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Community News

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SWISS CHEMICAL SOCIETY NEWS

A Tribute to Veronika Meyer



The *CHIMIA* column 'Highlights of Analytical Sciences in Switzerland' is one of the oldest and most consistently published columns to appear in *CHIMIA*. The columns are an undeniable success story, showcasing the excellent research that has been and is carried out in Switzerland in the field of analytical sciences.

This is all entirely thanks to Veronika Meyer, who initiated the column (then called Highlights of Analytical Chemistry in Switzerland) in 2005 and who served as its editor for the past 20 years. As a passionate, recognized analytical chemist (honoured as IUPAC's Distinguished Woman in Chemistry in 2017), author of a highly successful book 'Practical High-Performance Liquid Chromatography', and mountaineer (climbing Qomolangma), she has always sought new heights. She was able to identify and select important reports on cutting-edge research in the analytical sciences in Switzerland.

After 200 columns, Veronika Meyer has now passed the editorship of the Highlights of Analytical Sciences in Switzerland column to Bodo Hattendorf <https://doi.org/10.2533/chimia.2025.816>.

In tribute to Veronika's excellent efforts, the Editorial Board of *CHIMIA* has created a virtual issue of all the columns edited by her since 2005. https://www.chimia.ch/chimia/virtual_issue_analytical

SCS Foundation welcomes its new director: Dr. Franziska Schumacher



It's our great pleasure to welcome **Dr. Franziska Schumacher** as the designated Director of the SCS Foundation. She started in her new role on January 1, 2026 and needs to be formally approved by the Board of the Foundation in its next meeting in April 2026.

Throughout her professional career, Franziska Schumacher has always been dedicated to training young adults and promoting higher education, first as a teacher and university lecturer, then as a faculty and teaching course administrator. With a strong academic background and extensive leadership experience in higher education, Franziska is the perfect fit to further develop the SCS Foundation.

Source: <https://scs-foundation.ch>

The Top Ten Emerging Technologies in Chemistry – Call for Proposals for 2026



INTERNATIONAL UNION OF
PURE AND APPLIED CHEMISTRY

The International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry has released its call for proposals to identify the top ten emerging technologies in chemistry with the results to be announced in 2026.

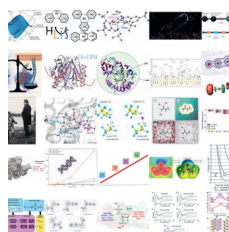
This initiative began in 2018 in recognition of IUPAC's Centenary in 2019, and while it was created to kick-off IUPAC's anniversary year in a very visible way, the end goal was to showcase the value of Chemistry (and chemists!) and to inform the general public as to how the chemical sciences contribute to the well-being of Society and the sustainability of Planet Earth. The most recent finalists for 2025 have been announced in October 2025 and detailed in the Oct 2025 issue of *Chemistry International (CI)*.

The call for the 2026 proposals is now open. Anyone can submit one or more proposals – this call for proposals is open to the global science community as well as to the general public.

Deadline is April 30, 2026.

Source: <https://iupac.org>

Quantum Science celebrated in a Special Pac



Three issues of Pure and Applied Chemistry (PAC) are devoted to a special topic inspired by the celebration of the International Year of Quantum Science and Technology. Guest editors Russell J. Boyd and Manuel Yañez extended invitations to more than 50 leading researchers in quantum chemistry in late 2024, with the aim of assembling articles highlighting the impact of quantum science and technology

across chemistry, materials science, and related disciplines. The resulting collection is broad in scope. Some papers report state-of-the-art research, while others offer authoritative reviews. Several contributions provide valuable insights into the work of leading researchers and trace the evolution of early quantum and theoretical chemistry into what is now more broadly known as computational chemistry. As expected, there is a strong emphasis on quantum chemistry—the branch of theoretical and computational chemistry that applies the principles of quantum mechanics to understand and predict molecular structure, properties, and chemical reactions. Quantum mechanics underpins our understanding of atomic and molecular interactions and plays a critical role in predicting chemical behavior and enabling new technologies, particularly in materials science and drug design. Thanks to DeGruyterBrill, the entire collection is made open access till April 2026.

