

Conference Report

Clariant Chemistry Day 2018

University of Basel, Kollegienhaus, October 4th, 2018

Anne Maier^{*a}, Thomas Volkmer^{*b}, and David Spichiger^{*c}

^{*}Correspondence: A. Maier, ^aClariant, Corporate Communications, E-mail: anne.maier@clariant.com; T. Volkmer, ^bClariant, Group Technology & Innovation Office, E-mail: thomas.volkmer@clariant.com; D. Spichiger, ^cSwiss Chemical Society, CH-3008 Bern, E-mail: spichiger@scg.ch

- Clariant CleanTech Award for outstanding achievements in the field of Clean Technologies and Sustainable Chemistry
- Fourth Clariant Chemistry Day at University of Basel
- Fostering exchange between academia and industry

Muttenz, October 4, 2018 – Clariant, a world leader in specialty chemicals, has once again honored outstanding scientific achievements in the field of Clean Technologies and Sustainable Chemistry at the fourth Clariant Chemistry Day by presenting its CleanTech Award. The company partnered with the University of Basel and the Swiss Chemical Society to confer the Clariant CleanTech Award. The top prize was awarded to **Ydna Marie Questell-Santiago** of the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) for her scientific work on new routes to carbohydrates and derivatives derived from biomass. Dr. Martin Vollmer, Chief Technology Officer at Clariant, presented the award to the delighted winner: “It is impressive to see these creative achievements in academic research with high industrial relevance. Sustainable chemistry is a key enabler for innovation in various industrial sectors but also to tackle the technological challenges of our society.”

Clariant, the University of Basel and the Swiss Chemical Society sincerely congratulate Ydna again for her fantastic contribution and at the same time want to highlight also the outstanding projects of the runners-up:

The second prize (CHF 2'500) was awarded to **Amita Ummadisingu**, EPFL Lausanne, for her project on film formation of perovskites for photovoltaics and how light impacts the morphology. The third prize (1'500) went to **Erwin Lam**, ETH Zurich, for his research on how specific catalysts can support the ‘methanol economy’ by hydrogenation of CO₂ to CH₃OH and the fourth prize (CHF 1'000) was given to **Jan-Georg Rosenboom** and **Dr. Peter Fleckenstein**, ETH Zurich, for their development of a new pathway to Polyethylene Furanoate (PEF) as replacement for fossil-based PET.

The award ceremony marked the end of an exciting event attended by around 100 students and representatives of industry and dedicated to the exchange of knowledge between industry and academia. Alongside the CleanTech Award nominees, the winner of the Clariant Chemistry Award at University of Basel, **Rajesh Mannancherry**, also talked about the results of his research on all-carbon ‘Geländer’ structures, which are comparable to a helical staircase.

The invited guest of honor at the event was **Paul Dyson** from the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL), who talked about improving the sustainability of chemical reactions by innovative catalyst systems. The lecture program was completed with three industrial perspectives from Clariant: **Marvin Estenfelder**, Head of R&D Business Unit Catalyst, (‘Catalysts – Enablers of a more sustainable world’), **Markus Rarbach**, Head of Business Line Biofuels & Derivatives, (‘Value generation from agricultural waste: Clariant Sunliquid® technology’) and **Tobias**

Platen, Scientist Competence Center Surfactants & Functional Chemicals, (‘Genadvance Hydra – A truly natural hair moisturizer’) gave interesting insights into their current projects.

In addition to the oral contributions, a further 36 participants showcased their research projects on the subject of sustainable chemistry in the form of posters and lectures. The Award Committee finally conferred the Poster Award for the best work presented during the poster session on **Christoph Kerzig** of the University of Basel. Explaining the idea behind the Clariant Chemistry Day, Dr. Martin Vollmer said: “The event and the results of the different scientific research projects clearly emphasize why it’s indispensable to strengthen the knowledge base in the field of clean technologies and sustainability. With the Clariant Chemistry Day we provide a platform for scientists from academia and industry to jointly identify potential for value creation.”

The Clariant CleanTech Award

The Award program was initiated in 2012 and is open to Master and PhD students and Postdocs from Swiss universities covering topics such as resource efficiency, renewable raw materials, or green technologies and environmental protection. It is judged by the Award Committee consisting of representatives from Clariant, the University of Basel and the Swiss Chemical Society. The award is endowed with a total of CHF 10'000, with CHF 5'000 for the first prize.



Award Committee and winners of the Clariant CleanTech Award places one to four, the Clariant Chemistry Award at the University of Basel as well as the Poster Award. From left to right: Martin Vollmer, Chief Technology Officer at Clariant, Christoph Kerzig, University of Basel, Rajesh Mannancherry, University of Basel, Amita Ummadisingu, EPFL Lausanne, Erwin Lam, ETH Zurich, Jan-Georg Rosenboom and Peter Fleckenstein, ETH Zurich, Ydna Marie Questell-Santiago, EPFL Lausanne, Professor Ed Constable and Professor Marcel Mayor, University of Basel, Alain de Mesmaeker, President of the Swiss Chemical Society, David Spichiger, Swiss Chemical Society, Thomas Volkmer, Clariant. (Photo: Clariant)

Clariant is a globally leading specialty chemicals company, based in Muttenz near Basel/Switzerland. On 31 December 2017 the company employed a total workforce of 18'135. In the financial year 2017, Clariant recorded sales of CHF 6.377 billion for its continuing businesses. The company reports in four business areas: Care Chemicals, Catalysis, Natural Resources, and Plastics & Coatings. Clariant's corporate strategy is based on five pillars: focus on innovation and R&D, add value with sustainability, reposition portfolio, intensify growth, and increase profitability.