BE OPEN celebrates the jury for Design Equality with Innovation: a competition for students dedicated to the UN Sustainable Development Programme

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LUGANO, Switzerland, May 16, 2026 /PRNewswire/ â?? DESIGN EQUALITY with Innovation is the 7th international competition in the SDGs-focused programme run by the socio-cultural initiative BE OPEN and its partners. The competition is open to students and graduates worldwide. The competition aims to encourage creation of innovative solutions by younger people, for a more prosperous and sustainable future.

According to the UN Department of Economic and Social Development, empowering women and girls plays a critical role in accelerating economic growth and social development. BE OPEN advocates that by dedicating the 2025/2026 competition to SDG#5, thus promoting the solutions that advance gender equality, meet the needs of women and girls, and promote women as innovators and entrepreneurs.

BE OPEN will reward the best work with grants ranging from â?¬2,000 to â?¬5,000, educational opportunities and trips to a major sustainability-focused international event.

The winning submissions will be selected by an international jury that features sustainability professionals, academics, designers, and experts in environmental policies and practices. On behalf of BE OPEN, Founder Elena Baturina welcomed the jury members: â??We are thrilled to have assembled such an extraordinary and diverse panel, and are deeply grateful for the time and expertise the jury are willing to share with our contestants and the wide public in the course of the competition. There is an exciting period ahead of us full of hard work and amazing discoveriesâ?•.

This yearâ??s jury panel features Barbara della Rovere, the Community Manager of the Innovation Champions Network at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); Helen Watts, the Executive Director of Student Energy; Anna Kaplina, the Environmental Affairs Officer at the UNECE Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution and the Gender Focal Point for the UNECE Forests and Environment Division; Peter Gamundani, a sustainability specialist with the Global Sustainable Solution Agents (GSSA); Anastasia Adamidou from the Office of the Commissioner for

Gender Equality of Cyprus, FranÃ§oise Mlebinge, the Programme Officer at SOLIFEDE-RDC, and Ajisafe Damilola Ifeoluwa, the President of the Foot Impact Unilorin Chapter, and the founder of TerraYouth Africa.

The announcement of the three main winners selected by the jury will take place at the end of May 2026.

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