Source: <https://iupac.org>

Special Birthday Celebrations 2026



Several of our senior SCS members will celebrate special birthdays in 2026. This gives us the opportunity to warmly congratulate them and wish them many more years with us!

100 Years

Ernst Schumacher, Bern
Peter Bladon, Lenzie / Glasgow

95 Years

Peter E. Häfelinger, Riehen

90 Years

Marcel R. Bühlmann, Schenken
Rolf Meyer, Zufikon
Max Ribí, Allschwil
Andreas Ludi, Bern
Lucie R. Balsenc, Geneva

85 Years

Kaspar Eigenmann, Alresheim
Albert Renken, Lausanne
Paul Stoll, Riehen
Peter Skrabal, Kilchberg
Gion Calzaferri, Bern
Heinz Heimgartner, Zurich
Rudolf Geiger, Bottmingen
Walter Graf, Uetikon am See
Carl W. Schläpfer, Firbourg
Bernard Liebich, Ascona
Martin Roth, Hölstein

80 Years

Ernst Peter Kündig, Chancy
Roger Malherbe, MuttENZ
Rudolf O. Duthaler, Bettingen
Rudolf Schmid, Dällikon
Othmar Leukart, St. Pantaleon
Heinz Berke, Zurich
Bernhard Krätler, Innsbruck (AT)
Heinz Gäggeler, Brugg
Heinz Frei, Berkeley, CA (US)
Beat Ernst, Magden
Rudolf Naef, Lupsingen
Anne Dimitrov-Wagenknecht, Bernex
André Peisker, Mönthal

75 Years

Alexander T. Zaslona, Satigny
Fritz Dick, Bern
Manuel Koller, Schliern b. Köniz
Hans Peter Wessel, Schliengen
René Nordmann, Zürich
Kurt Hilpert, Hofstetten
Silvio Ofner, Münchenstein
Eric Francotte, Nuglar
Christof Angst, Zurich
Veronika Meyer, St. Gallen
Laura Sigg, Effretikon
Edouard Marc Meyer, Neuchâtel

70 Years

Clemens Anklin, Westford, MA (US)
Antonio Togni, Zurich

Rudolf Wälchli, Basel
Louis-Pierre Molleyres, Bubendorf
Käthi Halder, Glis
Samuel Wunderli, Schlatt
Silvio Canonica, Volketswil
Philipp Widmer, Arosio
Marianne Hürzeler Müller, Däniken
Peter Walde, Windisch
Donald Hilvert, Zurich
Bruno Rotzinger, Délémont

A Warm Welcome to Our New Members!



Period: 18.11.2025–26.01.2026

Khadijetou Ahmed Ethmane, Ferney-Voltaire (FR) - Reto Arrighi, Tesserete - Alexandre Barthelme, Mulhouse (FR) - Lise Benoist, Bern - Rodrigo Carmona Chávez, Zurich - Suman Dana, Basel - Etienne Donckele, Basel - Thomas Duhamel, Bouveret - Berend Eggers, Thun - Sana Farhoudian, Tampere (FI) - Benjamin Forster, Basel - Malte Franke, Zürich - Cedric Fries, Basel - Jean-Luc Fuchs, Basel - Pascal Fuchsmann, Torny-le-Grand - Saroj Raj Ghimire, Orbe - Fabian Glatz, Basel - Dragana Grahovac, Lausanne - Coin Guillaume, Fully - Sevan Habeshian, Lausanne - Maria Heinke, Zurich - Sandrine Hell, Hagenthal-le-Haut (FR) - Teresa Horak, Zurich - Louise Jones, Galway (IR) - Song Ju, Neuchâtel - Jean-Philippe Krieger, Leymen (FR) - Daniel Latassa, Gamsen - Marius Lutz, Basel - Gregor Meier, Basel - Sven Thomas Nappen, Baden - Riccardo Pau, Lausanne - Alice Piantavigna, Lausanne - Jaroslav Pich, Zurich - Dimanthi Pliatsika, Wädenswil - Roberta Properzi, Basel - Christophe Salomé, Basel - Tobias Schirmer, Basel - Yeshua Sempere, Kemptthal - Rossel Thibaud, Neuchâtel - Simone Tortoioli, Basel - Jiun-Horng Tsai, Tainan (TW) - Daniel Varon Silva, MuttENZ - Philipp Waser, Luzern - Ping Xiao, Bern - Ektoras Yiannakas, Zurich.
Become a member: <https://scg.ch/membership>

