

Parts from the press release by Deutsche Messe AG, Hannover, on the presentation of the EUROPEAN BIOTECHNICA AWARD 2006 on Oct 12, 2006 in Zurich:

12 October 2006

Austrian-based Intercell AG wins EUROPEAN BIOTECHNICA AWARD for 2006

- Second and third prizes awarded to Genmab and amaxa
- Minister Schavan emphasizes importance of European cooperation in research

Over 200 guests representing business, politics and science from throughout Europe gathered in Zurich to celebrate the presentation of the EUROPEAN BIOTECHNICA AWARD 2006. The first prize, worth EUR 20,000, went to Intercell AG from Vienna/Austria. The second prize went to Genmab A/S from Copenhagen/Denmark, while amaxa GmbH from Cologne/Germany won third prize.

The prizes were presented by the German Federal Minister of Education and Research, Dr. Annette Schavan, Dr. Karsten Henco, founder of Qiagen and Evotec, CEO of U3 Pharma AG, Martinsried, and a member of the Award jury, and Stephan Ph. Kühne, member of the Board of Deutsche Messe AG, Hannover.

Speaking shortly before presenting the awards, Dr Schavan emphasized the importance of the competition, saying that it was a fitting way to advertise the need for greater European cooperation in the effort to boost Europe's status as an attractive research location. "The exchange of ideas and knowledge is gaining ever greater importance. We all profit from cross-border knowledge transfer. The presentation of the EUROPEAN BIOTECHNICA AWARD here in Zurich highlights the role of cross-border cooperation".

Intercell AG wins first prize

The winner of the first prize, Intercell AG, received a cheque to the amount of EUR 20,000 and a year's membership with EuropaBio. This biotechnology company, which is based in Vienna/Austria, specializes in the development of modern prophylactic and therapeutic vaccines against infectious disease. The R&D efforts of Intercell are dedicated to long-term medical advancement and the well-being of humankind. Established in 1998, the company is now one of the most successful in this sector. With 140 employees from 16 countries, Intercell AG is widely regarded as an innovative, efficient and quality-oriented business at the forefront of the so-called "smart vaccines" sector. Successful clinical trials and the keen interest that its products have received from various international pharmaceutical companies underline the status and recognition that Intercell AG enjoys within the global biotechnology industry. The company also has operations in Livingston/UK and Mooresville/USA.

Second and third prizes go to Genmab and amaxa respectively

The second prize – a media package with the European Biotechnology News – has been awarded to Genmab A/S from Copenhagen. Genmab in Copenhagen/Denmark is a biotechnology company that creates and develops human antibody products for the treatment of life-threatening and debilitating diseases. Genmab is currently developing various products that are designed to treat cancer, infectious disease, rheumatoid arthritis and other inflammatory conditions. The company is committed to developing and extending its broad portfolio of new therapeutic products. Genmab is an international company that cooperates with other companies; its partners include Roche, Amgen and Serono. This alliance makes it easier to access technologies useful in the rapid creation of human antibody products to target disease. At present the company employs 220 people. In addition to its head office in Copenhagen, Genmab also has operations in Utrecht/Netherlands, Hitchin/UK and Princeton/USA.

Third prize – which comprises a stand at BIOTECHNICA 2007 in Hannover and five days of consulting by the company Capgemini – was awarded to amaxa GmbH from Cologne/Germany. This company specializes in the development and commercialization of innovative products that facilitate the transfer of nucleic acid such as the DNA of isolated genes or so-called siRNA into cells. The efficient transfer of DNA or siRNA into cell lines and into primary cells, in particular, is of special relevance to medical research. It represents a real breakthrough for drug research and commercial drug development. amaxa currently has 150 employees. In addition to the headquarters in Cologne, amaxa also has a branch in Gaithersburg/USA.

Jury praises the high quality and international relevance of the entries

In his official speech Dr. Henco referred to the high quality of the entries and the international character of the participating companies. In order to emphasize the pan-European character of the Award it is presented in a different European city every year. Zurich – one of Europe's major finance capitals – was the host of the fourth award presentation. Dr. Henco pointed out that the jury of internationally acclaimed professionals made their decision on the basis of scrupulous deliberation and the observation of strict criteria. The award is bestowed upon small and medium-sized companies that have an established presence in biotechnology and the life sciences and have excelled by virtue of their innovative products and services, as well as related concepts and business ideas. With reference to the three finalists Dr. Henco added: "Today, they are all winners. All three companies have produced convincing, impressive concepts, and all of them will benefit from their participation in this competition."

The jury's chairperson, Prof. Dr. Peter Stadler, who due to illness had to relinquish the moderation of the Award presentation in favour of his colleague Dr. Henco, stressed that in the four years since it came into existence the EUROPEAN BIOTECHNICA AWARD had made considerable progress. "In the meantime the Award has earned an established and highly esteemed place within Europe's biotechnology sector", said Stadler.

Contact at Deutsche Messe AG:
Inga Waldeck
Tel.: +49 (0) 511 / 89-3 10 26
E-mail: inga.waldeck@messe.de

Selected press releases (RTF format) and photos are available for downloading at: www.biotechnica.de/presseservice