

Call for Applications – Mekel Prize 2023

Dear colleague,

After a Covid-related hiatus, we are glad to announce that the Mekel Prize will be awarded again in 2023.

The Prize is rewarded to honour the memory of Prof. Jan Mekel, a former employee of TU Delft, who stood up for his values and ideals against an oppressive regime. He initiated a resistance movement against the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands, for which he was sentenced to death and subsequently deported and killed in Sachsenhausen in 1942. Through his heroic actions, Mekel showed that the responsibilities of a scientist towards society do not end at the doorsteps of an office on campus.

Societies nowadays face other, big challenges: Climate change, global pandemics, artificially intelligent and autonomous technologies, and many more. TU Delft aims to contribute to dealing and perhaps resolving those big societal challenges in a morally and socially acceptable way. In line with the goals outlined in the European Horizon 2020 framework on “Responsible Research and Innovation”, which was adopted by the Netherlands Research Organization (NWO), TU Delft wants to foster innovations that are not only technologically ground-breaking but also socially responsible:

"Responsible research and innovation is an approach that anticipates and assesses potential implications and societal expectations with regard to research and innovation, with the aim to foster the design of inclusive and sustainable research and innovation."

Goal of the award

The Mekel Prize will be awarded to the most responsible innovation or research project at the TU Delft – projects that showcase in outstanding fashion that they have been committed from the beginning to relevant moral and societal values and have been aware of and tried to mitigate as much as possible in innovative ways the risks involved in their research. The award recognizes such efforts and wants to encourage the responsible development of science and technology at TU Delft in the future. The Mekel Prize is comprised of a statue of Professor Jan Mekel and €1500,-

Procedure

Eligible for application are all employees of TU Delft and Master students, whose projects are either currently undertaken at TU Delft or have been undertaken at TU Delft and finished within the past 2 years. Please begin your application with a concise and clear description of your project, so that an interdisciplinary committee can understand what you have done. In your application, you are furthermore kindly invited to reflect on the responsibility aspects of the innovative idea or project. We would like you to describe, how your project addresses the different aspects of responsible innovation (see the judging criteria below). Please make your reflection no longer than a maximum of 2 DIN-A4 pages of text.

We expect that the applications always have one main applicant, who will be the main recipient of the Prize. Up to 2 other researchers can be mentioned as main contributors/members of the research team – they will be mentioned on the certificate. The prize money will be shared equally among the team members.

The committee judges your innovation or project and your reflections on basis of the following criteria below. The innovative idea with the highest score will win.

Judging criteria

Addressing societal problem

- To what degree does the innovative idea/project contribute to solving a societal challenge?

Societal values

- Does the innovative idea/project take societal values into account (such as safety, health, sustainability, human welfare, justice, and privacy) and have they been taken into account during the development or design process?

Risks

- Have possible risks or other negative effects of your innovative ideas/project been anticipated? Which actions have been taken to mitigate and reduce these risks and effects?

Social use

- Have you anticipated the social use or implementation of your innovative idea/project and have you incorporated these insights during the development of your innovative idea/project?

Inclusiveness

- Did you have an inclusive development process? Did you engage relevant stakeholders during the development of your innovative idea?

Transparency

- Did you have a transparent development process? Can you account for the choices made during the development process to society?

Please send your reflection to Mekelprize-TBM@tudelft.nl before **the deadline of 22 October 2023**. We will notify the winner around **12 November 2023**.

We expect the prospective winner (main applicant) to be present during the Van Hasselt Lecture on the evening of **22 November 2023**, which will take place in Delft in the Van der Mandelezaal of the **Museum het Prinsenhof**. The winner will ceremonially receive the award after the lecture by Rector Magnificus Prof. Tim van der Hagen.

For more information about the competition, or about responsible innovation please visit the [website](#). If you have further question about the Prize or the application procedure, please do not hesitate to contact us.

The Mekel Prize Committee is very much looking forward to receiving your reflections.

Yours sincerely,

Martin Sand & Susanne Sleenhoff

Members of the Committee:

- Prof. Merle van Kreuk
- Dr. Anneke Zuiderwijk-van Eijk
- Prof. Mieke van der Bijl-Brouwer
- Prof. David Abbink
- Dr. Martin Sand