HONORS, AWARDS, APPOINTMENTS

DMCCB PhD Prize 2025 of the Swiss Chemical Society awarded to Dr. Xingyu Liu, EPFL Lausanne and Dr. Kevin Schiefelbrein, University of Zurich

The Division Medicinal Chemistry and Chemical Biology of the Swiss Chemical Society is happy and proud to announce the award winners of the DMCCB PhD Prize 2025. The award includes a prize money of CHF 1'500 and an invitation to give a short presentation at the DMCCB Basel Symposium 2026, that took place at the Biozentrum of the University of Basel on February 5, 2026. As both winners are in the US for a Postdoc, the lecturers were connected to the audience via video call.



Dr. Xingyu Liu

receives the award for his outstanding thesis entitled «Integration of Hypervalent Iodine Reagents and Carbazolyl Cyanobenzene-Based Dyes into Peptides: New Opportunities for Biomolecule Functionalization». He conducted the PhD thesis at the EPFL Lausanne in the

group of Prof. Jérôme Waser and is now SNSF Postdoctoral Fellow at The Scripps Research Institute, USA.



Dr. Kevin Schiefelbein

is awarded for his outstanding thesis entitled «Combining Flow-Based Chemical Peptide Synthesis and Biochemical Tools to Investigate Post-Translationally Modified Peptides with a Focus on Lasso Peptides». He conducted the PhD thesis at the University of Zurich in the Group of Prof. Nina Hartrampf and is

now SNSF Postdoc Mobility Fellow at the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York, USA.

Dr. Una Trivanovic, METAS receives the Metas Award 2026



The Swiss Chemical Society honors **Dr. Una Trivanovic**, METAS, Wabern-Bern, for her groundbreaking contribution to aerosol metrology and her doctoral thesis titled “Synthesis and dynamics of carbonaceous nanoparticles during enclosed spray combustion” that she completed at ETH Zurich.

SICS 2026: Best Poster Awards



The organizing committee of the 6th Swiss Industrial Chemistry Symposium (SICS), that took place at the Biozentrum of the University of Basel on Friday, January 30, 2026, awarded three students with the SICS Best Poster Award 2026. 75% of the posters that were presented in one of the two sessions during lunch time came from PhD students and they

completed the lecture program that exclusively presented industrial project.

After the ceremony, the three winners gave a five minute short talk on their research. The SCS and the organizing committee like to take the opportunity to congratulate the winners again:

Xiao-Yu Li, University of Basel

Stereoselective total synthesis of skew-tetramantane, diamond's chiral core

Ann-Sophie Paschke, ETH Zurich

Advancing Molecular Editing Through Nitrogen Atom Edits: From Fundamental Reactivity to Late-Stage Functionalization

Chloé Stoll, University of Geneva

Chiral Imidazo[1,5- α]pyridine-Based Ligands for the Au-Catalyzed Enantioselective Intramolecular Hydrocarboxylation of Allenes

The SICS Best Poster award is endowed with a certificate and a cash cheque of CHF 100.00.

