

News Release

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Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, Biopharma Innovation Cup Honors Young Scientists

- **Winning team receives €20,000 for an innovative project proposal on schistosomiasis vector control**

Darmstadt, Germany, July 27, 2016 – Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, a leading science and technology company, today announced the winners of its sixth Biopharma Innovation Cup. The winning team received €20,000 for its “controlling schistosomiasis transmission” approach in the Global Health area.

The Biopharma Innovation Cup highlights the commitment of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, to developing the next generation of biopharmaceutical talents with novel ideas for new innovation in medical science. With more than 900 applications from 53 countries, this year’s Biopharma Innovation Cup achieved a new record of popularity. Thirty-one participants were chosen to work for four days to develop a project plan around their original idea. Participants were coached by experienced Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, researchers and managers in the biopharma field.

The winning team Global Health inspired the audience with their innovative approach to “Controlling schistosomiasis transmission.” The team consisted of:

- Jennifer Beveridge, Georgia Institute of Technology (US)
- Theresa Maier, University of Cambridge (UK)
- Erica Namigai, University of Oxford (UK)
- Chetan Rathi, University of Tennessee (US)
- Josh Tycko, Editas Medicine (US)
- Gabriele Disselhoff, Team Coach



As part of the company's corporate responsibility efforts, Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, is committed to fighting the worm disease schistosomiasis until its elimination. The company donates up to 250 million praziquantel tablets to the World Health Organization annually, supports awareness campaigns, and is engaged in research.

As runner-up receiving €5,000, the Oncology team "Cutting cancer's nutrient supply" was chosen consisting of:

- Simon Breitler, Harvard University (US)
- Sabine Gogolok, MRC Centre for Regenerative Medicine (UK)
- Peter Kim, Yale University (US)
- Claudio Lademann, Max Planck Institute of Biochemistry (Germany)
- Mireia Mato Prado, Imperial College London (UK)
- Arne Sutter, Team Coach

The Biopharma Innovation Cup [won](#) the German Industry Innovation Award in 2015 for innovative HR concepts and the German Idea Award for best international idea in 2014. More detailed information on the Biopharma Innovation Cup can be found [here](#).

"We are impressed to see interest in the Biopharma Innovation Cup grow from year to year and look forward to continue giving young talent from all over the world a chance to learn about R&D in the pharmaceutical industry and to work directly with our scientists and managers at the summer camp," said Dr. Ulrich Betz, Executive Director of Innovation & Entrepreneurship Incubator at the biopharma business of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, and initiator and manager of the Biopharma Innovation Cup.

This initiative is designed to support the professional development of post-graduate students interested in a career in the pharmaceutical industry and to foster innovation from a promising new generation of academic talent. Applications to participate in the 2017 edition of the cup can be submitted starting November 1st, 2016.

Additional Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, initiatives in the 'open innovation' context can be found at the biopharma open innovation portal [webpage](#).

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Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, is a leading science and technology company in healthcare, life science and performance materials. Around 50,000 employees work to further develop technologies that improve and enhance life – from biopharmaceutical therapies to treat cancer or multiple sclerosis, cutting-edge systems for scientific research and production, to liquid crystals for smartphones and LCD televisions. In 2015, Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, generated sales of € 12.85 billion in 66 countries.

Founded in 1668, Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, is the world's oldest pharmaceutical and chemical company. The founding family remains the majority owner of the publicly listed corporate group. Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, holds the global rights to the Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, name and brand. The only exceptions are the United States and Canada, where the company operates as EMD Serono, MilliporeSigma and EMD Performance Materials.