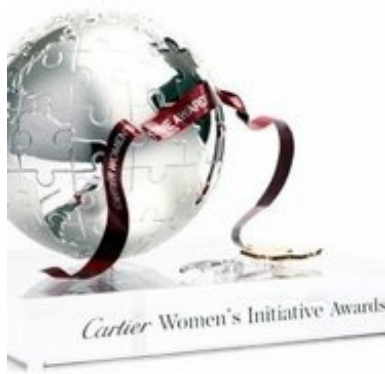


EVENS/CAUSES

Cartier supports female entrepreneurs with Women's Initiative Awards

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By JEN KING

French jeweler Cartier is supporting women entrepreneurs with its annual Cartier Women's Initiative Awards that promotes female-led startup companies.

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Created in 2006 by Cartier and its partners, the Women's Forum, McKinsey & Company and Insead Business School, the awards are given to the woman or group of women with the best business plan submitted to the global competition. Brands can be humanized by investing in causes that empower future leaders.

"The awards are dedicated to women entrepreneurs because they are the most vulnerable category of entrepreneurs," said Christine Borgoltz, corporate communication and public relations director at **Cartier International**, Paris. "Women struggle to be acknowledged as entrepreneurs and business leaders.

"They need to be highlighted and supported," she said. "Access to funding, networks and coaching are barriers that can stand in their way.

"With a majority of female staff members, Cartier is a very female-oriented company. Women are our main customers and our greatest source of inspiration. This is why we were more likely to support women, especially those who create human and social value:

the female entrepreneurs.

"For Cartier, social responsibility is paramount and has governed its ethics from the start. We view our commitment to social responsibility as an act that should bring concrete impact to the community. Especially in times of economic downturn with a need of reassurance, we need to come out of ourselves and affirm the generosity which is at the heart of Cartier's core values. Giving back to the community is part of our culture of generosity."

Cartier is a girl's best friend

The jeweler used its Facebook account to promote the business-driven contest.

The post gives a prompt for submissions, noting that Cartier is seeking "exceptional women entrepreneurs" and directs those interested to the Awards' Web site for additional information. Cartier Women's Initiative Awards has its own Facebook account that is tagged in the post as well.



Cartier's Facebook post

Cartier's Women's Initiative Awards has a three-tiered mission that aims to "identify and support initial-phase women entrepreneurs through funding and coaching" while "foster[ing] the spirit of enterprise by celebrating role models in entrepreneurship" and "create[s] an international network of women entrepreneurs and encourage[s] peer networking," according to the awards' Web site.

On Cartier Women's Initiative Awards Facebook consumers can watch videos of the 2013 finalists speak about important issues such as protecting the environment and healthcare in relation to their business models.

Embedded Video: [//www.youtube.com/embed/zZY38MXGRAM?list=UUXZbz5qzS99gKXwuSixRvCQ](http://www.youtube.com/embed/zZY38MXGRAM?list=UUXZbz5qzS99gKXwuSixRvCQ)

Cartier Women's Initiative Awards 2013 - How will the Awards help you in your business?

To help women who plan on submitting business plans, the Women's Initiative Awards Facebook also includes posts with tips on how to properly apply, such as proofreading the submission form and writing as clearly as possible.

A click-through on the awards' Web site gives a more in-depth overview of how Cartier and its partners identify and support women entrepreneurs through two rounds of competition.

The first round, held in June, selects 18 finalists, the top three projects in six regions: Latin America, North America, Europe, Sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East/North Africa and Asia-Pacific. The finalists are selected based on their business plans and then receive coaching from experienced professionals and move to the next round.

In October, the 18 finalists are invited to France where their detailed business plans will be presented in front of a panel of 30 women, internationally-based judges as well as an invitation to the Annual Global Meeting of the Women's Forum. The winning business plan from each of the six regions receives \$20,000 for funding, one year of coaching, networking opportunities and media exposure.



Finalists of the Cartier Women's Initiative Awards 2013

Cartier is accepting submission until Feb. 28. The application is available on the Cartier Women's Initiative Awards [Web site](#).

Good deeds

Promoting the creative and innovative ideas of others propels the host brand by showing that it cares about its consumers and the community.

For example, family-owned Hermès gained exposure for young international designers through its annual Prix Émile Hermès awards that reflect the brand's Fondation d'entreprise Hermès's ongoing commitment to artisan skills and forward-thinking creativity.

Since 2008, the Prix Émile Hermès prize has been awarded to purposeful designers whose work embodies the notion that a higher-quality life can be achieved through design. By supporting the artisan skills of blossoming designers, Hermès simultaneously shines a light on its own craftsmanship ([see story](#)).

In addition, Toyota Corp.'s Lexus narrowed down a submission pool of 1,157 candidates

to 12 winners for its 2014 Design Award.

The international competition garnered submissions from all over the world, with winners hailing from Germany, Italy, Israel, China, Taiwan, Vietnam and other countries. As a brand that touts itself as an idea innovator, the competition's global outcome bolsters Lexus' credibility ([see story](#)).

Due to the elite status of a luxury brand, giving back is important for gaining continued approval.

"Giving back is the right thing to do," said Marie Driscoll, CEO and chief consultant of Driscoll Advisors, New York. "We all know this deep down inside, it's a way of expressing gratitude individually for the grace that is in our lives.

"So, on the luxury brand front, these brands strive to be the best, to differentiate on the level of extreme beauty and artisan skill," she said. "Generosity of spirit is a value associated with luxury and strengthens our connection to the brand that is generous.

"On a more mundane level, it keeps our economic analytics at bay when we purchase items of delight at prices far in excess of their intrinsic value."

Final Take

Jen King, editorial assistant for Luxury Daily, New York

Embedded Video: [//www.youtube.com/embed/Vx4RW_S9gig](http://www.youtube.com/embed/Vx4RW_S9gig)

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