

Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting: 600 Young Participants Selected

Approximately 600 aspiring young researchers representing almost 80 countries will be taking part in the 64th Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting. The organising council has now announced the results of the multi-stage selection process. For the first time in the history of the meetings the percentage of female participants is higher than the male's percentage (52 to 48%). The students, doctoral students and post-docs will be meeting with 37 Nobel Laureates from 29 June to 4 July 2014. A select group of excellent young scientists will have the opportunity to present and discuss their research in a master class hosted by a Nobel Laureate. This year the dialogue between generations and cultures, which has been fostered by the meetings since 1951, is dedicated to medicine.

Starting in September 2013 thousands of scientists under the age of 35 applied to participate in the 2014 Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting. The majority of them were nominated by the more than 200 academic partner organisations of the meeting organisers after they had conducted an internal evaluation process of all submitted applications. Interested young researchers without access to these "Academic Partners" were able to apply through an open application process. In addition to the scientific achievements, the motivation of the applicants was decisive for a positive evaluation. Julie Bonano, a postdoc at the Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Virginia, expresses her excitement of being selected: "I sincerely look forward to the opportunity to meet and network with some of the greatest scientific minds of this generation. My attendance at the Lindau Meeting will hopefully provide me with a new perspective on my research."

The selection process was conducted by a scientific panel led by the Lindau Council's Vice-President Burkhard Fricke, emeritus Professor for Theoretical Physics at the University of Kassel. "The selected young researchers belong to the top of their class", says Stefan Kaufmann, Professor of Microbiology and Immunology at the Berlin Charité and director at the Max Planck Institute for Infection Biology. "This is the next generation of leading researchers, who expect to gain inspiration from their encounters with Nobel Laureates", adds Klas Kärre, Professor for Molecular Immunology at the Stockholm Karolinska Institutet. Since 2006 Kärre has been a member of the Nobel Committee, which chooses the laureates for the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine.

As council members and scientific chairmen of the up-coming meeting, Kaufmann and Kärre are responsible not only for the selection process but also for conceiving the meeting programme. The main focus of the numerous lectures, panel discussions and master classes is on molecular, genetic and cellular mechanisms, as they are among the keys to the prevention and healing of diseases. Some of the Nobel Laureates, such as J. Michael Bishop or Harald zur Hausen will present the latest findings in cancer research. For many years zur Hausen, the 2008 Nobel Laureate in Medicine, was the chairman and member of the scientific board of the German Cancer Research Center (DKFZ), which is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. Françoise Barré-Sinoussi, distinguished with the 2008 Nobel Prize as well, will report about the advancements made in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Another important topic, which Elizabeth H. Blackburn (2009 Nobel Prize in Medicine) will address, is the process of ageing at the cellular level and the diseases associated with that.