

Polymer International-IUPAC Award 2008: Call for Nominations

The executive editors of *Polymer International* and the IUPAC Polymer Division have established an award for creativity in applied polymer science or polymer technology. This new award, which celebrates the achievements of young researchers in the polymer community, will be presented at the IUPAC World Polymer Congress—MACRO 2008, to be held 29 June–4 July 2008 in Taipei, Taiwan.

The winner will be awarded USD 5 000 plus travel and hotel accommodation expenses to attend MACRO 2008, where he/she will present a plenary-type lecture. **All nominations are due by 15 March 2008** to Samantha Swann <sswann@wiley.co.uk>. A Scientific Committee, representing *Polymer International* and the IUPAC Polymer Division, will select the winner on the basis of scientific merit from nominations received before this date.

Nominees must be under age 40 on 31 December 2008, and must be available to present a plenary-type lecture at MACRO 2008. Nominations must include the following information:

- name and address of person making the nomination
- full name and date of birth of nominee
- business address of nominee
- academic background and education (college or university, location, major field, degree, year awarded)
- academic honors
- employment history (position, organization, duties, dates)
- publications, patents, unpublished reports, papers presented at meetings (a list of those deemed pertinent)
- honors and awards
- scientific achievements for which the candidate is nominated for this award

 www.iupac.org/news/archives/2007/PolymerInt-award.html

IUPAC InChI/InChIKey Project Joins Microsoft BioIT Alliance

The continued development of new and powerful medications for treatment of disease relies more and more heavily on collaborative projects, involving organizations possessing a wide range of complementary skills. The discovery techniques developed over many years by the pharmaceutical industry can now be married with a new generation of genome-based technologies, enabling many quite different approaches to health care. Information technology is an integral part of this enterprise. The vast collections of biomedical data now emerging require ultra-sophisticated methods of data-handling, and such methods are currently being developed and improved by teams of software engineers in a variety of IT organizations. The establishment of the BioIT Alliance in April 2006 by Microsoft and leading organizations in the life science industries was very much a reflection of this scenario. The Alliance has now been extended to include IUPAC.



The importance of IUPAC's contribution to the enterprise lies primarily in its responsibility for establishing standards for transmitting chemical information. IUPAC has long been well known for its internationally agreed recommendations for deriving names for chemical substances. With the number of known substances running into many tens of millions, including both those reported in the scientific literature and those synthesized in-house, this is no small achievement; however, conventional names are not best suited to the age of information technology, and IUPAC, in collaboration with the U.S. National Institute of Standards and Technology, has developed the machine-readable International Chemical Identifier (InChI), an open-source identifier algorithmically generated from a two-dimensional graphical structure <www.iupac.org/inchi>. This contains full structural information and can be converted back into the original structure.

On 5 September 2007, IUPAC launched the beta-version of software to generate a new fixed-length (25-character) identifier, derived algorithmically from InChI and known as InChIKey <www.iupac.org/inchi/release102.html>. Although this version of the identifier does not itself contain information about chemical

