MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Museum of the Moving Image and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation announce 2024 Sloan Student Prize finalists and mentors

Nine Sloan finalists—promising emerging filmmakers with science-themed screenplays—will work with mentors, with two winners to receive $20,000.

Previous Sloan film grantees Graham Sack, Gillian Weeks, and Temi Ojo, and filmmakers Chadd Harbold and Jordan McCray will serve as mentors this year.

Astoria, New York, November 12, 2024 — Finalists for the prestigious Sloan Student Prizes, part of the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation's nationwide film program, were announced today by Museum of the Moving Image (MoMI) and the Sloan Foundation. The finalists include student filmmakers from universities across the country, including the Sloan Foundation's six longstanding film partners American Film Institute, Carnegie Mellon University, Columbia University, New York University, University of Southern California, and UCLA who will compete for the prestigious Sloan Grand Jury Prize. Finalists from six other schools will also work with mentors to refine their screenplays for the Sloan Discovery Prize.

This year's mentors, all working creatives in the film industry, who help prepare the finalists by giving script feedback, are filmmaker and academic Graham Sack (*The Harvard Computers*), screenwriter Gillian Weeks (*Let There Be Life*), and writer/director Temi Ojo (*A Man with a Missing Face*)—previous Sloan grant winners—as well as filmmaker Chadd Harbold (*The Wrath of Becky*) and screenwriter Jordan McCray (*Committed*).

"We are thrilled to continue our partnership with the Sloan Foundation to support the work of emerging filmmakers grappling with science and technology themes, some of the most pressing issues our society faces today," said Sonia Epstein, Executive Editor of *Sloan Science & Film* and MoMI Curator of Science and Technology. "We're grateful to our mentors for helping prepare these finalists, and excited to bring together a jury of scientists and filmmakers to choose this year's winners."

"We are proud to join with Museum of the Moving Image and honor the best-of-the-best screenplays from Sloan's six original film school partners while also working with six

new Sloan partners to discover innovative screenwriters who integrate science and technology into their work," said Doron Weber, Vice President and Program Director at the Sloan Foundation. "These exceptional screenwriters will receive guidance from seasoned film industry professionals, three of whom are previous Sloan winners, and we look forward to seeing their exciting screenplays produced for the big screen or enacted as episodic series for streaming."

Awarded to two outstanding screenplays for feature films or scripted series that integrate science or technology themes and characters into dramatic stories, the Sloan Student Grand Jury and Discovery Prizes come with a cash award of $20,000 and year-round, dedicated mentorship from a scientist and film industry professional. Sloan winners will be honored at an awards ceremony, featuring work-in-progress readings by professional actors, at MoMI during the Museum's First Look festival in March 2025.

Established in 2011 (Grand Jury Prize) and expanded in 2019 (Discovery Prize), the Sloan Student Prizes aim to advance the professional paths of diverse, emerging filmmakers as they transition out of school and into the film industry. For more than 25 years, the Sloan Foundation has awarded annual prizes in screenwriting at six partner film schools. Each school nominates one winning candidate for the best-of-the-best Grand Jury Prize. The Discovery Prize represents an expansion of the Sloan film program to public universities not regularly affiliated with the Foundation.

This is the fourth year that the Sloan Student Prizes are administered by Museum of the Moving Image, as part of the Museum's wider Sloan Science & Film initiative, which provides opportunities for the creation, distribution, exhibition, and discussion of films that amplify understanding of scientific themes. Previous Sloan Student Prize winners include Gerard Shaka, whose script *Woodside* was recently recognized by the 2024 Black List x GLAAD List, and Marisa Torelli-Pedevska (*Starlight),* co-founder of the Inevitable Foundation, which supports disabled filmmakers.

The Sloan Student Prizes are also part of the Museum's endeavor to foster the work of emerging artists, a path that leads from media education for youth to spaces for creative collaboration and to artist recognition and industry participation.

The 2024 finalists are:

SLOAN STUDENT GRAND JURY PRIZE 2024 Finalists:
The finalists are nominated by six graduate film programs that have year-round partnerships with the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation to award screenplay grants for science-themed narratives.

It Revolves Around Tycho **by Zoe Milenkovic (Feature)**
American Film Institute

***Tamarack* by Elle Thoni (Series)**
Carnegie Mellon University

***Eruption* by Katla Sólnes (Feature)**
Columbia University

***Cécile* by Sarah Morales (Feature)**
University of California, Los Angeles

***Thin Ice* by Brittany Wang (Series)**
University of Southern California

SLOAN STUDENT DISCOVERY PRIZE 2024 Finalists:
The finalists are nominated by film programs without year-round screenplay
development partnerships with the Sloan Foundation.

***Grapefruit* by Aleeza Claire (Feature)**
Florida State University

***Abel's Baby* by Hallie Stephenson (Series)**
SUNY Purchase

***Treat Me Well* by Erika Lobati (Feature)**
Temple University

***Impact* by Yoel Gebremariam (Feature)**
University of Michigan

About the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation
The Alfred P. Sloan Foundation is a New York–based, philanthropic, not-for-profit
institution that makes grants for research in science, technology, and economics; quality
and diversity of scientific institutions; and public engagement with science. Sloan's
program in Public Understanding of Science and Technology, directed by Doron Weber,
supports books, radio, film, television, theater and new media to reach a wide, non-
specialized audience and to bridge the two cultures of science and the humanities.
Sloan's Film Program encourages filmmakers to create more realistic and compelling
stories about science and technology and to challenge existing stereotypes about
scientists and engineers in the popular imagination. Over the past two decades, Sloan
has partnered with a dozen leading film schools and established annual awards in
screenwriting and film production. The Foundation also supports screenplay
development programs with the Sundance Institute, SFFILM, Film Independent, the
Black List, the Athena Film Festival, and the Toronto International Film Festival. It has
supported over 850 film projects and has helped develop over 30 feature films. For more

information visit sloan.org or follow @SloanPublic on X, Instagram, or Facebook.

About Museum of the Moving Image
Founded in 1985, Museum of the Moving Image celebrates the history, art, technology, and future of the moving image in all of its forms. Located in Astoria, New York, the Museum presents exhibitions; screenings; discussion programs featuring actors, directors, and creative leaders; and education programs. It houses the nation's most comprehensive collection of moving image artifacts and screens over 500 films annually. Its exhibitions—including the core exhibition *Behind the Screen* and *The Jim Henson Exhibition*—are noted for their integration of material objects, interactive experiences, and audiovisual presentations. For more information about MoMI, visit movingimage.org.

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Museum of the Moving Image is housed in a building owned by the City of New York and has received significant support from the following public agencies: New York City Department of Cultural Affairs; New York City Council; New York City Economic Development Corporation; New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature; Institute of Museum and Library Services; National Endowment for the Humanities; National Endowment for the Arts; and Natural Heritage Trust (administered by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation).