

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- publications, patents, unpublished reports, papers presented at meetings (a list of those deemed pertinent)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



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www.pst.org.tw/macro2008

structure, it will do the following:

- facilitate web searching
- allow development of a web-based InChI lookup service
- permit an InChI representation to be stored in fixed length fields
- make chemical structure database indexing easier
- allow verification of InChI character strings after network transmission

Stephen Heller (IUPAC Division of Chemical Nomenclature and Structure Representation) says: "The InChI/InChIKey is the first publicly available unique chemical identifier. Until IUPAC developed the InChI/InChIKey, it had not been possible to link and exchange information and data between the vast chemical world and the life sciences world that the Microsoft BioIT Alliance supports. The InChI/InChIKey is like a Digital Object Identifier for chemicals. The InChI/InChIKey is an agent of change and an agent of the future for linking the chemical, biochemical, and biomedical information and data on the web. The InChI/InChIKey provides the Microsoft BioIT Alliance with a unique, easy, accurate, universal, and free way to link the information they collect and use internally and provide externally to their customers. . . . I am very pleased that I am part of the team that has been able to put this one small, but vital link in place to support and enhance drug discovery and improve the health of all persons around the world."

According to Rudy Potenzzone, Microsoft's director of the BioIT Alliance and industry strategist for life sciences, "Microsoft is pleased to have IUPAC, the international chemistry standards organization, join the Microsoft BioIT Alliance. The IUPAC InChI/InChIKey is a critical link in making the goal of improving biomedical data interchange come to fruition in the near future. As more companies and organizations use the IUPAC InChI/InChIKey to connect information, the international scientific community will benefit. We hope their participation in the Alliance can help expand its usage."

About the BioIT Alliance

Formed in 2006, the BioIT Alliance is a cross-industry group working to integrate science and technology in order to accelerate the pace of drug discovery and realize the potential of personalized medicine. Founding members include Accelrys Software, Inc.; Affymetrix, Inc.; Agilent Technologies, Inc.; Amylin Pharmaceuticals, Inc.; Applied Biosystems;

The BioTeam, Inc.; Digipede Technologies LLC; Discovery Biosciences Corporation; Geospiza, Inc.; Hewlett-Packard Development Company, L.P.; Illumina, Inc.; InterKnowledge; Microsoft Corporation; Sun Microsystems, Inc.; The Scripps Research Institute; VizX Labs, LLC; and other companies in the pharmaceutical, biotech, hardware, and software industries. Additional information can be found on the BioIT Alliance website at <www.bioitalliance.org>.

 www.iupac.org/news/archives/2007/BioIT-alliance.html

Chemical Heritage Foundation Names Thomas R. Tritton President

Thomas R. Tritton, formerly president of Haverford College, will become president of the Chemical Heritage Foundation (CHF) effective 1 January 2008. He will be only the second president of CHF, succeeding Arnold Thackray, who founded the organization in Philadelphia 25 years ago and will continue with CHF in the new role of chancellor.

"I am enormously excited to be returning to my roots as a scientist," says Dr. Tritton. "My life has been devoted to education and the CHF position offers a new way to continue that calling in directions that are both original and challenging."

Tritton was selected following a worldwide search for someone with both scholarly and entrepreneurial talents, who combines a passion for the long sweep of chemistry and molecular sciences with the drive to build and sustain a successful enterprise.

"Scientist, scholar, inspiring leader, Tom Tritton is the right person at the right time for CHF," said Vincent Calarco, chairman of the CHF Board of Directors. "His passion for chemistry, his energy, his leadership will help CHF achieve its ambitious goals . . ."

"CHF's world-class scientific collections and holdings provide an outstanding resource for scholars and a natural linkage to both the humanities and to the social sciences," said Tritton. "Additionally, the work on science education, outreach, and public policy offers distinctive contributions to contemporary questions and societal needs."

 www.chemheritage.org

