

GuaRoyal Society of Chemistry release



Picture: from left to right Dr Steve Pleasance, Dr Felix Zelder, Benedikt Kirchgaessler and Hugh Dennis © Royal Society of Chemistry / Lee Allison

FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION

## **Zürich business wins prestigious Royal Society of Chemistry Prize**

**CyanoGuard, based in Zürich, has won second prize in the food & water category of the Royal Society of Chemistry's Emerging Technologies Competition 2016.**

CyanoGuard has developed innovative quick tests for toxins in food, water and blood. The detection technology combines efficient and easy-to-handle indicators for cyanide with extraction technology and will improve food and water safety control, environmental monitoring and emergency health care globally.

40 shortlisted entrants pitched their ideas to a panel of expert judges at *Chemistry Means Business*, a two-day event for the chemistry-using industry by the Royal Society of Chemistry. The winners were announced at an award ceremony hosted by TV personality Hugh Dennis, on 15 June as part of the same event.

Benedikt F. Kirchgaessler, Managing Director at CyanoGuard said: *"Seeing so many promising and innovative projects from renowned institutions across Europe I am humbled that CyanoGuard was*

*chosen for this year's award. I feel that this international recognition of our work fuels our ambition even more to succeed with CyanoGuard."*

Dr. Felix H. Zelder, Scientific Advisor for CyanoGuard and Associate Professor at the University of Zurich's –Department of Chemistry added: *"Receiving this prize is very special to me. I was impressed by the competition and its awarding institution. The Royal Society of Chemistry stands for a globally unique combination of centuries-long tradition, fundamental and cutting-edge science, international reputation and innovative business, underlined by the network and presence of well-known, leading companies in the field."*

Applications were judged on the degree of innovation of the technology, its potential impact, and the quality of the science behind it. CyanoGuard will receive tailored business support from one of our multinational partner companies, business training, media support, and a cash prize of £3,000.

Dr Steve Pleasance, Head of Industry at the Royal Society of Chemistry said: *"Increasing innovation in the chemical sciences is one of the key elements of the Royal Society of Chemistry's industry strategy.*

*"Our Emerging Technologies competition, now in its fourth year and supported by our industry partners, is proving to be highly successful in accelerating the commercialisation of the cutting-edge research taking place in both universities and small companies."*

Winning the competition gives businesses the platform they need to make the industry aware of their technology. Since the initiative began in 2013, our winners have gone on to raise a combined total of over £16 million in further funding, grown their companies and entered commercial contracts.

A previous winner went on to secure US\$1.7 million of funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to develop their novel treatment for iron deficiency anaemia, whilst another received support from GSK and was awarded over £2.5 million to take their enzyme catalysis technology towards market.

## **Notes for editors**

### **Royal Society of Chemistry**

We are the oldest chemical society in the world and in 2016 we're celebrating 175 years of progress and people in the chemical sciences. Throughout the year, we're sharing the stories of how our members past and present have helped to change the world with chemistry.

With over 50,000 members and a knowledge business that spans the globe, we are the UK's professional body for chemical scientists; a not-for-profit organisation with 175 years of history and an international vision of the future.

We promote, support and celebrate chemistry. We work to shape the future of the chemical sciences – for the benefit of science and humanity.

### **Chemistry Means Business**

Chemistry Means Business, held on 15–16 June 2016, is our flagship event for the chemistry-using industry, uniting SMEs, multinational organisations, investors and academic entrepreneurs from across the UK and Europe. Over 300 people attended the event, which comprised over 30 industry speakers, 35 exhibitors, 40 chemical innovation pitches, 5 workshops and panel discussions, partnering meetings, and an awards ceremony hosted by Hugh Dennis.

### **Emerging Technologies Competition**

The Emerging Technologies Competition is our annual innovation competition, accelerating commercialisation of the best European technologies for the benefit of society and the economy. The competition is aimed at universities, research institutions and small companies, and welcomes technologies in healthcare & wellbeing, energy & environment, food & water, and materials. First, second and third prizes were presented in each category.

40 shortlisted entrants presented their ideas to a panel of expert judges at the competition final, held at the Chemistry Means Business event. The judges are industry leaders and experts in their fields, drawn from a wide range of specialisms.

The competition is supported by our partners – multinational companies who are global leaders in their fields; they will provide tailored business support and guidance to all winners in each of our competition categories.

Our 2016 partners are P&G, AstraZeneca, GSK, Croda, GE Healthcare, Johnson Matthey, Schlumberger, Unilever, Pfizer, AkzoNobel and Aramco.

More information about the Emerging Technologies Competition, and a full list of the winners, can be found on our webpage at: <http://rsc.li/emerging-technologies>