

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Canadian Teams Compete for Annual Million Dollar Arctic Inspiration Prize at Upcoming Scientific Meeting

Vancouver B.C. (November, 26 2012) —Rapid changes in climate, environment, culture, technology and the economy are bringing both challenges and opportunities for Canada's Arctic and its peoples. A couple from Vancouver, Canada, has founded a \$1 million annual prize that will enable multi-disciplinary teams to implement action plans that address the area's most pressing issues.

"Our motivation behind creating the prize is to recognize excellence and encourage teamwork among diverse groups in order to bring Arctic knowledge into action for the benefit of the Canadian Arctic, its inhabitants and therefore for Canada as a whole," said Arnold Witzig, co-founder with his wife Sima Sharifi, of the S. and A. Inspiration Foundation that funds the Arctic Inspiration Prize. "As immigrants to Canada, we wanted to contribute to the future of our adopted country of choice with a focus on the Arctic."

Issues such as human health, literacy, housing, food security and the sustainability of ecosystems and wildlife are listed amongst the priority areas for the Arctic Inspiration Prize. One to five teams will be awarded the first Arctic Inspiration Prize and associated \$1 million award at a ceremony held on Dec. 13 during the 8th ArcticNet Annual Scientific Meeting, which takes place at Vancouver's Westin Bayshore hotel Dec. 10 to Dec. 14, 2012.

"ArcticNet is honoured to manage the Arctic Inspiration Prize," said Martin Fortier, ArcticNet's executive director. "The prize is clearly aligned with our network's vision to enable scientists, Northerners and decision makers to jointly attenuate the negative impacts and maximize the positive outcomes of the transformation of the Canadian Arctic."

Former Governor General Michaëlle Jean, Nobel Peace Prize Nominee Sheila Watt-Cloutier, Juno-award winning singer-songwriter, Susan Aglugark and CBC News anchor Peter Mansbridge, are amongst the judges who sit on the selection committee. For more information visit: www.arcticinspirationprize.ca.

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ABOUT THE ARCTIC INSPIRATION PRIZE

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 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. To be considered for the prize, teams must propose knowledge to action applications having a direct impact on the Canadian Arctic and its Peoples.

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 IPY2012 International Conference, Peter Harrison.

ABOUT ARCTICNET

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 modernization 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.

The ArcticNet Administrative Centre is hosted at Université Laval, Quebec City, Canada. For more information visit: www.arcticnet.ulaval.ca.