

Lemelson-MIT Awards Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who established the Lemelson-MIT Program?

Jerome H. Lemelson (1923-1997), and his wife, Dorothy, established the Lemelson-MIT Program to recognize and reward outstanding inventors and innovators in the hope of encouraging more young people to pursue careers in science, engineering, technology, and entrepreneurship.

2. Who funds the program?

The Lemelson Foundation funds the program, which is administered by MIT.

3. What is the Lemelson-MIT Program's mission?

The Lemelson-MIT Program recognizes outstanding inventors, encourages sustainable new solutions to real-world problems, and enables and inspires young people to pursue creative lives and careers through invention.

4. How many Lemelson-MIT Awards are there?

There are two annual national awards. The *\$500,000 Lemelson-MIT Prize* is presented to an individual (or two collaborators), who is dedicated to improving our world through technological invention and innovation. The *\$100,000 Lemelson-MIT Award for Sustainability* is presented to an individual (or two collaborators) whose inventions enhance economic opportunities and societal well-being in developing and/or developed countries, while protecting and restoring the natural environment. Each year, the program also awards the *\$30,000 Lemelson-MIT Student Prize* to an MIT student for inventiveness and creativity.

5. Who can apply for the awards?

Candidates for the \$500,000 Lemelson-MIT Prize and \$100,000 Lemelson-MIT Award for Sustainability are identified by nomination only. Individuals seeking to be nominated are welcome to approach a relevant professional organization (science, engineering, medical or business) and/or regional inventors' groups to secure and support a nomination. All MIT seniors and graduate students can apply for the \$30,000 Lemelson-MIT Student Prize. The Student Prize is not an engineering prize; students from across the Institute are eligible.

6. Who qualifies as a nominator for the \$500,000 Lemelson-MIT Prize and \$100,000 Lemelson-MIT Award for Sustainability?

Nominators for the national awards are people with experience in engineering, science, medicine, or business. For example, nominators may be inventors, venture capitalists, engineers, or other influential professionals. Nominators may step forward on behalf of a candidate to submit a nomination or the program may identify and contact potential nominators of worthy candidates.

7. What is the nomination process for the \$500,000 Lemelson-MIT Prize and \$100,000 Lemelson-MIT Award for Sustainability?

Nomination cover sheets can be downloaded at web.mit.edu/invent/a-main.html for both awards. Cover sheets and additional information packets can be mailed upon request. Send mail requests to: Lemelson_Awards@mit.edu.

8. How can one apply for the \$30,000 Lemelson-MIT Program Student Prize?

Applications for the Student Prize are available through the Lemelson-MIT Program Web site, web.mit.edu/invent/a-student.html.

9. Can nominators nominate two candidates for the same award?

Yes, nominators may nominate more than one candidate for the same award.

10. How long are nominations for the \$500,000 Lemelson-MIT Prize and \$100,000 Lemelson-MIT Award for Sustainability active?

Nominations are active for two years.

11. May candidates be re-nominated in subsequent years?

Yes, candidates may be re-nominated in subsequent years, if they have not previously won that award.

12. Who can nominators contact regarding questions during the application process or to review materials for the \$500,000 Lemelson-MIT Prize and \$100,000 Lemelson-MIT Award for Sustainability?

Nominators can email Lemelson_Awards@mit.edu if they have questions about the process or would like their application materials reviewed prior to the deadline.

13. How are the Lemelson-MIT Award winners chosen?

To select winners of the \$500,000 Lemelson-MIT Prize and \$100,000 Lemelson-MIT Award for Sustainability, two independent screening committees comprised of MIT faculty review the nominations and select finalists for each award. A national jury of experts from science, engineering, medicine, technology and business then selects winners from both finalist pools, who must then be ratified by the Lemelson-MIT Prize Board. A judging panel comprised of MIT alumni, including scientists, technologists, engineers, and entrepreneurs, chooses the \$30,000 Lemelson-MIT Student Prize recipient.

14. Does the Lemelson family participate in the selection of the winners?

No, the Lemelson family is the benefactor of the program and does not participate in the selection processes.

15. How will the Lemelson-MIT Award winners be notified?

After final deliberations are made, the winners of the \$500,000 Lemelson-MIT Prize, \$100,000 Lemelson-MIT Award for Sustainability, and \$30,000 Lemelson-MIT Student Prize are each notified by telephone from the Lemelson-MIT Program director.

16. When are the Lemelson-MIT Award winners notified?

The Lemelson-MIT Program director notifies the winners of the \$500,000 Lemelson-MIT Prize and \$100,000 Lemelson-MIT Award for Sustainability in February of the awarding year, and the winner of the \$30,000 Lemelson-MIT Student Prize in January of the awarding year.

17. When will the Lemelson-MIT Award winners be announced?

The winners of the \$500,000 Lemelson-MIT Prize and \$100,000 Lemelson-MIT Award for Sustainability are announced each spring of the awarding year. The winner of the \$30,000 Lemelson-MIT Student Prize is announced during a press conference at MIT in February of the awarding year.

(more)

18. Are there requirements about how Lemelson-MIT Award monies must be spent?

There are no requirements as to how Lemelson-MIT Award winners must allocate their award monies. The awards are intended to recognize inventors, sustain inventive communities, and inspire youth to invent. Winners will be invited and encouraged to participate in Lemelson-MIT Program activities, including youth outreach opportunities to inspire young people to pursue creative lives and careers.

19. Are there other Student Prizes?

The Lemelson-MIT Program also funds the \$30,000 Lemelson-Illinois Student Prize and the \$30,000 Lemelson-Rensselaer Student Prize, which are administered by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, respectively.

20. What type of grants does the Lemelson-MIT Program offer?

Lemelson-MIT InvenTeams is a national grants initiative that awards up to \$10,000 to teams of high school students, teachers, and mentors to create an invention to solve a problem they have identified. Grants are awarded annually based on inventiveness, ingenuity and feasibility of project proposals. For more information on InvenTeams please visit web.mit.edu/inventeams/.