

First Winner of US\$500,000 Supercomputing Giveaway for Global South Sustainability Aces Interview


LONDON, UK, February 7, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Today - 6th February 2023 - Nigerian researcher who wants take carbon-reducing knowledge 'from the ivory towers to the common man on the street' was announced as the first winner of a half-million-dollar supercomputing competition.

Dr. Samuel Adekunle, based at Johannesburg University in South Africa, was the first applicant to be shortlisted by the Expert Panel for The See Through Carbon Competition, who approved his project following a rigorous interview. Dr. Adekunle and his team advise:


“We are really delighted by the award, our thanks to the Panel for their meticulous and transparent process.”

See Through News set up the Competition, following an unsolicited, and until now anonymous, donation on 15th December 2022. In collaboration with the donor, they used the advanced computing technology for the See Through Carbon Competition. The Competition favours projects that promote carbon drawdown in the 'Global South', i.e. the world's poorest countries. This pilot Competition ends when the US\$500,000 is exhausted, or on April 10th 2023 - whichever comes first.

Dr. Adekunle's team immediately start working with the donor, preparing emissions data that his team has been gathering in two of Africa's biggest cities over the past 18 months for cloud



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A Carbon Tale of Two African Cities

For the past 18 months, Dr. Adekunle has been monitoring emissions at two of Africa's biggest airports, Lagos and Johannesburg, as well as downtown areas in both cities.

His project proposes using cloud computing and Machine Learning to analyse real-time data from sensors monitoring emissions patterns. The results will benchmark the current level of emissions at a granular scale. Dr. Adekunle then wants to identify actionable ways to inform ordinary citizens how to change their behaviour in order to reduce emissions

Dr. Adekunle is a researcher in construction and the built environment. He is very familiar with both airports. As a native of Lagos, Nigeria who studies at the University of Johannesburg in South Africa, he's had an intimate personal experience of both locations over the past few years.

In the interests of transparency and to help other potential candidates with their applications, [his video interview](#) is available online on the See Through News YouTube Channel. During the interview, he explained his mission:

"Aside from creating a framework for carbon emissions for the Global South, there's also the aspect of using nudges to make people and stakeholders aware of the impact of carbon, and make them also conscious and intentional in terms of their activities, so that they don't do things that add to carbon emissions, and increase their carbon footprint."

"Taking lessons from the ivory towers to the common man in the streets...Most of the people on the streets don't even know about it [carbon emissions]. How do we bring it to the ordinary man on the street to say 'you must be involved in what is affecting us all?'"

[Global Sustainable Future Network](#), a non-profit alliance of early-career researchers in the Global South, partnered with See Through News to promote the Competition to its network, and shortlist applicants. In her assessment of Dr. Adekunle's proposal, GSFN Founder Dr. Renuka Thakore, a carbon auditing expert, emphasised its bold spirit of enquiry:

"Samuel deserves this. As a researcher myself, looking at this project, we are not looking for ultimate answers here, We're looking to understand what we can do, how we can improve, and how we can bring something to the table of the common people, as Samuel has described it, who can actively be engaged with this."

Competition Expert Panel Announced

The See Through News website has just published details of their Expert Panelists, which will be

updated as new volunteer experts are added.

The initial line-up includes:

Jonathan Watts, Global Environment Editor of The Guardian

Dr. Renuka Thakore, Carbon Auditing expert and founder of the Global Sustainable Futures Network

Guy Watson, founder of Riverford Organic Vegetables

Dr. Michael Uschold, leading ontological taxonomist and expert in knowledge representation.

Dr. Joe Jack Williams, carbon auditing expert in the construction industry and AI PhD supervisor

Dr. Susan Lechelt, human-computer interaction expert at Edinburgh University's School of Informatics

Robert Barnard-Weston, veteran sustainability consultant and eco-entrepreneur

Tom Beese, serial advanced computing entrepreneur

Robert Stern, founder of See Through News

The panel provides feedback to applications shortlisted by Competition partner the Global Sustainable Futures Network.

In the interests of transparency and education, all shortlisted applications, together with the Experts' feedback, will be published on the See Through News website. The Panel aims to assess each shortlisted application with feedback from at least one expert from each of the following three categories:

Technical Experts: assessing Application's computing requirements

Subject Experts: specialist knowledge assessing feasibility and methodology

Political Experts: assessing applications against the - how quickly the research results might start measurably reducing real world carbon.

Applications are still open. Organisers recommend that applicants carefully read the following points - all [accessible on this website](#).

Anonymous Competition Donor Revealed

The donor of the half million dollar's-worth of computing wanted to remain anonymous until a winner was found. Following this announcement of the first Competition winner, the donor has been named: Yellow Dog.

CEO Tom Beese, one of the Expert Panel's Technical Experts, said:

"Now there's a first winner, we are delighted. From the first moment of hearing what See Through News was setting out to do to increase the awareness and empowerment all of us in reducing carbon, we thought this an important initiative to support if we could. And now, we think that Samuel Adekunle's research could be a brilliant example of that initiative in action. We congratulate him highly on his win and look forward very much to working with him. While we

are becoming visible in our support of the SeeThrough Carbon initiative now that there is a first winner, the story is really about See Through Carbon and the winner, not us. That is why we were very happy to be in the background throughout.”

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