

“Chemistry for the Future Solvay Prize” awarded to Professor Peter G. Schultz for his work at the interface of chemistry and the life sciences

Professor Schultz’s work has resulted in new methods to synthesize molecules with novel chemical and biological properties and has impacted chemistry, materials science and medicine

Brussels, 26 September 2013 -- The “Chemistry for the Future Solvay Prize”, a bi-annual EUR 300,000 prize created by the Belgium based Solvay Group, is awarded to Professor Peter G. Schultz, professor at the Scripps Research Institute in California, and Director of the California Institute for Biomedical Research.



The formal statement of the jury chaired by Hakan Wennerström, Professor at the University of Lund, motivates the decision as follows: *“For Professor Schultz’s multiple scientific contributions at the interface between chemistry and biology, in particular for the exploitation of molecular diversity and the rational expansion of the genetic code of the living organisms.”*

Professor Schultz’s ground breaking work is impacting many scientific fields, including biotechnology and medicine. It also has important implications for regenerative medicine, and the treatment of infectious disease, autoimmune disease and cancer.

Unanimous in their decision, the five jury members of the Solvay Prize, amongst them two Nobel prize winners, took into account several criteria including scientific excellence, potential and actual scientific and societal impact, and scientific activity. Professor Schultz successfully delivered on all these requirements and proved to be a worthy winner.

In his most recent work, Professor Schultz pioneered a method that enables the expansion of the genetic codes of living organisms to include new building blocks beyond the 20 amino acids common to all forms of life. This ability, demonstrated with over seventy synthetic amino acids, has created new powerful tools in protein engineering, cell biology and biochemistry. Professor Schultz’s ground breaking work is impacting many scientific fields, including biotechnology and medicine.

His early work exploited the molecular diversity of the immune system to develop antibodies that selectively catalyze chemical reactions, much like natural enzymes. He extended these combinatorial concepts to many areas of chemistry, biology and medicine, and was the first to apply this approach to materials science, which made it possible to simultaneously synthesize and characterize the properties of many different materials for use in electronic devices, catalysis, energy storage and the environment. More recently, by developing highly sophisticated methods to screen “chemical libraries” for their effects on living cells, Schultz’s team identified small, biologically active molecules with important implications for regenerative medicine and the treatment of infectious disease, autoimmune disease and cancer.

Professor Schultz is known for his pro-activity, publishing during the course of his career over 500 papers and training over 300 co-workers. In addition, he has set up ten different pioneering technology companies and biomedical research institutes to ensure the positive impact of his scientific research on society.

"I am obviously delighted to win the Solvay Prize", said Professor Schultz. "It is a wonderful recognition for all of the hard work of a terrific group of present and past co-workers. I am very much looking forward to travelling to Belgium on 4 December for the award ceremony."

The Chemistry for the Future Solvay Prize rewards a major scientific discovery that could shape tomorrow's chemistry and help human progress. The EUR 300,000 Prize will be awarded every two years. It was announced on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the creation of the chemical company Solvay by Ernest Solvay, and to perpetuate the founder's commitment as a strong supporter of scientific research. It is intended to endorse basic research and underline the essential role of chemistry as a science and an industry to help solve some of the most pressing issues the world is facing. The prize will be given to Professor Peter G. Schultz during an award ceremony at the Palais des Académies in Brussels, Belgium, on 4 December 2013.

As an international chemical group, **SOLVAY** assists industries in finding and implementing ever more responsible and value-creating solutions. The Group is firmly committed to sustainable development and focused on innovation and operational excellence. Solvay serves diversified markets, generating 90% of its turnover in activities where it is one of the top three worldwide. The Group is headquartered in Brussels, employs about 29,000 people in 55 countries and generated 12.4 billion euros in net sales in 2012. Solvay SA SOLB.BE) is listed on NYSE EURONEXT in Brussels and Paris (Bloomberg: SOLB.BB - Reuters: SOLBt.BR).

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