

# Making It Easier to Plan a Career

“Career Steps Opportunities” aims for feedback / new network starts work

A series of events in Berlin, Göttingen and Tübingen entitled “Career Steps Opportunities” shed light on various aspects of career planning and development. The goal is to increase awareness of gender equity at all levels of hierarchy within the internal scientific community.

At the beginning of March, the Max Planck Society invited Cornelia Quennet-Thielen, State Secretary at the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, and other guests, including the improvisational theater group “Freiwild,” to the Harnack House in Berlin for the opening event, which ended with a three-voice chorus of thanks and left a smile on the participants’ faces. The four performers earned thunderous applause for their conference summary in the form of a highly idiosyncratic version of “Little Red Riding Hood.”

The event began with a retrospective look at the path taken by the Max Planck Society to promote equality. And a successful path it’s been, too, as Cornelia Quennet-Thielen confirmed, pointing out that, in ten years, the

MPG had tripled its number of female Directors. She described the improvement in equal opportunity symbolized by this increase as an expression of structural and cultural change. Still, she appealed to the management of the Max Planck Society, represented by patron and Vice President Angela Friederici and acting Secretary General Rüdiger Willems, not to waver in their efforts.

The contribution by Stefanie Lohaus, publisher of *MISSY MAGAZINE*, was met with thoughtful nodding as she explained that, in terms of female involvement, science differed little from the music and arts scene: “We have the same problems. Gender equity isn’t just a question of access and equal rights, it is also dependent on where the encouragement and support comes from, who believes that building a career is a natural choice and who takes care of children and family.”

At workshops on work-life balance, gender awareness and science careers, the predominantly young male and female scientists were asked to share their personal experiences and desires so as to hear how the Max Planck Institutes

could better respond to their needs. It soon became clear that gender equity won’t be achieved without effort, and that an awareness of the situation is an essential skill for modern managers.

This is by no means a matter of course, as the often-repeated requests for individual help and flexible working hours demonstrated. “But there are now research group leaders who allow their team members exactly this latitude,” as event organizer and MPG Gender Equality Officer Ulla Weber discovered. One female group leader with six children told her: “The main thing is that they are present on the one day a week on which the group meeting takes place.”

The Department of Personnel and Personnel Law at Administrative Headquarters took advantage of the opening event to cement the first links in a career support network. On the pattern of the links between the Welcome Officers at the Max Planck Institutes, the aim is to establish a “Career Steps Network” in concert with the Institute employees tasked with career support. One hundred individuals have already linked up on maxNet to exchange ideas.

Impressions from “Career Steps Opportunities” with Cornelia Quennet-Thielen (below right), State Secretary at the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, and the improvisational theater group Freiwild (below left).



# OpenCon 2017 in Berlin

Three-day program at the Harnack House from November 11 to 13

The Max Planck Society will be hosting the OpenCon 2017 organized by SPARC and the Right to Research Coalition. About 200 international participants around the globe will come together from November 11 to 13 at the Harnack House, the Society's conference center in Berlin, Germany, to promote openness in scholarly communication.

OpenCon, the platform for the next generation to learn about Open Access, Open Education and Open Data, brings together the most engaged students and early career academic professionals from all over the world. Attendance at OpenCon is by application only, and the majority of past participants receive travel scholarships.

OpenCon 2017's three-day program will begin with two days of keynotes, panels and interactive workshops. OpenCon places an emphasis on highlighting diverse early career voices, while complementing them with such leading experts as Wikipedia founder Jimmy Wales and European Parliament Member Julia Reda, who attended prior OpenCons.

The third day will feature an all-day session where participants have the opportunity to craft new campaigns, lay the foundations for new resources and form collaborations that will continue long after the November conference is over. The speakers for 2017 will be released later.

In 2013, the Max Planck Society and SPARC organized the first Open Access

conference dedicated to early career researchers in the run-up to the "Berlin 11" Open Access conference. That conference turned out to be the initial spark for OpenCon. Organized by the Right to Research Coalition and SPARC, OpenCon 2017 builds on the success of the first three OpenCon conferences, which collectively convened approximately 500 participants from 80 countries.

In addition, OpenCon's unique structure has supported 70 satellite events, enabling more than 4,100 attendees across 32 countries to participate in an in-person OpenCon event. Throughout the year, hundreds of these individuals remain engaged through monthly community calls, regular webcasts and a very active community discussion list.

Since initiating the "Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities" in 2003, the Max Planck Society is pursuing a broad and comprehensive Open Access agenda. The Max Planck Society is committed to consistently supporting Open Access on all levels. In particular, it is crucial to foster the engagement of the next generation of scholars because students and early career researchers face challenges from a scholarly publishing in transition.

For more information about the conference and to sign up for updates, please visit [www.opencon2017.org/updates](http://www.opencon2017.org/updates).

## Award-Winning Research Video

One of the films from the Max Planck Cinema series, "Biomaterials – Patent solutions by nature," has won the Technology Prize for 2016 at the Goethe Institute Science Film Festival. The film depicts the research carried out by Peter Fratzl at the Max Planck Institute of Colloids and Interfaces and optimally meets the required criteria: according to the international jury, "It exemplifies those decisive technologies that will change our lives in the 21st century."

