

IJGlobal ESG Outstanding Contribution Award – Anne Foster

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When the independent panel of judges met over Teams to work through the submissions for the inaugural IJGlobal ESG Awards, we fully expected there to be one Rising Star and one Lifetime Achievement.

However, as they reviewed submissions, it became immediately apparent that they had other things in mind. And we were perfectly happy for them to take charge as they had a clear remit to veto awards should they believe they reduce credibility.

When it came to Anne Foster, global head of ESG at Quinbrook Infrastructure Partners, the judges were in a quandary. They felt that a lifetime achievement award was too much for someone who clearly has a great deal more to give, so they created the Outstanding Contribution category.

They were effusive in their praise, with one judge saying that “Anne embodies ESG leadership in energy and infrastructure sectors” and another recognising her “brilliant achievements” with “no doubt of more in store”.

One judge said: “Anne may only be midway through her career, but her contribution to driving improved ESG outcomes spanning many diverse themes and industries can genuinely be described as outstanding. Her achievements leave me in awe, wondering just how she does it and I’m sure that in time she will be following James to the Lifetime Achievement award.”

This judge was referring to James Cameron who was selected in the judging session to receive the IJGlobal ESG Lifetime Achievement Award.





Another judge added: “Despite the outstanding performance at her current firm with tangible benefits generated by a wide range of projects – many of which were strong contenders in this award – Anne’s work reach is also reflected into industry advocacy, mentoring, thought leadership and many others. An early embracer of sustainability and definitely a role model for the new generation of ESG practitioners.”

This personal accolade is echoed throughout the awards with Quinbrook being recognised for winning the IJGlobal ESG Award – Technology and highly commended in the Social category... a good deal of which was down to Anne’s efforts.

“It is wonderful to be at this point in my career where the world is realising the need to build more sustainable businesses and to be able to work in a business that has ESG principles at its core,” says Anne.

“The Founders of Quinbrook built a company with climate resilience, mitigation and solutions as its foundation. We know our responsibility lies across all areas of ESG – including human rights and community impact, a just transition, diversity, biodiversity, environmental management and sound governance.

“We work day-to-day to steward investees to create more positive outcomes and – far beyond policy and process alone – are incredibly lucky to have portfolio teams so closely aligned and active in achieving the goals, on the ground, that we seek to implement for our investors and to drive change.

“Coming from years of mixing finance, environmental science and human rights it is wonderful for me to see so many now realising how critical ESG is to financial, human, climate and environmental outcomes of businesses and investments.”

Serving as Quinbrook’s global head of ESG, Anne has led its strategy since inception – designing and implementing ESG processes. Over the course of her career, she has advised on billions of dollars of transactions in relation to climate and ESG impact, working with organisations that range from blue chip companies like BHP Billiton, through to start-ups.

She has been appointed on numerous company boards, driving influence through ESG alignment and is a represented member on Quinbrook’s investment committee, valuation committee, procurement and digital innovation committees... which stands testament to the lengths she has driven critical ESG-based decision making.

Anne works day-to-day directly with portfolio companies to drive change – from designing strategies that can provide beneficial impact on vulnerable communities, water stress, to actively forcing change in supply chains, driving suppliers to reassess their transparency and activities.

Her commitment to social impact, assessment and strategy was selected by the KPMG Human Rights team to be showcased in a human rights report.

However, when it comes to the crunch, there’s a helpful barometer provided by the United Nations’ Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI) assessment in which Quinbrook A+/A+ each year of reporting and 30/30.

According to the submission, this “is testament to the level of focus on ESG impact and strategy that Anne has driven”.

Outside of Quinbrook, Anne has spent her career speaking, mentoring and actively driving change across the industry. Some of her impact, support, collaboration works and influence includes co-authoring *In Sight of the Clean Trillion*.

Anne was selected by CERES to take part in a roundtable with key regulators, supporting *Practices for Just, Sustainable and Equitable Development of Clean Energy* while also being chosen to represent Australia at SKOLL World Forum, SAID Business School.

Her achievements are many – which, during the judging session, had an evident impact on the panel – including being selected as one of 12 women across Australia for TEDx Sydney's advisory board, focused on diversity, human rights and women's opportunities.

She is a member of the UN Inevitable Policy Task Force and independently mentors and supports women and start-ups, through programmes like EnergyLab or independently. And while on maternity leave, she founded ANZ's No1 rated BCorp and *Best for the World Honoree*, focused on breaking down environmental harm and human rights issues at ground level.

An ESG crusader

Anne's drive in ESG comes from early in her education and career. In the 1990s, she spent time working to improve environmental and human rights issues, working directly with impacted communities, vulnerable and trafficked women both in Australia and South-East Asia.



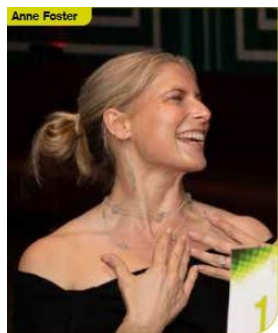
She sought out former leaders of global businesses to understand what issues had led to environmental damage, chronic issues in human rights and modern slavery.

According to the submission: “She tackles problems at the heart and with incredible detail, looking for solutions that deal with the real issues and uncomfortable truths – far beyond just where policies and processes can reach alone and instead understanding real – life complexities and seeking genuine resolutions.

“This has enabled her to drive and implement in Quinbrook what we have been told is one of the most extensive anti-modern slavery and human rights initiatives in asset management, critical to all renewable energy developers as concerns over labour transfer programmes of Uighur Muslim labourers, cobalt, gold, tungsten and other conflict or human rights mining abuses are embedded in the industry (like many others).”

While Anne is a private worker and rarely asks for public support, she has many supporters within some of the world's largest sovereign funds and pension pools, who regularly turn to Anne for advice, case studies or testing to help refine and improve their own ESG impact and analysis.

This influence has potential reach into hundreds of billions of dollars under management globally through her collaborations.



Anne is renowned for driving change in equality and diversity in finance, mentoring other women in their careers and is highly qualified for this role – a common area of concern at the intersection of ESG and finance.

She studied at the Bren School of Environmental Management, MIT in Cybersecurity and Tech and continuously supports her work through ongoing education.

The Quinbrook submissions rounds it off nicely: “Anne is driving the next generation of change, working with start-ups, universities and innovative groups to find ways to further drive impact both in diversity in how business is run and accessibility, as well as the intersection of energy, technology, water, agriculture, automation and constant assessment of what lies ahead and how industry needs to adapt and evolve to support human rights, wellbeing and our natural capital.”

The judges were unanimous in their view that Ann is a truly outstanding person and entirely deserving of recognition as the first recipient of the IJGlobal ESG Award for Outstanding Contribution.

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