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Press release

Zoo Berlin nominated for Giant Panda Global Awards

Fans of Berlin's pandas can place their votes from now until 21 January 2018

Usually, everyone working in panda conservation pulls together as a single, strong unit. But once a year they become rivals, when they compete for the Giant Panda Global Awards. The Oscars of the international panda community have been awarded annually since 2012. Today, the shortlists for the 2017 edition were announced – and Zoo Berlin has been nominated in five of the twelve categories:

- Zoo and Tierpark Director Dr Andreas Knieriem, in the category **Human Panda Personality of 2017**
- The Panda Garden, in the category **Most Beautiful Panda Zoo Enclosure**
- Meng Meng, in the category **Favorite Panda Outside of China**
- rbb TV documentary “Das Pandawunder von Berlin”, in the category **Panda Educational Entertainment of the Year**
- Official opening of the Panda Garden at Zoo Berlin in the presence of Xi Jinping and Angela Merkel, in the category **Panda Moment of the Year**

Other categories include “Panda Cub of the Year”, “Promising Young Foreign Scientist of the Year”, and “Favorite Panda Charity”. You can access the full list of categories and nominations here:

<http://www.GiantPandaGlobalAwards.com>

Over the next four weeks, panda fans from all over the world can visit the website to vote for who they think should win the coveted awards. Voting closes on 21 January 2018. In recent years, the biggest winners have included the zoos in Washington DC, Edinburgh, Toronto, Chengdu, Wolong and Pairi Daiza, Belgium.



The awards were initiated by Jeroen Jacobs, founder of the GiantPandaGlobal website, whose mission is to spread the word about giant panda conservation. “We want the Giant Panda Awards to draw attention to the threat facing giant pandas and promote efforts to protect them,” says Jacobs. But the event has another positive side effect: as zoos around the world vie to prove the excellence of their panda keeping and awareness-raising activities, facilities at all zoos just keep getting better.

“We are honoured to have been nominated in five categories,” says Zoo and Tierpark Director Dr Andreas Knieriem, going on to reveal a little secret: “As we celebrated the opening of our Panda Garden earlier this year in the presence of the German Chancellor and the Chinese President, Zoo Berlin has the additional honour of hosting this year’s award ceremony on 8 February 2018.”

Pandas under threat

Giant pandas, more than any other animal, have become an international symbol of species conservation, and occupy an almost holy status in their native country. These remarkable bears were once found right up in the northeastern part of China, all the way down into Myanmar and Vietnam. Today, the territory of the giant panda has shrunk to the sparse coniferous and deciduous woods in the mountain ranges around China’s Sichuan, Shaanxi and Gansu provinces. The latest panda count carried out by China’s State Forestry Administration in 2014 recorded at least 1,864 of these bears living in their natural habitat – 17 percent more than in 2004. But despite successful conservation efforts, the survival of giant pandas in the wild is not guaranteed. That is why pandas are still classified as “Vulnerable” on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.