



PRESS RELEASE

Schweighofer Prize awarded in Vienna

>> The Schweighofer Prize, the Innovation Award for the European Forest-Based Sector was awarded for the 7th time in Vienna.

>> EUR 300,000 for innovative ideas concerning wood.

>> The winners of 2015 come from Austria, Germany, Sweden, Italy and Switzerland.

>> Over 700 visitors from 41 countries from the international wood sector and representatives from the fields of research and economy took part.

Vienna, 17 June 2015. For the 7th time, the Schweighofer Prize, the Innovation Award for the European Forest-Based Sector, was awarded. Austrian forest-based industrial and initiator Gerald Schweighofer awarded the prizes in the presence of Austrian Federal Minister for Agriculture and Environment Andr  Ruppreecher, Austrian Federal Minister for Labour and Social Affairs Rudolf Hundstorfer, as well as Vienna's Mayor Michael H upl.

Gerald Schweighofer about the idea behind the Schweighofer Prize: "When my family created the Schweighofer Prize 12 years ago to support wood research, we wanted on the one hand to give something back to wood. On the other hand, we thought it very important to bring together the top people from the industry as well as research sector and to promote an exchange of ideas. The record attendance of 700 participants from 41 countries proves us right, and it makes me personally happy that the Schweighofer Prize is now of such great importance in Europe and on an international level."

Projects, products and technologies from Germany, Sweden, Italy and Switzerland received an award. Dr. Erich Wiesner, CEO of the Wiehag Group, received the main prize for his life's work. When awarding the prize, Gerald Schweighofer emphasized on the Europe-wide pioneer performances, his national and international engagement for the timber industry as well as his many initiatives for research and development.

Supporting next generation researchers

This year for the first time, the Schweighofer Prize established a cooperation with one of the largest integrated forest products companies in the world; the North American company Canfor which produces timber, cellulose and paper. Canfor sponsored ten students from Canada and the USA to take part in an "Innovation Workshop" on the day before the Schweighofer Prize. According to the motto "From Knowledge to Innovation", 27 young researchers from a total of 16 countries exchanged ideas under the leadership of Schweighofer Prize jury chairman Prof. Dr. Alfred Teischinger (University of Agricultural Science) in the domed hall of the TU Vienna.

Canfor CEO Don Kayne about the cooperation: "The business models of tomorrow are innovative and sustainable. The "From Knowledge to Innovation" workshop in Vienna takes place at a very high level. We want to support the researchers of the next generation and give them the opportunity to engage in dialogue with each other and to benefit from international exchange."



Mayor Michael Häupl: "Facing the challenges of our time with the help of research."

Mayor Michael Häupl, a supporter of research, himself a former biologist: "Great research requires adequate resources. There are many challenges that we must face, such as climate change or resource scarcity. To do so, we need new approaches and the research needs adequate resources. We are constantly trying to increase research funds in Vienna, and private initiatives such as that of Gerald Schweighofer strengthen us in our objective of further improving Vienna as a scientific location."

Federal Minister Andrä Rupprechter: "The Austrian timber industry plays in the Champions League."

For Andrä Rupprechter, the award shows the great importance of Austria's forest-based sector on an international level. "Promoting innovations and innovators of the next generation is exactly what Austria needs to be among the world's best. The reputation of Austria in the forest-based sector is excellent, as the high number of participants at the Schweighofer Prize 2015 already proves."

Federal Minister Rudolf Hundstorfer: "Innovation creates work."

For the Minister for Labour and Social Affairs Rudolf Hundstorfer, the promotion of research is an essential driving force to secure and generate jobs. "Innovation creates work. The promotion of innovations needs public support, but also private promoters such as Gerald Schweighofer. The people who received the award today have shown that even with a raw material that mankind has known since the beginning of time, it is still possible to do something new. It is a good sign for sustainability and economy."

Information concerning the winners:

Winner of the Schweighofer Prize 2015 is from Upper Austria

The main prize 2015 was awarded to Dr. Erich Wiesner from Altheim, Austria. He was honoured with € 100,000. "Dr. Wiesner has developed his company into a leading timber Construction Company in Europe. The completed projects present impressive and technically demanding constructions. In addition to his successful entrepreneurial activities, Dr. Wiesner has acted for many years as a leading representative of woodworking industries both in Austria and on a European level", said jury chairman Univ. Prof. Dr. Alfred Teischinger.

www.wiehag.com

The innovation prize winners share equally the prize money of € 200,000

- Block glueing production concept – an innovative manufacturing process for core layers, which results in a higher yield and significant savings.
Georg Reis, Richard Rister and Erhard Jung (Weinig AG), Germany
www.weinig.com
- p-System - The universal tool concept with an extreme shear angle of 70 ° prolongs the tool life and also offers an outstanding cutting quality
Martin Dressler (LEUCO AG), Germany
www.leuco.com
- Lindura® by Wood Powder Technology – A durable, resilient, easy-care wooden floor, which results from the fusion of top layer veneer and Wood Powder.



Darko Pervan and Niclas Håkansson (Välinge Innovation AB) Sweden, Johannes and Guido Schulte (MeisterWerke Schulte GmbH), Germany

www.valinge.se ; www.meister.com

- X-RAD – The revolutionary connection technique for CLT-elements; assembly on the construction site will be faster and safer.

Albino Angeli and Gianni Dal Ri (Rotho Blaas srl), Andrea Polastri (CNR-Ivalsa), Italy

www.rothoblaas.com ; www.ivalsa.cnr.it

- ETH House of Natural Resources – The four-storey pilot house with innovative timber structures out of hardwood; the structures have been developed in cooperation with industrial partners. Andrea Frangi und Flavio Wanninger (ETH Zürich), Katrin Hauser (Climate-KIC), Jan Hamm (Häring & CO. AG), Switzerland.

www.honr.ethz.ch

About the Schweighofer Prize

The Schweighofer Prize is donated by the Austrian Schweighofer family, which has been engaged in the European woodworking industry for generations. It rewards innovative ideas, technologies, products and services in order to strengthen the competitiveness of the European Forest Based Sector. Since 2003 the award is presented every second year, and is endowed with a total prize money of € 300,000. The Schweighofer Prize is divided into a main award and various innovation awards.

www.schweighofer-prize.org/

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