foundation based on recommendations made by SCAR.

## ***Project Accomplishments***

The major accomplishments of the past four years of the Prize have been the establishment and continuation of the Prize and the infrastructure required (e.g. website, Selection Committee). These efforts have culminated in the selection of the first four Prize Winners: Professor Steven Chown from Stellenbosch University in South Africa, Associate Professor Helen Fricker, Scripps Institute of Oceanography, USA; Dr Jose Xavier, Institute of Marine Research, Coimbra, Portugal; and Dr Stephen Rintoul, CSIRO Marine and Atmospheric Research, Hobart, Australia.

## ***International Interest in the Prize***

There has been high interest in the Muse Prize since its beginnings. The website set up to host information and nominations on the Muse Prize has received over 9,000 unique visitors representing 124 different countries over the past four years. Interest in the Prize has been increasing over time as reflected by various different metrics. For example, there has been an increasing number of visits to the Muse Prize website coming from different countries and an increasing number of different IP addresses to visit the site each year. Between 2010 and 2011 there was nearly a two-fold increase in the number of IP addresses to visit the site.

The increasing popularity of the Muse Prize website is also reflected in the increased number of pages visited each year. The average percent increase in the number of web pages visited has been 28% per year. The network reach of the website is also increasing over time with each year having more external pages linking to the Muse Prize website. Between 2010 and 2011 there was a five-fold increase in the number of external web pages linking to the Muse Prize website.

## ***Nominees***

The Muse Prize encourages nominees from any country who conduct research in any field of Antarctic science and policy. To date nominees have represented 20 different countries amongst Europe, Asia, Africa, North, and South America. The major field of work of nominees has been equally represented by science and policy, and incorporated research from varied disciplines including: climate science, geology/glaciology, oceanography, biology, and others.

Prize recipients have had international representation with winners from South Africa (2009), the USA (2010), Portugal (2011), and Australia (2012).

## ***Short-term Impact of the Project***

The achievement of the award winners has been recognized widely amongst the Antarctic and Arctic research communities; the home institutions and countries of award winners; the general science community; and early career scientists. Examples of the Antarctic research community recognizing award winners include press releases on web pages by: the International Arctic Science Community (IASC), SciencePoles the scientific website of the International Polar Foundation, and the International Polar Year (IPY).

Examples of news releases by the wider science community include postings on websites by: University of St Andrews' Centre for Biological Diversity, Centre of Excellence for Invasion Biology at the University of Stellenbosch, and the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels. Early career scientist organisations posting press releases of Muse Prize winners include the Association of Polar Early Career Scientists (APECS).

This wide publicity is an indication of the success the Muse Prize has achieved at recognizing important work of researchers in Antarctic science and policy, and in drawing attention and interest by the public and the wider science community to the importance of Antarctic research. The high esteem of the Prize is also underlined by the 2010 and 2011 Prize ceremonies, both of which were held at extremely prestigious conferences aimed at both the Antarctic and the non-Antarctic community. The 2010 Ceremony was held at the American Geophysical Union conference in San Francisco, attended by more than 18,400 people from around the world. Similarly, the 2011 Ceremony was held at the World Conference on Marine Biodiversity (WCMB), and the Martha Muse Prize Ceremony was held with the Opening Ceremony of the WCMB, sharing the platform with Jean-Michel Cousteau, amongst others.

## ***Longer-term Effects of the Project***

The Martha T Muse Prize is intended to be a lasting legacy of the IPY. The goal of the Prize is to provide recognition of the important work being done by key individuals and to call attention to the significance of understanding Antarctica in a time of change.

## ***Meeting SCAR Strategic Plan Aims***

The Muse Prize allows SCAR to contribute towards its mission by meeting the following strategic plan aims:

- Encouraging excellence in Antarctic and Southern Ocean research,
- Developing the capacity of early career scientists,
- Identifying evolving issues and emerging frontiers in Antarctic science, and
- Preserving and building on the legacies of the IPY 2007-2008.

## ***Looking to the future***

The Martha T. Muse Prize is in its fourth year of support by the Tinker Foundation who agreed to five years of full support. SCAR is to continue dialogue with the Tinker Foundation to continue the Prize program.

Other activities are being discussed with Tinker, for example the possibility of organizing a colloquium in the fifth year of the Prize.