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Ars Electronica, SAP and UN Global Compact Present New International Digital Art Award Recognizing the Role of Technology in Social Change

NEW YORK, N.Y. — June 22, 2004 — On the evening of 23 June, Ars Electronica, the world's foremost center for media art, SAP and the United Nations Global Compact will co-host the "Innovations for a Better World" Gala at New York's Metropolitan Pavilion to honor the winners of the new Prix Ars Electronica for "Digital Communities." This award recognizes the powerful role information technology can play in helping communities around the world overcome physical, educational and geographic disadvantages. The gala takes place on the eve of the first Global Compact Leaders Summit, to be held on 24 June at UN Headquarters.

The Prix Ars Electronica's prestigious Golden Nicas will be presented to "**Wikipedia**" (<http://www.wikipedia.org>), a free-content encyclopedia currently offered in more than 50 languages, and "**The World Starts With Me**" (<http://www.theworldstarts.org>), a digital health education and AIDS prevention program for young Ugandans. Both winners will take home over \$12,000 in cash prizes, to be used to improve or expand their projects or to set up a new "Digital Community." A total of 441 projects competed for the new award category.

"One of the greatest lasting benefits of the global expansion of the Internet is the ability to apply digital innovation to promote large-scale social innovation," said Les Hayman, chief officer of global human resources, SAP and member of SAP's extended board. "We are proud to single out initiatives and organizations that are creatively using new technologies to advance and improve relations among citizens, governments and the private sector."

“Since its founding in 1979, Ars Electronica has helped raise awareness of the social and cultural consequences of art and new technologies through partnerships with companies and the annual Ars Electronica Festival,” said Gerfried Stocker, director, Ars Electronica. “With the support of SAP, the new Digital Communities award category will further raise awareness by discovering, and supporting innovative programs in all corners of the world.”

“We must harness the potential of information technology if globalization is to succeed,” said Georg Kell, Executive Head of the Global Compact Office. “The projects honored by the Prix Ars Electronica are inspiring demonstrations of what can be done. It is my hope that this award will give further momentum to the spread and application of innovative solutions for the benefit of all.”

In addition to the two top prizes in the “Digital Communities” category, Awards of Distinction will be given to four additional projects, each endowed with \$6,000:

- **dol2day/democracy online today** (Germany - <http://www.dol2day.de>)
- **Krebs-Kompass** (Germany - <http://www.krebs-kompass.de>)
- **Open-Clothes** (Japan - <http://www.open-clothes.com>)
- **smart X tension** (Austria/Zimbabwe - <http://www.mulonga.net>)

An exhibit showcasing the winning projects and finalists of the Prix Ars Electronica for “Digital Communities” will be held in the General Assembly Visitors’ Lobby of United Nations Headquarters in New York from June 24 to July 18. Admission is free to the public. Media representatives are invited to participate in a guided tour of the exhibit at 3 pm on 24 June.

About Ars Electronica

With its specific orientation and the long-standing continuity it has displayed since 1979, Ars Electronica is an internationally unique platform for digital art and media culture consisting of the following four divisions: Ars Electronica – Festival for Art, Technology and Society; Prix Ars Electronica – International Competition for CyberArts; Ars Electronica Center – Museum of the Future; Ars Electronica Futurelab – Laboratory for Future Innovations. As the world’s premier cyberarts competition, the Prix Ars Electronica has been a forum for artistic creativity and innovation since 1987. It is the trend barometer in an ever-expanding and increasingly diversified world of media art. Thanks to its annually recurring nature, its international scope and the variety of the works submitted for prize consideration, the enormous Prix Ars Electronica Archive provides a detailed look at the development of media art and a feel for its openness and diversity.

About SAP

SAP is the world's leading provider of business software solutions. SAP® solutions are designed to meet the demands of companies of all sizes—from small and midsize businesses to global enterprises. Powered by the SAP NetWeaver™ open integration and application platform to reduce complexity and total cost of ownership and empower business change and innovation, mySAP™ Business Suite solutions are helping enterprises around the world improve customer relationships, enhance partner collaboration and create efficiencies across their supply chains and business operations. The unique core processes of various industries, from aerospace to utilities, are supported by more than 25 industry-specific SAP solution portfolios. Today, more than 22,600 customers in over 120 countries run more than 76,100 installations of SAP® software. With subsidiaries in more than 50 countries, the company is listed on several exchanges, including the Frankfurt stock exchange and the NYSE (<http://www.sap.com>)

About the United Nations Global Compact

Launched by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan in 2000, the Global Compact is a voluntary corporate citizenship initiative in support of universal principles in the areas of human rights, labour and the environment. Through the power of collective action, multi-stakeholder dialogue and learning, the Global Compact seeks to advance responsible corporate citizenship so that business can be part of the solution to the challenges of globalization. Since its inception, the Global Compact has become by far the world's largest and most widely embraced initiative of its kind, with more than 1,600 participants from over 70 countries. (<http://www.unglobalcompact.org>)

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