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## **First prize in DSM Awards for Chemistry and Technology 2006 presented to German researcher for work in the field of chemical biology**

**German researcher Marcus Koch yesterday won the first prize in the DSM Awards for Chemistry and Technology 2006. An international jury selected Dr. Marcus Koch, who earned his doctorate from the University of Dortmund, for his research in the fields of chemical biology and chemical genomics, the science in which chemistry is used for probing biological systems. Marcus Koch has succeeded in combining the advantages of two concepts – Protein Structure Similarity Clustering (PSSC) and Structural Classification of Natural Products (SCONP) – to develop a material- and time-efficient tool leading to more focused and biologically prevalidated compound collections. These can for example be used for elucidating the function of proteins and thus contribute to drug discovery. The research adds a new dimension to pharmaceutical R&D. Marcus Koch was presented with a certificate by Mr Peter Elverding, chairman of DSM's Managing Board. As the winner of the first prize he will also receive a cash prize of EUR 7,500.**

**The winner of the second prize, Sander Nabuurs of Radboud University Nijmegen (Netherlands), will receive a cash prize of EUR 5,000, and the winner of the third prize, Joris Smit of the University of Twente (Netherlands), will receive a cash prize of EUR 2,500. The other six prize-winners will all receive prizes of EUR 1,250.**

Regional juries short-listed three candidates from their own regions from the large number of entries received this year. After the nine nominees had given presentations on their research to an international jury on Monday, 22 May, the jury selected the top three.

This year's awards presentation event was held at Sportschloss Velen in the German state of North Rhine- Westphalia, one of the contest's participating regions. Speaking on the occasion, Mr Elverding stressed the key role innovative science plays in enhance the quality of life and called on the young award winners to use their talents to contribute to a better world: *"It is you who will shape tomorrow's world and, with your excellent scientific talents, help find solutions to many of the problems facing mankind."*

### **Encouraging pioneering research**

The DSM Awards for Chemistry and Technology were presented for the twenty-first time this year. Until 2001, the contest was open only to doctoral students from research

institutes in the Netherlands and Flemish-speaking Belgium. The catchment area was extended to Belgium's French-speaking region in 2002, and since 2003, the contest has also been open to researchers from the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia. Over the years the awards have gained a high reputation in academic circles and the contest is a major event on the international calendar.

DSM has now decided to expand the geographic scope of the awards. In 2007, a parallel contest with an identical awards scheme will be introduced for young scientists from universities in Switzerland, Austria, Eastern France and Southern Germany. This parallel contest will link up with DSM Nutritional Products, one of the newest members of the DSM family. DSM Nutritional Products is based in the Basle area of Switzerland and has extensive contacts with the academic world in and around its home base.

Also in 2007, the name of the awards will change to "DSM Innovation – Science & Technology Awards", reflecting both DSM's commitment to innovation and the increasingly wider range of scientific disciplines covered by the awards.

DSM performs a great deal of its R&D work in close collaboration with universities. DSM hopes that its Science & Technology Awards will encourage young research scientists to undertake creative, pioneering research. This is important because this kind of research often provides the basis for the development of new, knowledge-intensive industrial processes and high-tech products. DSM also believes that high-quality scientific research goes hand in hand with high-quality university education.

### **Jury report**

In its report about the winner of the first prize, the jury said it was impressed by Dr. Koch's out-of-the-box thinking: *"The winner's special achievement is that he integrated the principles and techniques of bio- and cheminformatics into a new approach in drug design."* The jury expects the findings of the research performed by the first prize-winner as well as the other laureates to make valuable contributions to new developments in their respective fields.

### **The winners of the first, second and third prizes**

Marcus Koch conducted his research at the Max Planck Institute of Molecular Physiology and at the Department of Chemistry at the University of Dortmund (Germany) under the supervision of Professor H. Waldmann.

Sander Nabuurs conducted his research at the Center for Molecular and Biomolecular Informatics of Radboud University of Nijmegen (Netherlands) under the supervision of Professor G. Vriend.

Joris Smit conducted his research at the Faculty of Science and Technology of the University of Twente (Netherlands) under the supervision of Professor J. Kuipers.

### **Other winners**

The other six prize-winners are:

## *Belgium*

Lieven Gevers      University of Leuven  
Centre of Surface Chemistry and Catalysis

Ive Hermans      University of Leuven  
Centre for Surface Chemistry and Catalysis

Miguel Stevens      University of Leuven  
Rega Institute for Medical Research

## *Germany – North Rhine-Westphalia*

Christoph Grondal      RWTH Aachen University  
Institute of Organic Chemistry

Nils Gerhardt      Ruhr-University Bochum  
Workgroup Optoelectronic Devices and Materials

## *The Netherlands*

Ronald Naber      University of Groningen  
Materials Science Centre

### **For further information:**

DSM, Corporate Communications  
Nelleke Barning  
Tel. +31 (0)45 5782017  
E-mail [media.relations@dsm.com](mailto:media.relations@dsm.com)

DSM, Academic Contacts & External Research  
Edith de Kreek  
Tel. +31 (0)45 5782093  
E-mail [edith.kreek-de@dsm.com](mailto:edith.kreek-de@dsm.com)

### **DSM**

DSM is active worldwide in nutritional and pharma ingredients, performance materials and industrial chemicals. The company creates innovative products and services that help improve the quality of life. DSM's products are used in a wide range of end markets and applications such as human and animal nutrition and health, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, automotive and transport, coatings, housing and electrics & electronics (E&E). DSM's strategy, named Vision 2010 – Building on Strengths, focuses on accelerating profitable and innovative growth of the company's specialties portfolio. Market-driven growth, innovation and increased presence in emerging economies are key drivers of this strategy. The group has annual sales of over EUR 8 billion and employs some 22,000 people worldwide. DSM ranks among the global leaders in many of its fields. The company is headquartered in the Netherlands, with locations in Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas. For more information on DSM, please visit [www.dsm.com](http://www.dsm.com).

