

IMEX Gala Dinner Hosts Awards Winners



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The IMEX Gala Dinner took place last night (April 23). Several awards were presented throughout the night.



Annual IMEX Academy Awards

The Annual IMEX Academy Awards took place at the Gala Dinner and were met with widespread praise and applause by an enthusiastic industry audience.

Introducing the prestigious and popular Awards, IMEX Managing Director, Paul Flackett explained that the industry currently demonstrates more strength and depth than he can ever remember.

The first individual Award of the night, the Joint Meetings Industry Council (JMIC) Unity Award was presented to Hans Friis, Executive Director of Brahler ICS AG. Hans accepted his Award from JMIC President, Barbara Maple.

The MPI Foundation Youth Award is made each year to a young student who has made a particularly insightful contribution to the meetings industry through a piece of research. This year's winner, British student Ashley Boniface of Thames Valley University, produced a paper that demonstrated an alternative use for the Phillips ROI Events Methodology. In the opinion of the judges, Boniface's paper impressively demonstrated that this commonly used model could also be applied by delegates to determine the value they gain from attending an independent educational conference. Her award was presented by MPI Executive Vice President, Foundation and Chief Business Architect, Katie Callahan-Giobbi.

IMEX also presents a series of Academy Awards to individuals in four different global regions. This year's Asia-Pacific Academy Award was presented to Pieter van der Hoeven. Pieter van der Hoeven has served for four years as President of ICCA.

The 2008 IMEX Academy Award for The Americas was presented to Jane Schuldt. Schuldt has served as President of SITE (Society of Incentive and Travel Executives) and the SITE Foundation, as well as working tirelessly to develop younger members of the industry.

As winner of the Academy Award for Europe, Barbra Albrecht has been relentless in her pursuit of developing her native destination, Switzerland, and is widely acknowledged to have maintained high standards of service delivery.

The Academy Award for Africa and The Middle East was made to Angeline Lue. Apart from being an enthusiastic, encouraging and dedicated Global Business Tourism Manager at South African Tourism where she is responsible for leading and implementing the Business Tourism Growth Strategy, Lue is also Chairperson of the ICCA Africa Chapter.

A particularly popular "Special Mention" Award was made this year to one of the industry's most widely known and energetic personalities, Walter Foletti of Expoforce.

IMEX Green Meetings 'Gold' Award

The winners of the 2008 IMEX Green Meetings 'Gold' Award were announced last night at the IMEX Gala Dinner as Scandic Hotels.

IMEX runs the only Green Awards in the meetings industry and the Green Meetings Award in particular has become a distinguished prize and important public acknowledgement for those meeting planners and suppliers committed to delivering environmentally friendly meetings and demonstrating tangible outcomes.

As a hotel chain, Scandic owns the operation of its hotels and concepts such as meetings are highly standardised within the business. Judges praised Scandic Hotels for the depth and detail provided in their submission, one of the many impressive entries received. They also acknowledged the extensive and systematic efforts made by the hotel chain in its commitment to measuring green practices. Examples include a programme for improving the utilisation of natural resources called "Save and Change" and a monthly report – The Sustainability Indicator. This SIR sets yearly savings targets for each hotel on electricity and energy usage. Compared to 1999 when the Ariadne property joined the Group, energy consumption per guest night has been reduced by 12.27% thanks to careful monitoring, changes in behaviour and the application of new technology. Scandic Hotels also systematically measure and set targets for elements such as air quality, environmentally friendly cleaning products, use of organic food, water conservation and waste management.

IMEX Green Exhibitor of the Year

In awarding this year's Green Exhibitor of the Year Award to Malta Tourism Authority, Head of the Judging Panel, Amy Spatrisano, President of the Green Meeting Industry Council, paid tribute to the fact that the organisation "had gone the extra mile to demonstrate their green credentials where some might have been tempted to fall back on old habits."

Malta's success this year is attributed to its use of lightweight, recycled materials and water-based paints in its stand construction together with a much reduced use of plastics, paper and water. With the help of stand designers, Zaffarese Exhibitions & Events Ltd and German suppliers of modular systems, Octanorm, judges decided that Malta had achieved a high standard of environmentally-friendly compliance. They also heard how Malta had been inspired by the new Eco-Certification Scheme recently introduced by the Malta Tourism Authority. This helps the islands many hotels to attract more visitors by demonstrating clear environmental performance measures.

Judges also praised Malta for approaching their IMEX stand design with a "creative yet impressively sustainable mindset."

IMEX Green Supplier Award

IMEX and the Green Meeting Industry Council developed the Green Supplier Award shortly after last year's show to recognise environmental excellence and innovation within the meetings industry. The Award represents the highest accolade for environmental responsibility among meeting suppliers.

The award is presented to Fairmont Hotels & Resorts. Gala Dinner guests heard how Fairmont first launched their Green Partnership Programme in 1990. The Group has since developed and expanded the scheme to include sustainable procurement processes, waste management plus water and energy conservation measures. In 2007 Fairmont launched 'Eco-Meet', a four-point, proprietary green meeting and conference planning tool designed to help planners reduce conference waste. The Group also recently entered into a partnership with the World Wildlife Fund to develop a climate change strategy.

The 2008 Silver Award was made to Vancouver Convention & Exhibition Centre in recognition of its 20-year history of taking active steps to manage and minimise its impact on the environment. IMEX judges also "highly commended" excellent nominations from The Direct Energy Centre and Apex Hotels.

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