

Earthshot Prize finalist LCM thanks Prince William for putting firm in global spotlight

The founders of a County Durham firm have thanked Prince William for thrusting them onto the global stage in the Earthshot Prize, despite being pipped to the post in the contest.

Seaham-based Low Carbon Materials (LCM) was one of just 15 finalists from around the world in this year's Earthshot Prize, which was first launched two years ago by The Royal Foundation of the then Duke and Duchess of Cambridge to incentivise change and help repair the planet over the next 10 years. The prize centres around five Earthshots: protect and restore nature, clean our air, revive our oceans, build a waste-free world and fix our climate.

LCM was one of three finalists in the last category, which aims to cut out carbon by building a carbon-neutral economy, with its carbon negative building material Osto, which is primarily made from waste materials and by-products that would have otherwise been difficult to recycle. The winners in each category were unveiled at a star-studded event in Boston, US, over the weekend, announced by a line-up of presenters including the Princess of Wales, Oscar winning actor Rami Malek, footballer David Beckham, actor and comedian Catherine O'Hara, alongside performances from the likes of Annie Lennox, Billie Eilish and Ellie Goulding.

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Despite now winning the main £1m prize, given to each category

winner to push forward their businesses and ideas, the team at LCM – which recently expanded into new premises ahead of commercialisation of their Osto building material – told of their ‘humbling’ experience taking part.

Natasha Boulding, CEO and co-founder, said: “It is a privilege to be one of only 15 Earthshot Prize finalists in the world and it has been truly humbling to have spent time getting to know the other finalists. On behalf of LCM, I’d like to say a huge congratulations to all the winners – and especially to 44.01 for winning the Earthshot Prize in the Fix Our Climate category. It is an amazing achievement and so well deserved by all.

“Being announced as an Earthshot Prize finalist has been an exhilarating experience for everyone at LCM, it has resulted in some truly outstanding developments. In a short space of time, it has thrust our purpose-driven start-up onto a global stage, helping us to raise awareness of the environmental issues in construction which we seek to address, to educate and inform mass audiences, and illustrate how the built environment can change for the better through science-led innovations such as ours.



Low Carbon Materials CEO and co-founder, Dr Natasha Boulding
(Image: Low Carbon Materials)



Annie Lennox performs during the second annual Earthshot Prize Awards Ceremony

(Image: PA)

“We have been overwhelmed by the support, positivity and all-around amazing tributes. We’d like to say thank you to HRH Prince William for not only creating a prize that helps to find and grow impactful solutions, but also inspires future generations to repair our planet, this decade. Our thank you also extends to The Earthshot Prize Team who are incredible and so supportive, and to everyone who has been part of our journey.

“It’s been a busy but exciting period for our ever-expanding team, especially having just moved into a new, much larger facility. The team has pulled together and risen to the challenge, and I’m hugely proud of everyone for these incredible achievements.”

She added: “Climate change is the greatest challenge we face in our lifetimes and we need to move faster to meet vital

targets. It's no longer a case of when it's going to impact us – it is already impacting us. 2023 is going to be a big year for LCM and we pledge to make the right decisions and keep innovating for the planet.”

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