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Profile Feature as seen in *Nature* 11 February 2021

A NEW SCI-TECH PRIZE FOR HUMANITY

A conversation with **DR. LE MAI LAN**, designated representative of VinFuture Foundation, based in Vietnam



Aspiring to join the pantheon of global science awards, a new prize has been established by the VinFuture Foundation. It aims to support impactful science and technology, particularly that being progressed by traditionally under-represented groups. Here, Dr. Le Mai Lan outlines the background and how it will work.

Why was the VinFuture Foundation established?

The events of 2020, particularly the pandemic, show that now more than ever we need to inspire and support the world's brightest minds to focus on using science and technology to solve our toughest global challenges.

The VinFuture Foundation was set up with an initial endowment of VND 2,000 billion (US\$100 million) with a mission of positively reshaping the lives of billions of people across the world through science and technology. A core component of the foundation is our new VinFuture Prize, which will honour exceptional minds whose breakthrough scientific research and technological innovations have the potential to create meaningful change at scale.

Their work will bring an improvement in health, prosperity, productivity, and living conditions, as well as by promoting resilient, sustainable, and equitable growth and development.

The world has had a number of prestigious science and technology prizes such as Nobel, Fields, and Turing. Why is the VinFuture Prize needed?

Over the years, researchers and inventors have made great contributions to science and human life. More prizes honouring wisdom will further boost the creativity of these outstanding minds.

The VinFuture Prize is different because it is the first fund of this stature to be established in the Asia-Pacific region.

The fund honours work that has or will have the potential to

bring solutions that can be applied to the everyday life of ordinary people, not just macro studies or academic studies, which are far from reality.

Moreover, the scale of impact that the project brings is also very important. We pay a lot of attention to work that serves the majority, especially ordinary people who have rarely had access to science and technology because they are too expensive or too difficult to access. VinFuture Prize recognizes the outstanding scientific contributions that bring positive impacts to humanity on a global scale. Those two values must go hand in hand.

What is the value of the VinFuture Prize?

The VinFuture Prize has a value of VND 70 billion (US\$3 million) with three additional special VinFuture Prizes to the value of VND 11.5 billion (US\$500,000), awarded annually. The Prize Fund comes from the sponsor, VinFuture Foundation.

Three VinFuture Special Prizes focus on scientists and scientific fields that have never been honoured, making the VinFuture Prize different from others.

VinFuture Special Prize for Developing Country Innovators is dedicated to an exceptional researcher or innovator currently working in a developing country institute.

VinFuture Special Prize for Women Innovators is dedicated to an outstanding female researcher or innovator.

VinFuture Special Prize for Emerging Fields is awarded for research or innovations in

an emerging field that have the potential to create positive changes for humanity. The specific emerging field will be decided by the Prize Council annually.

Who will judge the prizes?

The VinFuture Foundation has two councils: Pre-screening Committee, and Prize Council.

The VinFuture Pre-screening Committee is comprised of world-class scientists, researchers and leaders. The Pre-screening Committee is responsible for pre-screening nominations according to the evaluation criteria set by the Prize Council, and at the same time synthesizing and preparing documents for the shortlist of nominees before submitting them to the Prize Council.

The VinFuture Prize Council is comprised of outstanding scientists, inventors, and technology leaders. Their achievements have contributed to the advancement of mankind and are recognized globally not only by prestigious prizes such as the Nobel Prize, the Turing Prize, and the Millennium Technology Prize, but also by their responsibilities at leading technology groups or scientific associations.

The Prize Council is responsible for the establishment of the prize management process, setting the evaluation criteria and selecting winners.

This is the first time a science prize at a global scale has been established in Vietnam. What obstacles has VFF overcome?

Being the first impactful and global prize to be established in Vietnam, VinFuture has overcome

many difficulties. Besides major challenges such as distance and multiple time zones, we also face doubts and concerns about the capabilities of Vietnamese organizations in this area, as this is unprecedented in the country or the region.

Difficulties do not hinder our determination. VinFuture has been developed from the very beginning with a suitable plan and a clear strategy: always keep learning from passionate intellectuals and successful operating models. At the same time, we have been and will always be determined and persistent with the goal of the prize according to three principles: capacity; integrity; transparency. We strongly believe that time will prove our ability, worthy of the enthusiasm of the intellectuals who have always trusted us in this meaningful journey from the beginning — as well as received credibility from the international community.

We believe that VinFuture Foundation and VinFuture Prize will strongly promote creativity in the field of science and technology, bring human knowledge beyond normal boundaries, and contribute to a better future for humankind.

For more information: <http://vinfutureprize.org>



CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

VINFUTURE PRIZE

Create meaningful change in the everyday lives of millions of people



The VinFuture Prize is the first global science and technology prize from Vietnam and is one of the world's largest annual prizes in science and technology.

A Grand Prize of USD \$3 million is awarded annually to proven breakthrough research and technological innovations that positively improve the quality of human life.

Three additional Special VinFuture Prizes will be awarded to:

- Innovators from developing countries
- Female innovators
- Innovators with outstanding achievements in emerging fields

Nominations will be reviewed by the Prize Council:

- Prof. Sir Richard Henry Friend, FRS, UK, Chair
- Dr. Padmanabhan Anandan, India
- Prof. Jennifer Tour Chayes, USA
- Prof. Pascale Cossart, France
- Prof. Chí-Văn Đặng, USA
- Dr. Xuedong David Huang, USA
- Prof. Gérard Albert Mourou, France
- Prof. Sir Kostya S. Novoselov, FRS, UK-Singapore
- Prof. Michael Eugene Porter, USA
- Prof. Leslie Gabriel Valiant, FRS, USA
- Prof. Hà-Văn Vũ, USA

We invite you to submit your nominations no later than

JUNE 7TH, 2021

For the nomination form and details of the nomination process, please visit vinfutureprize.org

