

Innovation Award in Medicinal and Pharmaceutical Chemistry for Andreas Bender and Ingo Ott

Two very gifted researchers, Andreas Bender (University of Cambridge, UK) and Ingo Ott (Braunschweig University of Technology), have received €5000 toward their research as part of the Prize for Innovation in Medicinal and Pharmaceutical Chemistry from the German Chemical and Pharmaceutical Societies (GDCh and DPhG). Bender was recognized for his original and pioneering research for predicting mechanisms of action and side effects of drugs through data analysis, and Ott was honored for his work on the biological activity of new gold(I) drug candidates.

Andreas Bender did his undergraduate studies in Berlin, Dublin, and Frankfurt (with G. Schneider at Frankfurt University) as a German National Merit Foundation Scholar. In 2005, he received his PhD from the University of Cambridge (UK) under R. C. Glen. Between 2006 and 2007 he was a Presidential Postdoctoral Fellow with the Novartis Institutes for BioMedical Research in Cambridge (MA, USA) and the Broad Institute of Harvard and MIT, where he collaborated with J. L. Jenkins and P. Clemons, respectively. Bender started his independent research career at the Leiden/Amsterdam Center for Drug Research and was Head of the Pharma-IT Platform at Leiden University (2008–2010). He then moved back to the University of Cambridge and is now lecturer there. Bender's research interests involve cheminformatics and bioinformatics.^[1] He focuses on the integration of chemical, biological, and phenotypic data, which can for example be used to anticipate serious drug side effects earlier in development, or to design compounds with the desired bioactivity profile.

Ingo Ott studied pharmacy at the University of Innsbruck and completed his diploma thesis under B. Matuszczak and G. Heinisch. In 2004, he completed his PhD studies with R. Gust at the Institute of Pharmacy of the Free University of Berlin. Then after postdoctoral work with X. Qian at the East China University of Science and Technology in Shanghai (China), he returned to Berlin as a research assistant (2004–2008). In 2009, Ott established his own research group at the Braunschweig University of Technology where he focuses on the medicinal chemistry of metal-based drugs for tumor therapy. This work involves the synthesis of new metal complexes and in vitro evaluation of the compounds using cell culture models and enzymatic assays. He has also used gold complexes to development new drugs, which show promising pharmacological properties such as the inhibition of the enzyme thioredoxin reductase or anti-angiogenic effects.^[2]

Carl Duisberg Prize for Christian G. Hartinger

The Carl Duisberg Prize is awarded annually by the GDCh to encourage young talented researchers. This year, Christian Hartinger (University of Vienna) received this honor for his exemplary analytical work on the characterization of protein-metal and DNA-metal conjugates using mass spectrometry and electrophoretic methods as well as for his role in developing the antitumor drug KP1019, which is currently in phase II clinical trials.

Hartinger studied chemistry at the University of Vienna and received his PhD there in 2001 under B. K. Keppler. He remained in Vienna as a research assistant until 2006 before moving to Switzerland for three years to take up an Erwin Schrödinger Fellowship with P. J. Dyson at the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL). Hartinger then did his habilitation at the University of Vienna where he is currently an assistant professor. His research focuses on the development of metal-based anticancer agents and of analytical methods to characterize their behavior in terms of reactivity to biomolecules. In particular, his group is interested in preparing compounds with targeting properties that comprise mono- and polynuclear metal compounds with Ru, Os, or Rh as the central atom.^[3]

Horst Pracejus Prize for Uwe J. Meierhenrich

The GDCh has awarded Uwe J. Meierhenrich (University of Nice Sophia Antipolis, France) its biannual Horst Pracejus Prize in recognition of his pioneering work on chirality. Meierhenrich's name is associated with the detection of amino acids in comets in preparation for the cometary Rosetta mission.

Meierhenrich studied chemistry at the University of Marburg and earned his PhD in physical chemistry in 1997 from the University of Bremen under the guidance of W. H.-P. Thiemann. Then he carried out postdoctoral work with H. Rosenbauer at the Max Planck Institute for Aeronomy in Katlenburg-Lindau (now the Max Planck Institute for Solar System Research; 1997–1999), at the University of Bremen (1999–2000), and at the Centre de Biophysique Moléculaire (Orléans, France; 2000–2001). Meierhenrich then returned to Bremen and earned his habilitation there in 2003 before moving to the University of Nice Sophia Antipolis in 2004. He currently holds the professorship for biophysical chemistry and also collaborates with industry to study the chirality of natural products used as flavors and fragrances. Last year he published a Review in *Angewandte Chemie* on the origin of primitive cells.^[4]

Awarded ...



A. Bender



I. Ott



C. G. Hartinger



U. J. Meierhenrich



T. Ritter

And also in the news ...

... Tobias Ritter (Harvard University, USA) is the recipient of the 2011 BASF Catalysis Prize valued at €10000. This outstanding young researcher is active in the field of organometallic chemistry, complex molecule synthesis, and mechanistic studies to develop practical access to molecules of interest in catalysis, medicine, and materials. At the upcoming Heidelberg Forum of Molecular Catalysis in July, he will present a lecture on his latest area of interest; fluorine chemistry applied to the synthesis of complex molecules. Ritter's academic achievements have been recently reported in our News section.^[5]

-
- [1] a) M. R. Doddareddy, E. C. Klaasse, Shagufta, A. P. Ijzerman, A. Bender, *ChemMedChem* **2010**, 5, 716;

b) A. Sebastian, A. Bender, V. Ramakrishnan, *Mol. Inf.* **2010**, 29, 773.

- [2] a) I. Ott, B. Kircher, C. P. Bagowski, D. H. W. Vlecken, E. B. Ott, J. Will, K. Bensdorf, W. S. Sheldrick, R. Gust, *Angew. Chem.* **2009**, 121, 1180; *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.* **2009**, 48, 1160; b) I. Ott, H. Scheffler, R. Gust, *ChemMedChem* **2007**, 2, 702.

- [3] a) B. Wu, M. S. Ong, P. J. Dyson, C. G. Hartinger, C. A. Davey, *Chem. Eur. J.* **2011**, 17, 3562.

- [4] a) U. J. Meierhenrich, J.-J. Filippi, C. Meinert, P. Vierling, J. P. Dworkin, *Angew. Chem.* **2010**, 122, 3826; *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.* **2010**, 49, 3738; b) U. J. Meierhenrich, J.-J. Filippi, C. Meinert, J. H. Bredehöft, J.-i. Takahashi, L. Nahon, N. C. Jones, S. V. Hoffmann, *Angew. Chem.* **2010**, 122, 7966; *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.* **2010**, 49, 7799; *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.* **2010**, 49, 7799.

- [5] a) *Angew. Chem.* **2011**, 123, 1791; *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.* **2011**, 50, 1753.

DOI: 10.1002/anie.201102246