

Conference Report

SwissSnowSymposium 2018

Cornel Fink, Dmitry Vasilyev, and Lu Chen

*Correspondence: C. Fink, EPFL, CH-1015 Lausanne, E-mail: cornel.fink@epfl.ch

From January 26–28, 2018, members of the Swiss Young Chemists' Association came together in Saas Fee for the 16th SwissSnowSymposium. After the participants' registration and a follow-up Apéro, the welcome dinner took place. Thereafter, two invited speakers shared their experience in two one-hour talks. First to present was Prof. **Peter Chen** (ETH Zürich), granting insights into his current research in a lecture titled 'Bond strengths in the gas phase, in solution, and in silico: dispersion effects and big molecules'. After his excellent presentation, **Delia Mihaila** (Publishing Director, MDPI AG) discussed the advantages of open access publishing and also explained how publishing might be done in the future. Next, a new concept was introduced to the SwissSnowSymposium by holding a panel discussion entitled 'Career perspectives with a PhD degree'. Four young PhDs, namely Dr. **Sviatlana Siankevich** (CTO & Co-founder, Embion Technologies SA), Dr. **Matthew Wise** (Corporate Strategy, ABB), Dr. **Justus Tönnemann** (Chemist Quality Assurance & Quality Systems, Carbogen Amcis), Dr. **Gerald Bauer** (Postdoctoral researcher, PSI) with distinctly different career paths after their graduations gave short presentations about their professional background and how their choices led to their current employment. Subsequently, the audience had the opportunity to ask questions and take part actively in the discussion to learn more

about their possibilities when concluding university with a PhD degree. The day closed with two talks from PhD students.

On Saturday, the participants enjoyed the wonderful slopes of Saas Fee under a blue sky and bright sunshine. As a special bonus, Dr. **Kathrin Brun** (Wiley-VHCA), an accomplished ski instructor, offered ski lessons to interested participants for free. The scientific program continued in the late afternoon with the lecture of Dr. **Dmitry Perekalin** from the Russian Academy of Sciences entitled 'Cyclobutadiene complexes of platinum metals'. The dinner helped everyone to regain strength for the upcoming poster session, which allowed each attendant to display his own research and moreover to discuss it with experts from various fields of chemistry. Afterwards our last invited speaker, Mag. **Matthias Rizzi** (Expert Process Safety, Consulting International), reported on 'Quantitative ATEX-HAZOP – A holistic Approach tackling Process Safety by combining Risk and Ignition Source Analysis with Numerical Methods'. The oral session proceeded with the six PhD students' talks. Finally, the evening peaked in the award ceremony, where the winners of the poster session and best oral presentation were announced. The jury had by all means no easy task since all young scientists presented excellent research results in a professional manner. Lastly, **Linda Bannwart** (best oral presentation), **Rachel Hevey** (best poster) and **Martha Zoumpoulaki** (best poster runner-up) were awarded for their outstanding achievements. Congratulations to the winners and many thanks to everybody who contributed to the success of the event.



SwissSnowSymposium 2018 - Group picture

