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THE MCSA 2023 SUPERTRAMP AWARD

Background information

Expedition award:	Base amount of R30 000.00. An additional amount may be considered for exceptionally deserving ideas.
Awarded by:	The Mountain Club of South Africa
Eligibility (applicant):	All MCSA members who will be participating in or leading an expedition of members of the MCSA. Preference will be given to young mountaineers.
Eligibility (destination):	Any country — including South Africa — for any length of time. Preference will be given to originality as well as to first ascents and/or unusual/remote destinations .
Closing date:	The prescribed application form (in MS Word) should be submitted by email, no later than 30 November 2022 of the year preceding the expedition.

Details

The MCSA is well aware of the prohibitive costs involved in the organisation and implementation of expeditions for all members, but especially younger members who have no recourse to funds. In lieu of this, the MCSA has set up a system which anticipates will make funds available on a yearly basis in order to facilitate such expeditions. The concept is:

1. to provide support for expeditions organised and undertaken wholly by MCSA members particularly young South African mountaineers,
2. The applicant must be a fully paid-up members of the MCSA (of any section) for a minimum of two years.
3. that the award be granted to a single person, whether or not the expedition team comprises two (or many) young South African mountaineers. The recipient may then decide the manner in which the money is spent.
4. that all applications include a full itinerary of the planned climbing trip (see application form). This should include a budget with a breakdown of approximate costs of (e.g.) flights, accommodation, transport within the destination country, porters, food, permits, etc. The MCSA is aware of the difficulties associated with detailed cost analyses months before proposed expeditions. The idea is to provide the MCSA Supertramp evaluating body with a basic idea of costs/destination, etc, not a full cost analysis. Preference will be given to applicants that have attempted to minimise overall costs (e.g. does the airline offer youth fares? Are reciprocal benefits afforded to MCSA members in the destination country? Are Youth Hostels in operation in the destination country and is the applicant a Youth Hostel member?)
5. that, on return from the expedition, the recipient provides feedback of the expedition (including submission of an article to the MCSA Journal of that year and a report to MCSA (National Committee)), as well as slideshow presentations to at least two MCSA sections so as to encourage other young mountaineers and to promote mountaineering amongst young people.

Applicants must please note the following:

1. If you wish to submit any further information (text only – no pictures or PowerPoint presentations), attach it to the application form.

2. Where "relevant experience" is requested, please provide names and approximate dates (year only) of routes done, mountains climbed, etc.
3. The referees named must know you personally and should be able to provide a recommendation of your mountaineering conduct as well as personal standing.
4. For "equipment costs" please list additional gear that you need to purchase for this expedition. Do not include the value of the total gear required for the expedition.
5. The MCSA Supertramp evaluating body may request you to submit further information regarding routes, planning or budgeting if it feels such information is necessary.
6. The MCSA Supertramp evaluating body must be informed immediately about any changes in expedition objective or its team members. The MCSA Supertramp evaluating body reserves the right to reconsider the granting of the award in the event of significant changes.
7. By specifying the objectives of your expedition, you and your party undertake to make every reasonable effort to achieve these aims. Of course, your personal safety – and that of the expedition members must never be compromised to achieve these objectives.
8. You are expected to familiarise yourself with the laws and regulations of the country you are visiting and abide by those. Applicants are responsible for obtaining their own passports and visas to the destination country.
9. Your application will be considered by the MCSA Supertramp evaluating body and should it decide to sponsor the expedition you will be informed via email not later than 16 December of the year preceding the expedition. Method of payment can be arranged at that stage, but the money will be made available one month before the date that the expedition is due to leave.
10. The recipient must return funds if the expedition does not proceed for some reason (reasonable consideration will be given for true "acts of god" i.e., entirely unforeseen, and unavoidable, circumstances).
11. Decisions and awards if the MCSA Supertramp evaluating body are final and will be announced by the MCSA National President.

Further enquiries:

email: mcsasupertramp@gmail.com & president@mcsa.org.za

**** A brief history of the Supertramp award"**

Not all those who wander are lost.

–JRR Tolkien

In April 1992, 24-year-old Chris McCandless ditched his car, burnt the money in his wallet, donated his savings to charity, hitched a lift to the outskirts of the Alaskan outback and, armed with little more than a hunting rifle and a sack of rice, walked into the wild. He renamed himself Alexander Supertramp and deliberately lost contact with everyone he had ever known. He wanted nothing more to do with what he saw as a sick, sad world and sought only to survive as his (flawed) heroes had done: on their wits and survival instincts alone. He did not even carry a map in his rucksack. He was a disillusioned idealist, a passionate, zealous young man who yearned for adventure without the encumbrances of modern living or the inevitable complications that come from human interaction. His emaciated, lifeless body was discovered 100 days later, having starved to death through a series of unfortunate events.

Opinions about this story (chronicled by Jon Krakauer in his extraordinary book, *Into the Wild*) are diametrically opposed. Some think Alexander Supertramp was an arrogant, selfish, rich kid. Others think he is someone to whom hymns should be sung and statues erected and that his story is not about his death, but about his life. That he made the bravest of all decisions: *not* to be a victim, at least not to civilisation's mechanical march. That he subscribed to the philosophy that to live is to do and to do is to do *now*. "Most men" said Henry Thoreau – one of his champions – "lead lives of quiet desperation".

The Supertramp Award was introduced in 2005 by the Magaliesberg Section of the MCSA and run for twelve consecutive years. For lack of funds the award ceased to exist in 2017. The MCSA has now re-introduced this award.