PROPOSAL FOR A CAETS TECHNOLOGY COMMUNICATIONS PRIZE

Background

The CAETS Communications Committee was set up to find ways of helping the member academies improve the communications of policy, educational initiatives and the importance engineering and technological sciences in society. The aim is to amplify our impact on governments and the public of the countries in which we live based on the premise that the important role of technology in society is not recognised due to the failure on the part of technological scientists and engineers to communicate clearly and effectively with a general audience.

The CAETS Communications Committee believes that one intervention (out of many possible) in this regard would be to encourage technological scientists and engineers to devote effort to communicating in a simple and engaging manner with general audiences. We believe that the most effective way of achieving this would be to encourage the development of short videos (five minutes preferred but no more to 15 minutes) which explain the societal importance of technological breakthroughs and engineering successes. Such videos would have the dual aim of

1. Inspiring students to follow careers in engineering and technological sciences, and
2. To educate the general public on the impact that engineering and technological sciences have in their lives and future.

Given that such videos take a considerable amount of effort we propose establishing two CAETS Communications Prizes which would recognise the best such videos from the member academies globally. We propose the following two categories for these prizes:

Submissions can be made in two categories:

1. Engineering Success Stories (by which we mean the development has led to measurable real-world outcomes). This category would be based on the work of established technological scientists and engineers who are fellows of the CAETS member academies.
2. High Potential Innovations (by which we mean a validated idea that has the potential when implemented to change the world). This category would be open to of students or junior scientists/engineers with less than 10 years' work experience (with allowances for career breaks) since obtaining their last degree. Obviously, such contenders would not need to be fellows of member academies but the video should be introduced by one of the member academies.

Initially the award would only offer 'bragging rights' but hopefully we can attract funding in the future (for example through corporate or government partnerships) to establish monetary rewards for the winner.

Process

Member Academies would annually submit their best videos (no more than two in total – which could both be from either of the same category or from different categories) to CAETS for selection of the global winner. Submissions would close six months prior to the annual CAETS meeting.

The judging would be done by a subset of no more than seven members (including the Chair and Deputy Chair) of the CAETS Communications Committee. Membership of the judging panel would

be selected by the Chair and Deputy Chair of the CAETS Communications Committee based on expressions of interest from member academies.

The winner would be announced at the annual CAETS meeting.

All submitted videos will be presented on the CAETS website, in the form of a title and link to the source. The winner will receive extra attention.

Video Content

Videos will preferably be five minutes or less, but an absolute maximum of 15 minutes and should contain the following content:

- A description of the problem being solved and its relevance to the real world, including how it is applied;
- A clear and simple explanation of the technology, how it works and why it is novel;
- For category 1, the impact that the solution has had already (number of installations, users, customers, etc.);
- Credits: names and affiliations of the researchers and developers, logo of their organisation, logo of the academy submitting the video.

Judging Criteria

The videos will be judged against the following criteria:

1. Short video (15 min maximum but around five min is preferable);
2. Intelligible to a general audience (which means they must focus on clearly explaining why the problem is important before describing the nature of the solution);
3. Solve a meaningful problem using technology (the problem solved does not have to be globally meaningful – it could be locally meaningful e.g. improving clean water supply in a developing country using a novel low-cost solution);
4. For Category 1, demonstrated successful practical application;
5. Inspiring in terms of being engaging for a young/student audience;
6. Reviewed for credibility by experts in the domain;
7. In English
8. Submitted by a member academy. For Category 1, the video must be submitted by Fellows of a member academy. For Category 2, the video must be endorsed and submitted by the member academy.

Promoting the Prize

Member Academies are to develop communication plans, respective to the requirements of their country's communication needs to raise awareness of the prize, encourage video submissions, and to celebrate their respective submission/s for the prize and subsequent winners.