



For Immediate Release

CANARI wins NGO Award for Good Governance

Port of Spain, February 6, 2020 – The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) received the Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) Award for Good Governance at the Trinidad and Tobago Energy Conference 2020 hosted by the Energy Chamber of Trinidad and Tobago, February 3 - 5, 2020. Over the last few years, the Energy Chamber has been awarding NGOs in the area of good governance based on the results of an online assessment tool which evaluates governance structures, policies and processes.

“Governance is at the heart of CANARI’s mission. We believe in involving stakeholders and ensuring accountability and transparency in decision-making and actions to manage and protect our environment. We translate this belief into how we operate as an organisation – we practice what we preach,” emphasised Nicole Leotaud, CANARI’s Executive Director. “We seek to be at the cutting edge of demonstrating best practices in governance and are always innovating to improve. The Energy Chamber’s questionnaire was a chance for us to examine our governance policies and systems and see if there were areas that we could do better.”



Members of the ‘CANARI Family’, including the Board of Directors (Elected Partners), staff, Associates and Programme Advisors, in February 2019. Photo by: CANARI

CANARI is celebrating its 30-year anniversary as a non-profit, technical institute promoting and facilitating stakeholder participation in the stewardship of natural resources in the Caribbean. As the Institute has grown and evolved, its policies and systems also needed to strengthen.

The Institute has a unique and innovative governance structure; the Partnership, which reflects its participatory culture. Elected Board members; ‘Elected Partners’, work with the Executive Director (who is Managing Partner) and one or two senior staff who are appointed as Staff Partners. Decisions are taken collectively and by consensus. All staff attend and participate in Partnership meetings, ensuring decision-makers are fully informed and staff can input into and understand the decisions taken.

“We at CANARI are very pleased to receive this award as it recognises the long-standing commitment to good governance that the Institute has held since inception,” said Zakiya Uzoma-Wadada, Chair of CANARI’s Partnership. “I want to thank all our Partners, our Executive Directors and staff for their contribution over the years to the development and implementation of policies and procedures which enable the high standard of governance practiced by the organisation. CANARI is well reputed across the Caribbean and internationally as a credible and reliable organisation. We have worked hard to build trust with funders, governments and partners by delivering strong results and always being accountable and transparent in our work.”

As CANARI is almost completely grant-funded, mainly from international funders, the Institute has very stringent systems in place to account for use of funds to deliver results in the most efficient and effective manner. It has been audited by international organisations and independent evaluators many times and sees these audits as great opportunities to get external expert advice on where policies and systems need to improve.

Importantly, CANARI is also accountable to the stakeholders it serves, so their opinions are considered when making decisions about how to run the organisation. It also ensures information about its work is shared with them, including via social media.

Through training, mentoring, coaching and developing new tools and innovative approaches, CANARI also helps other organisations across the Caribbean to strengthen their own capacity.

“It is very important that non-profit organisations (NPOs) – including CANARI – practice good governance and take responsibility for strengthening our own organisations,” noted Leotaud. “However, it is also important that governments and funders recognise the unique characteristics of non-profits and help us to be more accountable, transparent and effective.”

Energy Chamber members can play a significant role in training, coaching and mentoring NPOs to help strengthen their governance systems, especially financial management. Corporate social responsibility programmes can include funding to achieve this, not just for technical work.

“Together we can build strong, effective and sustainable NPOs that are practicing good governance and contributing to sustainable development in the Caribbean,” remarked Leotaud.

CANARI sincerely thanks the Energy Chamber of Trinidad and Tobago for this recognition and congratulates the other awardees.

Video about CANARI: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XHUF9KagAy0&t=93s>

About CANARI: The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute is a regional technical non-profit organisation which has been working in the islands of the Caribbean for 30 years. Our mission is to promote and facilitate stakeholder participation in the stewardship of natural resources in the Caribbean. Our work focuses on Resilience, Equity, Ecosystems and Biodiversity and Participatory Governance. See here for more information on CANARI: <http://www.canari.org/>

Connect with us:



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