

SPIA Asia announces “Asia’s Top 10” Best Football Leagues in Asia by AFC” Awards Finalists



Global football giants to attend two-day sports business conference
LaLiga announced as main partner for SPIA Asia

BANGKOK, Thailand - The fourth edition of Asia’s leading sports conference and awards platform, SPIA Asia - Asia’s Sports Industry Awards & Conference, has once again seen over 400 award submissions from 47 countries in 21 award categories (14 Asian categories; 4 Thai categories; 3 Public Voting categories; 1 Achievement category). Set to take place 19 & 20 November at Centara Grand & Bangkok Convention Centre at CentralWorld, the first two categories of “Asia’s Top 10” were announced today by organisers MMC Sportz, in conjunction with the Sports Authority of Thailand. The submission deadline for the Thai categories will close only on 4 November and will therefore be released separately.

The complete list of “Asia’s Top 10” is included below, and can be viewed at www.spiaasia.com.

“Thailand has just hosted a very successful inaugural MotoGP and we are keen to host more international events to showcase the country’s sporting credentials and at the same time use such events to learn from these international organisations. SPIA Asia is a good example of this - welcoming more than 400 industry leaders from all walks of the sports industry to Bangkok, and we are happy to be supporting again this year,” said Mr. Itthiphol Kunplome, Vice Minister for Tourism and Sports.

Speaking of Thailand’s desire to become a force in sports globally, Mr. Parat Suwanmaythakorn, Director of Administration and Professional Sports Standard Division, Sports Authority of Thailand, commented, “SPIA Asia offers Thai sports event organisers, brands, venues, associations and federations the opportunity to learn from the world’s best. On the regional and international level, Thailand has many sports success stories, but it’s important we strive to improve all the time. SPIA Asia provides a platform for Thailand to develop and grow, to raise our sports industry to the next level, and I look forward to welcoming Thailand’s sports leaders and entrepreneurs to SPIA Asia on 19 and 20 November.”

“This will be our third year in Thailand working closely in partnership with the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, and the Sports Authority of Thailand. We have already exceeded the number of submissions from the last year across the 21 categories, which truly reflects the importance for recognition and celebration of the achievement for Asia’s Sports Industry. With the competition from so many federations, rights holders, agencies and brands being so tough, we would already like to congratulate all shortlisted finalists on “Asia’s Top 10 for their excellent achievement, commented Mr. Eric M. Gottschalk, CEO of MMC Sportz, organizer of SPIA Asia - Asia’s Sports Industry Awards & Conference.

“We are also proud of our new partnership with the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) which will be presenting two of their very own awards at SPIA Asia 2018 related to the performance of the

professional football leagues in Asia: “Best Developing League” and the “Best Inspiring Football League” category. Both categories have gone through an AFC self-assessment and an AFC audit before being named on Asia’s Top 10 list by the AFC.

The final round of judging will be conducted by our 37 judging members on 19 November in Bangkok before we will announce the winners in all categories during the Awards Gala on 20 November”, added Gottschalk.

The two-day “The Business of Sports – Asia’s Sports Industry in the Fast Lane IV” conference which is once again preceding the Awards Gala has also seen a tremendous boost in participation and content delivery through the event partnership with TWITTER, which for the first time for such a conference will deliver a live stream to international audiences.

Over 50 international speakers are featured this year at the conference which is showcasing research studies, panel discussions and keynote speeches in current mainstream industry topics around Inclusion and gender equality related to women’s sports; Bitcoin and crypto currencies in sports; post-event reviews from recent major events such as FIFA World Cup and the recently concluded Asian Games; an outlook to the Rugby World Cup in Japan and the SEA Games in the Philippines; eSports leagues; Tourism & sports; New technologies in sport and the main pillar around the “Business of Sports & the Business of Football in Asia”.

Key rights holders across the international football landscape have already committed their attendance at SPIA Asia namely with the AFC, LaLiga, Premier League and the Bundesliga being represented by some of the top clubs such as FC Barcelona, FC Valencia, City Football, Chelsea FC, Liverpool FC, Arsenal, Bayern Munich, BVB Dortmund among many others.

“Football is the world’s most popular sport and throughout Asia it has a big impact on many people’s lives from fans and spectators to sponsors, businesses, players and local communities. On the back of a successful FIFA World Cup in Russia, we have an exciting line-up of global football experts, club representatives, as well as representation from the AFC and Football Association of Thailand.

“I’m also very excited and proud to announce our first-ever partnership with LaLiga which will elevate the football segment tremendously,” added Mr. Gottschalk.” LaLiga will bring one of its global brand ambassadors in the form of an ex-player to the conference, will host an exclusive LaLiga football panel at SPIA Asia attended by six top tier LaLiga clubs and present in the evening a small sided 8-team delegate football tournament networking function.”

“LaLiga are delighted to be partnering the SPIA Asia – Asia’s Sports Industry Awards & Conference in Bangkok, an important industry wide event which unites the key sports business figures in the region. The event presents a platform to further promote our work across the region at an event dedicated to discussing topics and themes affecting the industry today.

“As the leading football league in the world, LaLiga continues to make giant strides across Asia through ground-breaking commercial and broadcast partnerships and of course world class football action on the pitch creating a product that goes from strength to strength”, said Mr. Ivan Codina, Managing Director Southeast Asia, LaLiga.

Benjamin Tan, Deputy CEO of Thai League expressed his satisfaction: “We are very happy to be shortlisted for the “Best Inspiring Football League of the Year Award by AFC” as this is the biggest football award for leagues in Asia. The shortlist recognizes our tremendous work conducted in the areas of competition management on and off the field, as well as the developments of marketing, commercials, communications and community engagement. We are in the elite field alongside of

Japan, China, Korea and UAE and I am thankful for SPIA Asia and the AFC to have received the good news today that we are shortlisted for this Award”.

Other activities at SPIA Asia 2018 include the “Walk of Fame” exhibition, showcasing some of the most precious trophies in the world of sports across different sports.

SPIA Asia is also committed to leaving a legacy in Thailand and will once again raise funds for a local charity project. The live auction will go ahead during the Awards Gala and features original signed sports memorabilia from some to the most famous legends in football, motorsports, boxing and other sports as well as luxury travel and holiday packages.

SPIA Asia brings together the governing bodies, federations, agencies, rights holders, brands and organizations which strongly contribute and positively influence the landscape of sport in Asia. Organized by MMC Sportz, SPIA Asia is endorsed by Thailand’s Ministry of Tourism and Sports, Sports Authority of Thailand, Tourism Authority of Thailand, Thailand Exhibition & Convention Bureau and the Asian Football Confederation.

Key partners of the 2018 event include the following entities which have pledged their partnership support to SPIA Asia 2018: LaLiga, Lagardère Sports, SMG Insight, PLC (Pro League Committee), Sportsfix, Mafo Sports, Sponsorium, TWITTER, SRI and CentraraGrand@Central World while long term local PR Agency Infinity Communications and The Sponsorship Experts (marketing partner & local co-organizer) are back on board for a third year.

For more information about the conference program, delegate passes and Awards Gala ticket sales, visit www.spiaasia.com.