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OG21 Technology Champion 2023

The OG21 Technology Champion award for 2023 goes to Professor Asgeir Sørensen at NTNU and founder and director Vidar Mathiesen from InflowControl. They are awarded the prize independently of each other for outstanding efforts and technological innovations of great importance to the petroleum sector as well as to other industries.

BY GUNNAR H. LILLE | PUBLISHED 2 FEB 2024

Terje Aasland and Lars Sørum together with the winners of the award "OG21 Technology Champion 2023", Vidar Mathiesen and Asgeir Sørensen (on video transmission from Berkeley where he is currently a visiting professor)

- This year's winners are good examples of how long-term research and development leads to ground-breaking commercial results. We need more innovators like them, says Petroleum and Energy Minister Terje Aasland.

- We received 20 nominations, and most of them were very good, says jury leader Lars Sørum, who is currently head of research at Sintef. In the end, we were left with two candidates who have excelled in their own way. It was very difficult to choose between the two, and the jury has therefore chosen to give the prize to both.

Professor Asgeir Sørensen has been the director of the AMOS center at NTNU, a center which for ten years has conduceted research into autonomous maritime operations and systems. In close collaboration with industry partners and with management support from NTNU, Professor Sørensen and his team have developed knowledge and innovations of great importance for education, research, business and administration. The scope of the research has been broad and covers areas such as oil and gas, offshore wind, shipping, aquaculture, fisheries, coastal structures, marine research and management, and marine safety. The AMOS centre's outstanding results include, among other things, the education of 220 new PhDs, and the establishment of 8 new technology companies.

Dr. Vidar Mathiesen, director of the technology company InflowControl, has developed an autonomous inflow valve (AICV) that is used to limit water and gas production from oil wells. It has so far been installed in 275 wells on 5 continents. The technology leads to significantly lower greenhouse gas emissions, reduced costs and a higher degree of recovery. Dr. Mathisen has been central both to the establishment of InflowControl and to the development of the AICV technology from idea to broad implementation. He is a true entrepreneur who has lived with uncertainty and overcome start-up barriers to bring the technology to commercial success.

Both winners have greatly benefited from public research support on their way to the good results. AMOS has been part of the SFF scheme (centres of excellence), and InflowControl has received support from the Petromaks2 programme. Both schemes are administered by the Research Council of Norway.

The award was presented by Minister of Petroleum and Energy Terje Aasland during the OG21 forum on 16 November 2023.

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