The IUPAC Richter Award 2026 was given to Prof. Richard B. Silvermann, Northwestern University, USA



Prof. Richard B. Silverman, Northwestern University, USA has been awarded the 2026 IUPAC-Richter Prize in Medicinal Chemistry. The prize recognized his transformative and sustained contributions to medicinal chemistry that have fundamentally reshaped both scientific understanding and patient care. He is the inventor of pregabalin (Lyrica®), one

of the most successful university-originated drugs in history. Beyond this singular accomplishment, Professor Silverman has repeatedly translated deep mechanistic insight into clinically advanced therapeutics, including CPP-115 and OV329 for epilepsy and neuropathic pain, and AKV9 (formerly NU-9) for ALS and Alzheimer's disease, each arising from elegant physical-organic and enzymological principles and progressing to human clinical trials.

The acceptance lecture will be held in Atlanta, GA, United States at the 39th National Medicinal Chemistry Symposium (May 31–June 3, 2026). A lecture will also be presented at the forthcoming EFMC International Symposium on Medicinal Chemistry in Basel, Switzerland (September 6-10, 2026).

Source: <https://iupac.org>

Good teaching through personal dialogue: Dr. Marc-Olivier Ebert, ETH Zurich receives the Golden Owl Award 2025



Dr. Marc-Olivier Ebert, ETH Zurich receives the Golden Owl Award for excellence in teaching from VSETH. He discovered his passion for analytical chemistry during his doctoral studies at ETH Zurich. After completing two postdocs, he returned to ETH in 2008 and has been successfully passing on his knowledge to students for over 10 years.

The Golden Owl honours lecturers who have provided exceptional teaching and motivates them to continue with their excellent teaching. At the end of the Spring Semester, an online survey created by VSETH is sent to all students asking them to rate the teaching style of their lecturers. The results are given to the respective student association.

The interview is available on: <https://chab.ethz.ch>

The Spark Award 2025 is awarded to Patrick Domke, Alberto Garrido-Castro and Bill Morandi, ETH Zurich



Every year, ETH Zurich presents the Spark Award for the most promising invention. In 2025, **Patrick Domke**, **Dr. Alberto Garrido-Castro** and **Prof. Bill Morandi** received the coveted award for their electrochemical process, which turns persistent pollutants into valuable raw materials for industrial applications.

The award ceremony was held as part of the Open-i innovation event at the Zurich Convention Center, where ETH researchers presented other inventions and opportunities for collaboration.

Source: <https://ethz.ch>

JOURNAL NEWS

Helvetica, Volume 109, Issue 1, January 2026



Perspective

Xanthate-Based Pathways to Ketones
Samir Z. Zard

Synthetic Procedure

Photo-Flow Reaction and Enantiomer Separation as an Enabling Combination to Chiral Substituted 1,2-Cyclobutane-diol

Antony Bigot, François Decalogne, Jésus Manzananas, Changxia Yuan, Han Chen, Fenglai Sun

Research Article

Synthesis of Biphenanthrene Natural Products by Atroposelective Aromatic Ring-Opening Metathesis
Valeriia Hutskalova, Christof Sparr

Scalable Synthesis of Highly Pure (*R*)-3-Fluoropyrrolidine From (*S*)-4-Chloro-3-hydroxybutyronitrile
Christian P. Bold, Pascal S. Engl, Alfred Stutz, Markus Stöckli, Matthias Krämer, Serena M. Fantasia, Albrecht Metzger, Christian Moessner, Paolo Tosatti, Stefan Hildbrand

Allylation of C(sp³)-H Bonds Using a MW/Persulfate Protocol
Hsin-Hsuan Lee, Chun-Yu Chen, Yen-Ku Wu, Ilhyong Ryu

Isomerization of α -Pinene Oxide to *Trans*-Pinocarveol
Emanuel Studer, Johanna Oortmann, Ryan Gilmour

Tuning Pore Chemistry in Dioxin-Linked Porous Organic Polymers for Enhanced High-Pressure CO₂ Uptake
Timur Ashirov, Krzysztof Piech, Önur Buyukcakir, Taner Yildirim, Ali Coskun

Bismuth Compounds React With a Nitron: Lewis Pair Formation and Quantification of Radical Trapping
Andreas Stoy, Johannes Schwarzmann, Felix Geist, Ahmed Fetoh, Malte Jürgensen, Jordi Poater, Istemi Kuzu, Crispin Lichtenberg

