

Foundation of Dynasty Founder's Son Also Named Foreign Agent

By [Anna Dolgov](#)

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Just weeks after Dmitry Zimin's Dynasty Foundation was forced to shut its doors after being slapped with a "foreign agent" label, a foundation headed by his son, Boris Zimin, has also received the designation.

On Tuesday, the organization Sreda, which gives grants to support independent media, "was included in the registry of organizations that perform the functions of a foreign agent," Russia's Justice Ministry said in a statement.

Under Russian law, the Justice Ministry can place any NGO that receives foreign funding and which engages in loosely defined "political activities" on the list. The 2012 law was controversial among critics, as the term "foreign agent" carries a strong Cold War association with espionage.

Boris Zimin, who founded Sreda and sits on the group's ruling council, said in a statement that his organization is funded exclusively by the money accumulated by his father, a former telecommunications magnate.

"As of today, the Sreda foundation receives funding to carry out its activities from a single source — from the capital created more than 10 years ago by D[mitry] Zimin and intended for public welfare," Boris Zimin said.

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Past recipients of its grants include independent Dozhd television and Tomsk-based TV-2, which the government has taken off the air.

The elder Zimin's foreign bank accounts were also the source of the funding for the Dynasty Foundation, which provided grants to young scientists. Dynasty shut its doors earlier this month rather than continue its work under the foreign agent label.

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