

Activating Impact and Innovator of the Year finalists announced

Posted on Tuesday 5th February 2013

BBSRC has announced the finalists in its 2013 Activating Impact and Innovator of the Year competitions.

Professor Tim Dafforn (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/biosciences/staff/profile.aspx?ReferenceId=9224&Name=dr-tim-dafforn>) of the School of Biosciences and Matthew Hicks, Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Birmingham are finalists for the Most Promising Innovator award for a synthetic biology solution to pathogen detection.



All competitors will find out who has won the prestigious titles at a final in central London on 20th March 2013.

The two competitions form part of BBSRC's Fostering Innovation programme, which also includes the Excellence with Impact awards, celebrating the success of scientists, knowledge exchange practitioners and institutions which have translated excellent research into social and economic benefits.

Activating Impact is a new competition which has been created to celebrate the work of successful Knowledge Exchange and Commercialisation (KEC) teams or individuals that make essential contributions in turning excellent bioscience research supported by BBSRC into real-life applications.

As well as recognising these contributions the competition aims to promote best practice in KEC amongst the bioscience community and stimulate innovative approaches to future KEC activities in the biosciences.

The winning team will receive £50,000 and up to two runner-ups will receive £25,000 to contribute to an aspect of the organisation's strategy for KEC.

Activating Impact 2013 finalists

- University of Aberdeen
- University of Cambridge
- University of Dundee
- The University of Edinburgh and The Roslin Institute
- The University of Manchester
- University of Nottingham
- University of Oxford

Innovator of the Year is an established competition recognising the efforts of BBSRC-funded scientists to take their work beyond the lab and deliver social and economic advantages.

The Innovator of the Year finalists compete in one of the three categories; 'Commercial Innovator', 'Social Innovator' and 'Most Promising Innovator' which reflect the breadth of the benefits delivered by BBSRC's investment in UK bioscience. One of the category winners will be chosen as the overall Innovator of the Year by the independent panel of expert judges.

Winners in each category will receive a £10,000 award to support research, training or other activities promoting economic or social impact. The overall winner will receive a further £5,000 and their department will receive £15,000.

Previous winners include the University of Cambridge's Professor Shankar Balasubramanian, who co-invented Solexa Sequencing, an ultrafast way to sequence DNA. The firm he co-created, Solexa, was sold for \$600M.

In 2012 Professor George Lomonosoff of the John Innes Centre won the overall title for his work developing a safe and accessible way to manufacture proteins in plants, which could revolutionise vaccine screening.

Innovator of the Year 2013 finalists

Commercial Innovator

- Stefan Przyborski, University of Durham. Technology that enhances the value and relevance of cell-based assays for discovery and screening applications.
- Hagan Bayley, University of Oxford. Engineered protein nanopores.
- Anna Hine, Aston University. Advancement of protein engineering for global biotechnology and pharmacology.

Social Innovator

- Ian Graham, University of York. High value chemicals from plants: molecular breeding of pharmaceutical crops.
- Peter Mertens and Simon Carpenter, Simon Gubbins and Carrie Batten, The Pirbright Institute. Identification, modelling and control of bluetongue outbreaks in the UK and northern Europe.

Most Promising Innovator

- Ryan Donnelly, Queen's University Belfast. Hydrogel-forming microneedle arrays for enhanced drug delivery and patient monitoring.
- Tim Dafforn and Mathew Hicks, University of Birmingham. A synthetic biology solution to pathogen detection.