Controlling Rotational Motion of Nonplanar Porphyrin Atropisomers by Metal Coordination
Sophie Maguire, John E. O'Brien, Brendan Twamley, Liam Cribbin, Mathias O. Senge

Spirocyclic Diamine Scaffolds for Medicinal Chemistry
Aline Carrel, Alejandro Flores, Maedeh Darsaraee, Jean-Louis Reymond

Website: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/15222675>

INDUSTRIAL NEWS SWITZERLAND

Source: www.chemanager-online.com

Anne-Kathrin Stoller Becomes New CEO at Bachem

October 31, 2025: Bachem announced today that the Board of Directors has appointed Anne-Kathrin Stoller, the former Head of Bachem Americas and previously the company's CMO for many years, as the new CEO effective January 1, 2026. She succeeds Thomas Meier, who has decided to take on a new challenge

outside the company after more than thirty years at Bachem and almost six years as CEO.

"Thomas Meier has contributed significantly to Bachem's continued success. Together with his team, he has achieved a capital-efficient and profitable growth. At the same time, Bachem's position as an innovative and reliable partner to the pharmaceutical industry has been further strengthened. We would like to express our sincere thanks to Thomas for his many years of service, his leadership and extraordinary contribution to Bachem," says Kuno Sommer, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Bachem. He continues: "I am very pleased that we have been able to appoint Anne-Kathrin Stoller, an experienced and competent successor from within our own ranks, as the new CEO. Anne-Kathrin has an excellent combination of expertise, leadership skills, and customer focus and, together with her colleagues in the Executive Committee, will continue Bachem's successful course." Thomas Meier, CEO, Bachem, added: "Bachem is a great company and has developed into a leading global, innovation-driven developer and manufacturer of peptides and oligonucleotides in recent years. I have had the privilege of helping to shape and accompany this development in various roles over the past three decades, and I am very grateful for the many enriching experiences I have had at work and the formative encounters with people. Above all, I would like to thank Bachem's employees and customers, as well as my colleagues in the Executive Committee and on the Board of Directors, for their active support and excellent cooperation."

Anne-Kathrin Stoller, current Head of Bachem Americas and future CEO, Bachem, commented: "I am delighted to have earned the trust of the Board of Directors and will do everything in my power, together with the members of the Executive Committee and all Bachem employees, to continue our company's impressive success story. Under the leadership of Thomas Meier, Bachem has set the course for the future. I would like to thank him for his collegial support over the past years and everyone at Bachem who works hard every day to ensure that we make an important contribution to human health." Anne-Kathrin Stoller has worked for Bachem since 2006. After holding various management positions, including Head of Business Development & Sales Europe, Chief Marketing Officer and member of the Group Executive Board, she took on the role of Chief Operating Officer Americas in 2022 and is responsible for the company's US business. Anne-Kathrin Stoller studied chemistry in Hanover and Cambridge (UK) and holds a doctorate in bioorganic chemistry from the University of Basel.

Clariant Announces Joint Venture for Flame Retardants with Fuhua

November 6, 2025: The joint venture, pending authorities' approval, will create halogen-free flame retardants for various end-markets, addressing tightening regulatory requirements. Clariant, a sustainability-focused specialty chemical company, announced its strategic joint venture with Fuhua, focused on developing innovative non-halogenated flame retardants. The new initiative, which is subject to customary approval from relevant authorities, aims to create next-generation phosphorus-based flame retardants to serve several industries like building and construction, automotive, electric and electronic, directly addressing the tightening technical and regulatory environment in these sectors. The signing of this strategic joint venture agreement is the result of Clariant and Fuhua's joint innovation and R&D strategic cooperation. This strategic cooperation fully leverages the advantages and strengths of both Clariant and Fuhua. Clariant and Fuhua join in the commitment to develop new non-halogen flame retardants, adding significant value for their customers. Navigating through the evolving regulatory landscape and responding to their customers' increasingly ambitious sustainability objectives, the new joint venture will strategically position itself to