The Goethe Institute presented awards in six categories. The Technology Prize is endowed with 1,000 euros. The Festival brings science to life on screen in an entertaining, creative and exciting way. It toured 16 countries last fall.

Established in 2006 the Ernst Haage Prize honors young scientists for outstanding achievements in the field of chemical energy conversion and fosters young academics in particular. The prize is awarded by the Ernst Haage-Foundation and is endowed with € 7,500.



RESEARCH AWARD IN  
„CHEMICAL ENERGY CONVERSION“

Nominees must be scientists who hold a doctorate from a German research institution/university. They should have their primary residence in Germany, be no more than 40 years old and not have a permanent employment contract.

Nominations may be submitted to the Foundation's Board of Trustees by **September 15th 2017** and should include the following documents:

- Two pages of laudation
- Curriculum vitae in table form
- Complete publication list
- Up to three reprints of works by the nominee

Personal applications cannot be considered.

The prize recognizes outstanding scientific achievements in the field of chemical energy conversion, for example in the following divisions:

- Hydrogen as a medium for transferring and storing energy
- Photovoltaic storage solutions
- Electrochemical storage
- Biomass and bioenergy
- CO<sub>2</sub> transformation
- Hydrogen oxidation and electrolysis
- Reduction of nitrogen
- Artificial and natural photosynthesis
- Development of new experimental and theoretical methods to find new application areas in the energy research.

## ERNST HAAGE PRIZE CALL FOR PROPOSALS 2017

Directorate of the  
Max Planck Institute  
for Chemical Energy Conversion  
Attn. Ms. Christin Ernst  
Stiftstr. 34-36  
D-45470 Mülheim an der Ruhr  
Catchword: Ernst Haage



For further information on the Ernst Haage Prize, the Foundation and award ceremony, please visit <http://www.cec.mpg.de>

Prof. Dr. Robert Schlögl  
Prof. Dr. Serena DeBeer  
Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Lubitz  
Prof. Dr. Frank Neese



MAX-PLANCK-INSTITUT FÜR  
CHEMISCHE ENERGIEKONVERSION

# Shaw Prize for Simon D.M. White

Max Planck Director receives award for numerical simulations of structure formation in the early universe

This year's Shaw Prize for Astronomy goes to Simon D.M. White, Director at the Max Planck Institute for Astrophysics, for his contributions to understanding structure formation in the universe. The Shaw Prize is awarded annually in the life sciences, mathematics and astronomy by the Shaw Prize Foundation in Hong Kong. A gold medal and prize money of 1.2 million US dollars will be awarded in each area at a ceremony in Hong Kong on September 26, 2017.

The universe was born 13.8 billion years ago in the Big Bang. But how did the cosmos we observe today, with its billions of galaxies of different shapes and sizes, develop from this enormous explosion? Apparently, as Simon White and his collaborator Martin Rees first hypothesized in 1978, gigantic clouds of material separated from expansion and fell back on themselves under the influence of gravity when the universe was just a few hundred million years old, and galaxies then formed as gas cooled and condensed at the centers of immense halos of the mysterious dark matter that is still detected only through its gravitational effects.

Over four decades, Simon White and his students and collaborators have simulated this scenario with ever-increasing realism on the largest available computers. A well known recent example was the Millennium Simulation, carried out in 2005 on the Max Planck Society's Garching supercomputer in collaboration with Volker Springel and others. This simulation tracked the development of structure and the formation of 20 million galaxies throughout a region of space measuring more than two billion light-years across.

In fact, such simulations produce a kind of cosmic net in which matter accumulates in and flows along filaments on the edges of gigantic bubbles. This is precisely the structure that astronomers observe in the real universe on very



This year's Shaw Prize for Astronomy goes to Simon D.M. White, Director at the Max Planck Institute for Astrophysics.

large scales. The work of White and his colleagues demonstrates how such complex structures develop from the simple, near-uniform conditions initially hypothesized, but now directly observed, to be present in the early universe.

Simon White was born in 1951 in Ashford, England. He earned a first degree in mathematics from Jesus College, Cambridge in 1972, an MSc in astronomy from the University of Toronto in 1974 and a PhD from Cambridge University in 1977. In the 1980s, White teamed up with Marc Davis, George Efstathiou and Carlos Frenk to show that the "Cold Dark Matter" theory (CDM) was consistent with the formation of galaxies and other cosmological structures.

In the 1990s he, together with Julio Navarro and Carlos Frenk, showed that all dark matter halos have a simple "universal" structure that can be predicted from the material content and geometry of the universe and current ideas about its very early evolu-

tion. White was a Lindemann Fellow at the Astronomy Department of the University of California at Berkeley in 1977 and 1978, and a research fellow at Churchill College, Cambridge from 1978 to 1980.

He was then a senior fellow at the Space Sciences Laboratory of UC Berkeley (1980–1984) before joining the Faculty of Astronomy at the University of Arizona (1984–1991). In 1991, White returned to the Institute of Astronomy in Cambridge and was director of the European Association for Research in Astronomy from 1992 to 1994. Since 1994, White has been Director at the Max Planck Institute for Astrophysics in Garching.

In addition to numerous other prizes and awards, Simon D.M. White has won the Helen B. Warner Prize from the American Astronomy Society, the Dannie Heineman Prize for Astrophysics, a gold medal from the Royal Astronomical Society and the Gruber Cosmology Prize.