



Macao Ricci Institute Together with Wofoo Social Enterprise Partners Launch The Deignan Award for Responsible Entrepreneurship

Applications to enter the award, celebrating SMEs in both Hong Kong and Macao that stay true to ethical business practices, are open now for free

Jointly organised by Macao Ricci Institute at the University of Saint Joseph, Macao, and Wofoo Social Enterprise, the Deignan Award for Responsible Entrepreneurship, in memory of Dr. Alfred Deignan (1927-2018), was officially launched on 22nd April. The launch event was carried out in both online and offline formats, with the physical event held at Ilha Verde Campus of University of Saint Joseph, Macao. The event attracted the participation of guests from small-and medium-sized enterprises, business chambers, associations and institutions in various sectors of Macao, while guests and speakers from Hong Kong also joined the event through live streaming and interacted with the Macao audience. Meanwhile, the event was broadcasted live on the official website and social media of the Award as well as media partners for the public participation.

The Deignan Award for Responsible Entrepreneurship has received great supports from Hong Kong and Macao. Entrepreneurs and government officials from both regions sent out their videos with blessing to kick off the launch ceremony. At the event, Macao guests including Dr. Stephan Rothlin, Chairman of the Deignan Award for Responsible Entrepreneurship and Director of Macau Ricci Institute; Rev's Professor Stephen Morgan, Rector of University of Saint Joseph, Macao; Mr. Antonio Trindade and Ms. Tiffany Leung, Professor of Business Ethics at City University, Macao as well as Hong Kong online guests Bishop Stephen Chow, S. J. Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong and Dr. Joseph Lee, Vice-Chairman of Deignan Award for Responsible Entrepreneurship and President of Wofoo Social Enterprises, officiated the kick-off ceremony. With the presentation of six core values, the Deignan Award for Responsible Entrepreneurship has officially launched.



The Deignan Award, named to commemorate the inspiring mission in education and social service of Dr. Alfred Deignan, aims at encouraging the continuous pursuit of sustainability, corporate social responsibility, business ethics, and ESG considerations and implementation by SMEs in both Hong Kong and Macao.

The organisers are convinced that impact is achieved not only through profit made but also for key factors such as the well-being of all stakeholders; business operations that are driven by environmental-friendly and positive-impact-driven; unified by the vision of creating an inclusive community and raising the next generation of talents and leaders, so that businesses spearheads the creation of social value.

The other key organisers include the University of Saint Joseph, Macao; the Hong Kong International Institute of Educational Leadership as well as the Centre for Catholic Studies at The Chinese University of Hong Kong. The Award is further supported by The Macao Institute for Corporate Social Responsibility in Greater China and Globethics.Net, Geneva . Also as the inaugural edition of the award, an array of organisations have lent their support, with our Steering Committee including Dr. Stephan Rothlin, Macao Ricci Institute; Dr. Joseph Lee, Wofoo Social Enterprises; Prof. Jenny Lao Phillips, Dean of the Faculty of Business and Law of the University of Saint Joseph; Dr. Anselm Lam, Director of Centre for Catholic Studies, The Chinese University of Hong Kong; Prof. Dr. Carlos Noronha, Vice President of the Executive Council, Macao Institute for Corporate Social Responsibility in Greater China; Ms. Karen Neng, Managing Director of the IT firm Moxlink; Fr. John Tang S.J., Warden of Ricci Hall & Chaplain of Hong Kong University; Fr. Emilio Zanetti S.J. , Fund Raising for East Asia. The Steering Committee will provide various supports and resources throughout the judging period, making for a more vibrant competition and making the award a valuable experience for all participants.

The Judging Panel will represent a broad range of circles including the public authorities, social service organisations, academia, caring partners and industry players. The eligible SMEs will be judged on several criteria in regards to respecting human dignity, respecting business ethics,

respecting fairness, respecting the disadvantaged, respecting the environment, and entrepreneurial spirit.

The ceremony represented the official launch of the Deignan Award. Dr Stephan Rothlin, Chairman of the Deignan Award for Responsible Entrepreneurship and Director of Macau Ricci Institute, said on the ceremony: “The Slogan and encouraging message of the Deignan award is: ‘Just do good business.’ I think that it is quite tough these days to be financially successful while still paying full attention to ethics and law under a number of restrictions. I, therefore, hope that the Deignan award could be a modest but significant element to create like-minded networks of SMEs in Hong Kong and Macao. No matter at which stage of an SME we need the constant support and inspiration, especially from people who have proven that it is worth going the extra mile: that doing good business by SME is the engine of the economy.”

Dr. Joseph Lee, Vice-Chairman of Deignan Award for Responsible Entrepreneurship and President of Wofoo Social Enterprises, said: ”Do well and do good is the mission of social enterprises, in which businesses must grow financially while pursuing its sustainability with social purposes. Through DARE, we hope to stimulate more collaboration and discussion about the roles and responsibilities that businesses can play nowadays to individual and societal flourishing. The Award will be a platform, for all who believe in social harmony for sustainable development. Across geographic boundaries, Hong Kong and Macao, we can build shared knowledge, promote good values, seek meaningful relationships, and build strong connections.”

Bishop Stephen Chow, S. J. Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong, said: “Business is not just about money-making. I think all who are participating in this award will not believe that business is just about making a profit. Profit is an important part, but not the only part, and might not be the major part. Because we can see that human beings, a group, any commercial organisation, are formed by people. What they are nurturing, their spirit, how well can they get in touch with their own inner truth, kindness, beauty and love will assist them in continuing their work and speciality and bring these into full play.”

A panel discussion was held along with the launch ceremony with topics discussing how the First Deignan Award of Responsible Entrepreneurship links in special way entrepreneurship in times of crisis and survival with key Confucian values of integrity, honesty, and self-criticism. Participants, Dr. Joseph Lee, Ms. Alice S.M. Law, Mr. Chris Drake from Hong Kong via live video online, and Rev. Stephen Morgan, Ms. Tiffany Cheng Han Leung, Mr. Antonio Trindade from Macao shared their opinions on how the the Deignan Award may inspire individuals and firms in very challenging times to stick to the values.

The entry period of the Award is until 31st August 2022, free of charge. SMEs in both Hong Kong and Macao that employ fewer than 100 persons and meet entry criteria are eligible.

A panel of esteemed judges will shortlist three finalists of SMEs from Hong Kong and Macao respectively, and the Winner of the Deignan Award will be unveiled at the award ceremony on 25th March 2023.

Entry forms and brochures will be available for download from the official website at www.deignanaward.org.

For further information, please visit the Deignan Award official website or contact Secretariat of the Organising Committee:

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About Wofoo Social Enterprise

Founded in 1997, Wofoo Social Enterprises is a collaborative platform that provides a wide range of services. Wofoo is committed to cooperating with the government, business sector, academia, social groups and people from various walks of life, so that resources can be pooled to offer high-quality and up-to-date social services. Our projects emphasise both innovative ideas and sustainable development, as well as aim to strengthen the general public's commitment and contribution to the society.

About Macao Ricci Institute

Macao Ricci Institute is a non-profit, study and research institution dedicated to fostering better mutual understanding between China and the world community. Offering a unique blend of cultural, professional, and research programmes, the purpose and method of the Macao Ricci Institute are best summed up in its links with the city of Macao, the person of Matteo Ricci, the Society of Jesus, and the people of China. Through its programs, publications and services, the Macao Ricci Institute gives witness to the advantages that all share through a continued and mutual search for intercultural understanding.

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