transform the challenges into targeted innovation opportunities. This approach is deliberate and focused on creating sustainable value with new phosphorus-based products that maintain or improve flame-retardant performance while meeting regulatory requirements. “This joint venture marks an important step in our commitment to developing flame retardants that solve both performance needs and regulatory concerns,” said Angela Cackovich, Business President, Adsorbents & Additives and EMEA, Member of the Executive Steering Committee. “By partnering with Fuhua, a recognized leader in integrated chemical manufacturing, we’re combining expertise to create solutions that will help our customers stay ahead of regulatory changes while maintaining the highest performance standards.” The new development initiative comes as regulatory bodies worldwide are implementing stricter controls on traditional flame-retardant technologies. Clariant’s proactive approach enables the company to anticipate these changes and develop compliant alternatives before customers face regulatory challenges, reinforcing the company’s reputation for forward-thinking innovation in specialty chemicals. “This strategic cooperation demonstrates Clariant’s targeted approach to innovation in the additives sector, consistently delivering solutions that address emerging challenges,” said Manuel Mueller, Head of Strategy & Innovation, Clariant. “The new partnership with Fuhua represents another important step in developing products that align with Clariant’s commitment to innovation, sustainability, regulatory compliance, and performance excellence.” This latest investment builds upon Clariant’s established presence in China, following the CHF 100 million investment in its Daya Bay facility with a second production line for Exolit OP flame retardants. The company also expanded its capabilities with a second production line for Nylostab S-EED stabilizer in Cangzhou.

Novartis Launches \$23 Billion North Carolina Manufacturing Hub

November 20, 2025: Novartis plans to establish a flagship manufacturing hub in North Carolina by 2027-2028 as part of a \$23 billion investment in US infrastructure. The initiative aims to produce medicines across key therapeutic areas, create 700 new direct jobs, and generate over 3,000 indirect jobs by 2030, while strengthening the local supply chain.

Novartis plans to expand its operations in North Carolina, creating a new flagship manufacturing hub with end-to-end manufacturing capabilities. This announcement is part of Novartis’ \$23 billion investment in US-based infrastructure over the next five years, designed to increase manufacturing capacity and enable 100% of the company’s key medicines to be produced end-to-end in the US.

As part of this flagship hub in North Carolina, Novartis will:

- Build a new site in Durham with the construction of two new facilities dedicated to manufacturing biologics and sterile packaging
- Build a new site in Morrisville with one facility for the production of solid dosage tablets and capsules, including packaging
- Expand the scope of its existing Durham facility with the added capability to support sterile filling of biologics into syringes and vials

The company is on track to produce all its advanced technologies in the US with:

- Cell and gene therapies manufactured in Morris Plains, NJ, and Durham, NC
- Radioligand therapies manufactured coast-to-coast at facilities in Millburn, NJ, Indianapolis, IN, and Carlsbad, CA, and two new sites planned in Florida and Texas
- xRNA therapies to be manufactured at a new facility whose location will be announced in the coming months

Currently, Novartis produces gene therapies in Durham, North Carolina. Together, the new and existing facilities will create a single hub, expanding capabilities to produce medicines across the company’s main therapeutic areas: oncology, immunology, neuroscience, and cardiovascular, renal, and metabolic. The proximity of the facilities will allow teams and production processes to work in tandem – from manufacturing active ingredients to final packaging – and create efficiencies in its manufacturing. “This announcement is a commitment to American innovation and to the patients we serve,” said Vas Narasimhan, CEO of Novartis. “By building a full, end-to-end manufacturing presence in North Carolina for our broader portfolio, we are expanding our capacity to deliver medical breakthroughs, securing a more resilient US supply chain, and investing in the local communities that make our mission possible.” Anticipated to open in 2027-2028, the flagship manufacturing hub, encompassing more than 700,000 square feet between the existing campus and new facilities, is expected to create 700 new jobs at Novartis and more than 3,000 indirect jobs across the supply chain by the end of 2030.

