



23 April 2012

### **NEW \$1 MILLION ARCTIC INSPIRATION PRIZE LAUNCHED**

Montreal, Quebec, 23 April 2012 – The new \$1 million CAD Arctic Inspiration Prize was launched today at the International Polar Year 2012 conference. The Prize will be awarded annually to recognize and promote the extraordinary contribution made by teams in the gathering of Arctic knowledge and their plans to implement this knowledge into real world applications for the benefit of the Canadian Arctic, its Peoples and therefore Canada as a whole.

The Arctic Inspiration Prize is made possible through the generous endowment of the S. and A. Inspiration Foundation, the commitment of the ArcticNet Network of Centres of Excellence to voluntarily manage the Prize, as well as the contribution of numerous volunteers and partners.

"The motivation for the Arctic Inspiration Prize is derived from our wish as immigrants to contribute to the future of our adopted country of choice with a focus on the Canadian Arctic and the major challenges to its rapidly changing environment, culture, technology and economy. It is our dream and hope, that in addition to our contribution, other individuals and organizations from north and south will contribute and help make the Arctic Inspiration Prize a long lasting success" said Arnold Witzig, Director of the S. and A. Inspiration Foundation.

The Prize recognizes and encourages teamwork and collaboration among diverse groups and organizations in addressing the causes rather than the symptoms of issues of importance to the Canadian Arctic and its Peoples.

"ArcticNet is proud and honoured to manage the Arctic Inspiration Prize. The Prize is clearly aligned with our Network's vision of a future where knowledge exchange, monitoring, modeling and capacity building will have enabled scientists, Northerners and decision makers to jointly attenuate the negative impacts and maximize the positive outcomes of the transformation of the Canadian Arctic" said Martin Fortier, ArcticNet's Executive Director.

A Selection Committee composed of distinguished individuals known for their commitment to the Canadian Arctic and its inhabitants will select from one to five Prize winners annually, with associated awards totalling \$1 million. Current members of the Selection Committee include Inuit Nobel Peace Prize nominee Sheila Watt-Cloutier, Inuit Juno award winner Susan Aglugark, CBC's Chief correspondent Peter Mansbridge, Rhodes scholar and founder of Dechinta, Erin Freeland Ballantyne and Queens University professor and Chair of the International Polar Year 2012 Conference, Peter Harrison.

Teams may not apply directly for the Prize but need to be nominated. Nominations Forms will be available on the Arctic Inspiration Prize website on 31 May 2012. The first Arctic Inspiration Prize Awards Ceremony will be held in conjunction with the ArcticNet Annual Scientific Meeting on the evening of Wednesday 12 December in Vancouver B.C.



### **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

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### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The S. and A. Inspiration Foundation was founded by Ms. Sima Sharifi and Mr. Arnold Witzig in 2008 as a not-for-profit corporation, located in Vancouver, B.C. The foundation has been active in charitable endeavours in the fields of education and gender equality throughout the developing world. In 2011, they decided to focus the activities of their foundation in Canada, their homeland of choice.

ArcticNet is a Network of Centres of Excellence of Canada that brings together scientists and managers in the natural, human health and social sciences with their partners from Inuit organizations, northern communities, federal and provincial agencies and the private sector to study the impacts of climate change and modernisation in the Canadian Arctic. Over 150 ArcticNet researchers and 700 graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, research associates and technicians from 30 Canadian universities and 20 federal and provincial departments and agencies collaborate on 36 research projects with more than 100 partner organizations from 15 countries.