



PRESS INFORMATION

Research Prize for innovative ideas in shoe and textile recycling

I:Collect AG and EPEA International Environmental Research are awarding the international Research Prize "I:CO AWARD – rethink. recycle. reward." with €5,000 for cutting-edge ideas in the field of shoe and textile recycling. The application deadline is July 31, 2010.

Hamburg, march 05, 2010 (jw) - Every year, in Europe, more than one million tons of used textiles and shoes are thrown out with the domestic waste. I:Collect AG wants to avert this burden for the environment with their collection system, I:CO ("I collect") and accept used shoes, clothes and textiles in the branches of their associated partners. I:CO recycles them professionally and environmentally-friendly; thereby keeping valuable raw materials in a cycle of re-use. Ideas for shoe and textile recycling will be rewarded with the Research Prize the 'I:CO AWARD'. "Consumers should be able to buy clothes and shoes with a clear environmental conscience, wear them proudly, and return these items to a cycle of circulation. We intend to contain 100% of all textiles and shoes in a continuous, everlasting cycle by 2030. In order to achieve this challenging aim, we need new innovative ideas", says Stephan Wiegand, Board of Directors, I:Collect AG.

I:CO is also supported by Prof. Dr. Michael Braungart of EPEA International Environmental Research, Hamburg and creator of the Cradle to Cradle concept. Cradle to Cradle's objective is the production of zero waste, and to win back valuable raw materials. During the initial manufacturing of consumer products it should be taken into consideration whether or not these products are biologically degradable, and if they will be able to serve as a fertilizer, or completely recycled in some other way. Dr. Braungart challenges: "How can we succeed in keeping these valuable raw textile materials in a recycling circuit? What can we improve at the initial production of shoes and clothing? We want to take shoe and textile recycling to a new level and make its significance for our environment clear." He and I:CO have initiated the International Research Prize „I:CO AWARD – rethink. recycle. reward.“.

"I:CO AWARD" will be given for the first time this November at the Nutec trade show in Germany. A jury of european environmental experts and a delegation from I:CO's partner affiliates will decide on the nominees and winners of this internationally advertized Research Prize. All nominees are invited to the Nutec trade show to present their ideas. The winner will be announced there, be publicly honored, and receive the I:CO AWARD and €5,000.





Applications for the I:CO AWARD are being accepted until July 31, 2010. According to Stephan Wiegand, "There are no limits to the creativity of the projects: from converting used shirts into coffee filters to the development of a formula for the 100% recycling of shoe soles. Every application is welcome." Additional information and terms of participation can be found at www.i-co.ag/ico-award.

Benefactor's Background: The Swiss company I:Collect AG is a member of the SOEX Group, located in Switzerland. I:CO has been collecting old textiles and shoes in the branches of their partner companies ADLER Modemärkte, Bingo shoe discount, MAX SHOES, MISTER MINIT, RENO, Stichweh Dry Cleaners and Vögele Shoes since February, 2009, in Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Luxembourg, where customers receive shopping coupons for clothes and shoes in return.

More information at www.i-co.ag

EPEA Background: EPEA International Environmental Research GmbH (located in Hamburg) was founded in 1987 by Prof. Dr. Michael Braungart and focuses on dealing with the development of ecologically optimized products and procedures, recognizing and avoiding the infiltration of pollutants in biological or technical systems, material stream management and the assessment of materials in regards to their environmental and health compatibility. The idea behind it: Cradle to Cradle® is working with various companies to develop products capable of conversion and recycling, economically viable for the environment and healthy for the users. Their innovative design goes beyond form and functionality. Cradle to Cradle® products are developed (in view of a positive definition and assessment) with special attention to content materials and offer new dimensions of product quality and security; nevertheless, they remain conventional products economically, ecologically and socially superior.

More information at www.epea.com

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