Europe’s Biotech Inflection Point

December 18, 2025: At BIO-Europe, WuXi AppTec Co-CEO Steve Yang outlined how strategic partnerships can unlock Europe’s untapped biotech potential.

When BIO-Europe opened its doors this year in Vienna, the conversation quickly gravitated toward one theme: how Europe can convert its scientific strength into global impact. On stage, Dr. Steve Yang joined a high-level panel on the future of strategic partnerships, an area where the company collaborates with around 500 European customers. His message was clear: Europe is poised for growth, but success will depend on how fast, and how effectively, it builds and scales collaborative models. Dr. Yang described how partnerships have evolved from transactional engagements into deeply integrated collaborations. In fields such as peptides, oligonucleotides and other complex modalities, he explained, progress requires cross-functional governance, rapid decision cycles and joint scientific problem-solving. These structures allow projects to move smoothly across discovery, development and manufacturing, a process he likened to a relay, where every hand-off must be seamless to preserve speed and quality.

Trust Forged Under Pressure

For Dr. Yang, trust is not built in conference rooms but in moments of shared pressure. At year’s end, for example, emerging biotechs often request accelerated study packages ahead of crucial partnering meetings in early January. Meeting these requests requires WuXi AppTec to coordinate globally, maintain flexible capacity and mobilize teams across time zones. Delivering under such constraints, he noted, frequently becomes the turning point that cements a long-term partnership. These “crunch periods” demonstrate reliability not in theory, but in execution. As the discussion at BIO-Europe focused on operational realities and partnership models, Dr. Yang offered a complementary view when speaking later that month at the Sofinnova Growth & Innovation Summit in London. There, he broadened the lens to the global forces shaping these collaborations. Capital is returning to biotech, demand for complex modalities is rising, and innovation is spreading faster than ever. Breakthroughs in areas such as T-cell engagers or next-generation immunotherapy concepts now circulate worldwide within months, triggering rapid waves of follow-on research. Europe is part of this momentum, but as Dr. Yang stressed, its scientific creativity must be matched with the operational velocity needed to make a true difference to patients.

Providing the Backbone for Drug Development

WuXi AppTec's role in this landscape is intentionally focused: the company does not compete with its customers, does not retain IP and does not run an independent R&D pipeline. Instead, it provides the infrastructure and scientific depth that help innovators bridge the high-risk "valley of death" from discovery to early clinical development. Its integrated CRDMO platform – spanning discovery, development and commercial manufacturing, has become an essential capability for startups and established pharma alike. Europe is central to this strategy. WuXi AppTec has expanded its Munich R&D site and maintains manufacturing capabilities in Switzerland. These investments strengthen WuXi AppTec's ability to support customers throughout Europe and provide them with the scientific and operational capabilities they need to advance their programs efficiently. The company's expanded capabilities also reflect a broader industry shift toward complex modalities. One example is WuXi AppTec's peptide manufacturing platform, now exceeding 100,000 liters, which has enabled faster progress for programs in areas such as metabolic disease. The scale and integration of such platforms illustrate how WuXi AppTec supports innovators working in technically demanding fields.

The Road Ahead: Wuxi Apptec's Perspective on Future Partnerships

Looking to the future, Dr. Steve Yang expects two forces to reshape collaborations: the globalization of innovation and the accelerating speed of knowledge transfer. Both trends increase the need for partners with broad geographic reach, technical depth and the ability to guide programs across stages without losing momentum. In this environment, WuXi AppTec's globally integrated CRDMO platform is designed to provide exactly that continuity, enabling innovators to move from discovery to development and manufacturing without fragmentation or delay. For Europe, this is both an opportunity and a call to action. The region's scientific foundations are strong, but success will hinge on building strategic partnerships that pair discovery excellence with executional scale. By offering access to global capabilities while working closely with European teams, WuXi AppTec aims to help bridge that gap. As Dr. Steve Yang summarized at BIO-Europe, "quality by design, speed by design" is no longer a technical aspiration, it is the operating model required to turn Europe's breakthroughs into real-world therapies.

