

MEDIA RELEASE**SABRE EDUCATION AND RIGHT TO PLAY GHANA JOINTLY RECOGNIZED AMONG TOP 10 FINALISTS FOR CHF 600,000 (\$614,000) KLAUS J. JACOBS BEST PRACTICE PRIZES 2022**

- ***Sabre Education and Right To Play Ghana, both based in Accra, Ghana, recognized for their joint project to scale play-based early years teacher training across Ghana***
- ***Three Best Practice Prize recipients will be awarded CHF 200,000 each and announced on 30 September at a ceremony taking place in Zurich***
- ***All 10 finalists will convene for a co-creation event on 1 October, and are also eligible for follow-on funding of up to CHF 150,000***

Zurich, July 13, 2022: Sabre Education and Right To Play Ghana have been jointly named as top 10 finalists for the Klaus J. Jacobs Best Practice Prizes 2022, a set of three awards each worth CHF 200,000 (\$208,000) that honor outstanding achievement and practice in advancing quality education.

The Accra-based partners' implementation models focus on delivering play-based early years teacher training, through in-person and virtual workshops, in-classroom coaching and supervision.

The three recipients of this year's Best Practice Prizes will be announced at a ceremony in Zurich on 30 September 2022. For the first time, the 10 finalists will convene for a co-creation event, taking place on 1 October 2022. They will exchange knowledge and ideas on advancing learning, and will have the opportunity to partner with other shortlisted applicants to develop proposals for new projects. Two concepts will receive follow-on funding of up to CHF 150,000 (\$156,000) each.

Awarded every other year, the Klaus J. Jacobs Best Practice Prizes recognize non-profits, businesses, and social ventures that are bringing forth innovative solutions to some of education's biggest challenges.

Fabio Segura and Simon Sommer, co-CEOs of the Jacobs Foundation, said:

"We want to warmly congratulate the Sabre Education and Right To Play Ghana partnership on becoming a top 10 finalist for the Klaus J. Jacobs Best Practice Prizes 2022. These prizes were created to showcase the groundbreaking work that businesses, social ventures, and non-profits all around the world are doing to ensure children have access to quality education. There is not a moment to lose. By bringing to light the evidence of what works we can use it to implement solutions that can be tailored to learners' diverse individual needs.

"In the age of COVID, it is also important to share ideas and evidence of what works on the ground to help shift policy, particularly as education systems adapt to a new and unfamiliar terrain. That is why we are launching this new follow-on collaboration funding of up to CHF 150,000. We look forward to bringing together all 10 Best Practice Prize finalists for our co-creation event, and we can't wait to see what inspiring concepts they come up with together."

Susan Place Everhart, CEO of Sabre Education, said:

“We are so grateful to the Jacobs Foundation for recognizing Sabre Education and Right To Play Ghana among the top 10 finalists for the prestigious Best Practice Prizes. We look forward to connecting with all the inspiring organizations that have been shortlisted for these awards, and see how we can advance education together.”

Josephine Mukakalisa, Country Director of Right To Play Ghana, said:

“We are thankful to the Jacobs Foundation for including Right To Play and Sabre Education in the shortlist for this award. We hope to use this incredible platform to share our learnings, and help even more teachers in Ghana and around the world gain the knowledge and skills to transform their classrooms into creative and engaging play-based learning environments.”

Sabre Education and Right To Play Ghana

Sabre Education and Right To Play Ghana deliver play-based early years teacher training, in direct partnership with the Government of Ghana. They also engage the wider school ecosystem, including head teachers, parents and local government to ensure system-wide change. As a result, teachers are provided with the knowledge, skills and support to transform their classrooms into child-centered, play-based learning environments.

While 85% of kindergarten teachers in Ghana have received some formal training, according to the country’s Education Management Information System 2018/19 project, very few have been trained to teach Ghana’s new play-based kindergarten curriculum using active, play-based teaching methods. This is despite the fact that play-based kindergarten learning is seen as the most effective for a child’s brain development. As a result, after four years of compulsory education only 2% of pupils are attaining the desired standards for literacy.

Sabre and Right To Play came together in 2021 as strategic partners, combining their collective expertise, to support the Ghanaian Government to scale quality play-based teacher training to every kindergarten teacher in Ghana. Together, they have engaged the wider early childhood education (ECE) sector in Ghana and worked closely with ECE champions within the government to develop an optimal, scalable, play-based teacher training model. They have strengthened stakeholder buy-in, and are now supporting the government to roll it out across Ghana.

The collaborative approach that Sabre and Right To Play Ghana have adopted to scale play-based teacher training across Ghana is bringing the early years education sector together in a totally new way. The collaboration to develop the scalable teacher training model has flipped the script on siloed working; for the first time an equitable learning experience is possible for over one million pre-primary Ghanaian children.

Ninety master trainers have been trained in the delivery of the scalable teacher training model, ready to be deployed across the country. The ambition is to reach all 261 of Ghana’s districts, providing training to 40,076 kindergarten teachers to ensure all 1.6 million kindergarten pupils receive a quality start to their education.

On average, after receiving Sabre’s teacher training, educators score over 80% in their competency of delivering play-based teaching. In 2019, an assessment of 3,222 children after

Sabre's teacher training showed 72% had a sufficient or strong mastery of pre-reading, pre-writing, mathematical, psychosocial and communication skills. At the end of an early childhood education (ECE) project conducted by Right To Play in Uganda in 2020/21 to improve access and quality of ECE interventions for refugees, all 60 teachers trained were competent in implementing play-based learning and all 2,371 children successfully transitioned to primary school.

If the partners are named as recipients of one of the Best Practice Prizes, they plan to use the funds to support and help catalyze the national scaling of quality play-based teacher training in Ghana. Important next steps include supporting the Government to test, evaluate and implement delivery models at scale to refine the training content and ensure high impact, develop a national monitoring and evaluation framework for the teacher training and identify finance models for national scale-up. They will also leverage the power of technology to cost-effectively and sustainably train more teachers through e-learning and communities of practice.

Klaus J. Jacobs Best Practice Prizes

Applications for the Best Practice Prizes 2022 opened on 6 January and closed on 10 February 2022. Recipients must demonstrate outstanding achievement in advancing learning and education, and embrace variability in learning. Their projects should draw on scientific evidence, use a clear results framework, and must be sustainable, scalable, and financially viable. Finally, they must build on strong leadership and partner networks.

In memory of its founder, the entrepreneur Klaus J. Jacobs, who passed away in 2008, the Jacobs Foundation presents two awards every other year for exceptional achievements in research and practice in the field of child and youth development and learning. The Klaus J. Jacobs Research Prize rewards scientific work that is highly relevant to society, and the Klaus J. Jacobs Best Practice Prizes honor exceptional commitment and innovative solutions of institutions.

Notes to editors:

The Jacobs Foundation is active worldwide in promoting child and youth development and learning. The Foundation was founded in Zurich by entrepreneur Klaus J. Jacobs in 1989. As part of its Strategy 2030, it has committed 500 million Swiss francs to advance evidence-based ideas for learning, to support schools in offering quality education, and to transform education ecosystems around the world. <https://jacobsfoundation.org/en/>

Right To Play is a global organization that protects, educates and empowers children to rise above adversity using the power of play. We reach 2.3 million children each year in some of the most difficult and dangerous places on earth, helping them to stay in school and graduate, resist exploitation, overcome prejudice, prevent disease and heal from the trauma of war. We do this by harnessing play, one of the most fundamental forces in a child's life, to teach children the critical skills they need to dismantle barriers and embrace opportunities, in learning and in life. Visit www.righttoplay.com for more information.

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