

Russia's Dynasty Science Foundation 'on Brink of Closure' After Foreign Agent Fine

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Dmitry Zimin

The Dynasty Foundation, Russia's largest private donor supporting science, is on the brink of closure after being fined under the controversial foreign agents law, the Kommersant newspaper reported Thursday.

Dynasty's founder, telecom tycoon Dmitry Zimin, has finalized the necessary paperwork for its liquidation, the paper cited an unnamed source as saying, a day after a Moscow court ordered Dynasty to pay a 300,000 ruble (\$5,600) fine for refusing to register as a foreign agent.

Under Russian law, NGOs that receive foreign funding and are involved in vaguely defined political activity are obliged to register as foreign agents — a term critics say is synonymous with Cold War-era espionage — and can be fined for not doing so.

Dynasty was classified as receiving foreign funding because Zimin keeps his money in overseas banks, despite being a Russian citizen and resident.

Zimin, who was earlier quoted as saying he would close the foundation over its labeling as a foreign agent, ordered liquidation documents to be drawn up back on June 8, Kommersant reported.

The dissolution of Dynasty could mean the closure of at least 20 projects for the advancement of science and education, the paper said. Dynasty was due to allocate about \$8 million in grants this year.

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