Dow CTO Leadership Change

January 8, 2026: A.N. Sreeram, Senior VP and Chief Technology Officer, will retire from Dow at the end of June. Andre Argenton will move to the newly created role of Chief Technology & Sustainability Officer. A.N. Sreeram, Senior Vice President and Chief Technology Officer, will retire from Dow at the end of June. Since joining Dow 20 years ago, Sreeram has transformed Dow's approach to innovation by accelerating new product commercialization through collaboration with our customers. Many award-winning products have been developed under his leadership, spanning applications from coatings and construction to electronics and packaging. In a corresponding move, Andre Argenton will move to the role of Chief Technology & Sustainability Officer. Dow is uniting Sustainability and R&D to accelerate moving ideas to impact. Andre brings significant technical and leadership experience and will continue to focus on delivering solutions that outperform customer expectations and differentiate Dow in the marketplace.

And the Winners are: CeraSleeve, ElementarHy and Primogene

January 16, 2026: A jury of experts has selected three start-ups as winners of the CHEManager Innovation Pitch 2025.

CHEManager Innovation Pitch, CHEManager's start-up promotion initiative, was launched in 2019. Last year, with the support of our sponsors Brenntag, Siemens and Ruhr-IP, we presented 18 start-ups with their ideas – eleven in the German-language editions of CHEManager and seven in CHEManager International. A jury of experts has now selected the winners in three categories from all 18 start-ups, taking into account various decision criteria. Last year, start-ups from Germany, Switzerland, Canada and the Netherlands were represented. Even though most of the start-ups are based in Germany, the internationality of the founding teams is still high. This speaks for the attractiveness of academic institutions in this country, as most start-ups are spin-offs from universities. The topics ranged from biotechnology, synthesis chemistry and material development to energy and process technology. The three mega trends of sustainability, circular economy, digitalization and transformation were omnipresent as drivers of innovation.

In the "Value to Sustainability" category, CeraSleeve from Darmstadt won ahead of the Viernheim-based start-up Curenergy, and Ucano Biotech from Berlin. CeraSleeve is developing a paper additive that replaces conventional wet strength and sizing agents with a sustainable material. The team uses a wafer-thin layer of silica to make paper tear-resistant and water-resistant. The patented technology enables a genuine circular economy in which the paper can be fully recycled.

The winner in the "Value to Society" category was Primogene, with a narrow lead over CeraSleeve and Ucano Biotech, who also scored highly in this category. Primogene is an innovative biotechnology company based in Leipzig that specializes in the development of biotechnological production processes for bioactive ingredients. The focus is on human-identical compounds that promote health in all phases of life.

In the "Value to Industry" category, ElementarHy from Hamburg clearly beat C4Value from Mülheim an der Ruhr, and Biosimo from Schlieren in Switzerland. ElementarHy uses a revolutionary plasma technology and has positioned itself as a leading provider of cost-effective and scalable membrane electrode units for electrolyser manufacturers. We develop, produce and recycle customized MEAs, minimizing the use of critical raw materials (-95%) and delivering outstanding performance and first-class quality.

CeraSleeve received the most votes across all categories, followed by Ucano Biotech, C4Value, and Biosimo. Even though only three start-ups were ultimately recognized as annual winners, all 18 companies that were able to present themselves to a large audience at the CHEManager Innovation Pitch 2025 can still feel like winners. The expert jury consisted of: Tanja Bendele (Ruhr-IP Patentanwälte), Axel Paix (Brenntag), Nicky Ahnert (Siemens), Holger Bengs (BCNP Consultants), as well as Jörg Wetterau (Labor für Kommunikation) and Volker Oestreich (Dr. Oestreich Consulting). The jury session was moderated by Christene Smith and Michael Reubold (CHEManager). In addition to a certificate and a trophy from CHEManager for three winners, BCNP Consultants will enable the winning start-ups to present themselves at the 10th ECP in Frankfurt at the beginning of February and make valuable contacts with companies and investors.

Source:

CHEManager | CHEManager International
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