



20 February 2024

## UN GLOBAL COMPACT COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT

Technology Academy Finland (TAF) reiterates its support for the UN Global Compact and confirms its ongoing commitment to the initiative.

In this Communication on Engagement, we give information about the actions TAF has taken between March 2, 2022, and March 2, 2024, to support the UN Global Compact and how we are engaged with the initiative.

### Our mission

TAF is an independent foundation, with a mission to celebrate the world's greatest technological innovations that are crucial in solving global challenges. The foundation develops and governs the biennial Millennium Technology Prize, the preeminent global award focused on technological innovations for a better life. This includes work that improves human well-being, biodiversity, and sustainability at large. The prize money is one million euros, and it is awarded every two years. The foundation increases public awareness of the Prize and ensures its high academic standard. TAF provides an international meeting ground for corporate life, academia, and policy makers, as well as improves Finland's position in the global community.

### Promotion of sustainability principles

One of the key objectives of our communications strategy is to engage academia, businesses, and the public sector to encourage collaboration to tackle global challenges. This includes cross-national collaborations, as solving issues like climate change requires international cooperation. In addition to academia, our target groups for communications include large, medium and start-up companies involved in research and development work, committed to sustainability and innovation to benefit human well-being. We foster dialogue with NGOs and nonprofits involved in environment and/or science education, and with communities who share the concern for the future of our planet.

We measure the success of the global dissemination of our sustainability principles by the number of nominations we receive from different parts of the world. In 2023, we received 69 nominations, an increase of 73% compared to 2021. The share of nominations from outside Europe and North America reached an all-time high of 46%. The share of women nominees was 16%, the second highest achievement in our 20-year history.



MILLENNIUM  
TECHNOLOGY  
PRIZE



## Sustainability in operations

We want to ensure that we follow the UN Global Compact principles in our own work. The Millennium Technology Prize has a set of rules for its selection committees, embodied in the Terms of Reference that guide the work when selecting the technological innovation to be rewarded. The rules were most recently updated in November 2023 to strengthen our alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Goals by reducing the carbon footprint of our own activities. The nominations for the Prize are evaluated by two committees, which have traditionally met face to face. As communications technology has evolved, it has become feasible to organize the committee meetings as hybrid meetings, in which members can also participate remotely. This has reduced the need for the committee members to travel. Only the final meeting, where the International Selection Committee makes its final recommendation to the TAF board of the Prize winner is held as a face-to-face meeting in Helsinki. This change in our process has reduced the carbon footprint of the selection process.

In daily operations, we have engaged in several actions to reduce the environmental effects. Our office is in carbon-neutral premises that are easily accessible by public transportation. The office building has been awarded a platinum-level LEED environmental certificate for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. We are offering a subsidy to personnel to use public transportation. Our IT system is operating in a cloud environment, and we have maximized the use of digital services, further reducing the use of paper.

In our HR policy, we comply with the freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining. We do not approve of or engage in any forms of discrimination in our recruitment nor our daily work.

## Partnerships

We select our corporate partners by applying sustainability and responsibility criteria, based on publicly available ESG (Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance) data. We require that a partner company is a member of UN Global Compact or has made a comparable public commitment to sustainable development.

We have currently ten corporate partners, all of which fulfil our criteria for responsible business. We have ten Finnish universities as academic partners, and we have made note of their advanced responsibility strategies and reporting. We participate in meetings and events organized by UN Global Compact Finland on a regular basis.

## Integrity

We work against corruption by having strict control over the integrity of our winner selection process. In addition to review by our selection committees, the nominations are studied and evaluated by experts who are completely detached from the makers of the final decision, and their identity is kept secret. All participants in the process are required to sign a non-disclosure agreement. Adherence to an ethical Code of Conduct in the research and development work leading to the nominated innovation is among the prize selection criteria.



We will maintain our UN Global Compact Communication on Engagement to help us stay focused and continuously improve in these areas.

Markku Ellilä  
Chief Executive Officer