

We walked the talk!

On December 14, at Solvay's Brussels headquarters, representatives of the 10 winning teams of the 2009 Solvay Innovation Trophy received their awards from the hands of Members of the Executive Committee and Trophy judges. >>>



New Business

New SOLEF® PVDF for lithium batteries

>>> SBU SPECIALTY POLYMERS

A new SOLEF® PVDF for lithium-ion batteries significantly improves key features of these batteries such as energy density, performance and duration, as well as driving down cost. Interesting applications include electric and hybrid cars.



Customer Oriented Projects

World's lightest airline catering trolley

>>> SBU SPECIALTY POLYMERS

Tigris is a brand new generation of lightweight, fully recyclable airline catering trolleys based on Radel®, 25% lighter than aluminum. Other transport applications for this innovative technology are already foreseen.

"I was present at the 2006 SIT Awards Ceremony and was greatly impressed by the respect that Solvay gives its innovators. It fired me up with enthusiasm, and I am delighted to be part of the Advanced Polymers team that has won its very first Innovation award."

Brian Alexander, Solvay Advanced Polymers



Performance Improvement

Palladium catalyst for H₂O₂ production

>>> SBU PEROXIDES

The innovation consisted of devising and developing a new palladium catalyst. The patented process uses raw materials that are easily available and cheaper. It is simple, has fewer synthesis stages, consumes less power and generates less waste than the old process.

"It's an honor to lead such a highly skilled team that has worked so hard for many years. We have had our failures, but each one was a valuable learning opportunity. Our success clearly shows that basic science still has an important role to play at Solvay."

Armin Liebens, SBU Peroxides

BETWEEN OURSELVES >

The ceremony was a first for Solvay: a globally interconnected multimedia event based in Brussels (Belgium) with continuous connections and live Internet relays to and from seven other sites: Bangkok (Thailand), Hannover (Germany), Alpharetta (USA), Bollate (Italy), São Paulo (Brazil), Martorell (Spain) and Tavaux (France). In all, the event was watched by nearly 500 Solvay employees and invited guests worldwide. Jacques van Rijckevorsel, Group Innovation Sponsor and Group General Manager of the Plastics Sector: *"The format was excellent ... and exciting too. You could see it on people's faces, wherever they were; they were simply delighted to participate in the awards ceremony with*

colleagues from around the world. The passion for Innovation was clearly shared. I believe we could extend the format in future to encompass more sites, depending on the available technology." The 2009 SIT Awards ceremony truly embodied the motto of this innovative year: *"Share the knowledge, shape the future"*. For the technological challenge of course, but even more because during those two and a half hours together the Solvay innovators shared their successful projects, their enthusiasm, their innovative spirit, wherever they were in the world.

After the opening remarks by CEO Christian Jourquin and words of welcome from Brigitte Laurent,

Group Innovation Champion, the seven connected sites each presented an innovation category in turn, showing the richness and diversity of the Solvay projects portfolio throughout the world. The finalist projects were then presented and the winner announced.

"It was amazing to see everyone rejoicing on site when one of their projects won! It proves that the drive for Innovation is truly present throughout the whole Group. The results of this 5th edition of the SIT clearly show that, when it comes to Innovation, we can walk the talk!"

comments Brigitte Laurent. The ten winning projects came from Strategic Business Units (SBUs)

"Share the knowledge, shape the future."



Management Improvement

Solvay ethics film festival

>>> CC LEGAL & COMPLIANCE

This unique initiative motivates employees to create their own audiovisual learning and communication tools for promoting ethics and compliance within Solvay, and revolutionizes traditional methods of internal training.



Sustainable Development and citizenship

SCR: NO_x reduction for diesel engines

>>> SBU INERGY

The Dinox[®] technology of Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR) involves injecting an aqueous solution of urea into the exhaust system of diesel engines to eliminate harmful nitrogen oxides. Unlike competing processes, it does not use a catalyst of rare metals.



Sustainable Development and Citizenship

S-300 expansion in Green River

>>> SBU SODA ASH

This project turns waste into a useful and powerful environmental protection product. A technical study has confirmed the feasibility of making low-cost, technical grades of S-300 bicarbonate from trona (natural carbonate) processing effluent.

"I was in the audience in 2006 and said to myself: 'I really want to win one of those trophies in 2009!' I was lucky; we had just started working on this unique project. It was a rocky path at times, but we continued to look at the problem from new angles until we succeeded." Kurt Allen, SBU Soda Ash



Specialty Polymers, Peroxides, Soda Ash, Inergy and Vinyls, from Competence Centers (CCs) Materials Development and Analysis and Legal and Compliance, and from the Pharmaceuticals Sector. The judges awarded two trophies in the "Sustainable Development and Citizenship" category, particularly important this year. They also chose to give not only one, but two Jury prizes. Finally the Comex prize (rewarding an earlier SIT Trophy-winning project that has since proved particularly successful in the field), went to a Solvay Solexis innovation that took a trophy in 2003. The connected sites each had their own celebrations before or after the international event, which started at 2pm Brussels time, meaning 8pm Bangkok time, 11am São Paulo time and

9am Alpharetta time. In Brussels, the closing remarks by Jacques van Rijckevorsel were followed by a panel on Open Innovation and Collaboration with Innovation specialists Keeley Wilson, Christopher Hull and Friederich Pinnenkamp. Then it was the turn of André Borschberg to present the emblematic Solar Impulse project, finishing with the film of the solar airplane taking off for the first time on December 3, just 11 days earlier! Finally, host Paul Barrett sent all participants to a last "event": a collaborative dinner where everyone was asked to participate in putting together the meal before enjoying it together. Knowledge-sharing indeed! ●

Find all details on the finalist teams and projects on the intranet <http://solia-media.solvay.com/innovationtrophy/sit2009>.

What did they win?

Each team received two prizes of EUR 4 000, one to be shared by the team for their own celebration, and one to be donated to a humanitarian project. The teams all opted for Shelt'Up, a project that designs and manufactures portable shelters for people suffering from natural disasters in various parts of the world.



Replicated Innovations

High-tech organic electronics

>>> CC MATERIALS DEVELOPMENT AND ANALYSIS

Organic electronics find applications in lighting walls, electronic newspapers and ultra-thin television screens. Thanks to the mobilizing impetus of New Business Development, Solvay is now a credible partner for companies active in this field.



Jury Prize

Teaming with Petrovax for influenza vaccines

>>> PHARMACEUTICALS SECTOR

By combining Solvay's skills and technologies with those of Russian company Petrovax, three novel, next-generation vaccines have been produced, strengthening and expanding Solvay's portfolio of vaccines in Russia and the CIS*.

*Commonwealth of Independent States (former republics of the USSR).



Jury Prize

Bio-ethylene for vinyls

>>> SBU VINYLs

Solvay produces bio-PVC in Brazil from ethylene derived from sugar cane – a local, renewable natural resource.

"It was a privilege to be part of the jury. There were so many interesting, novel projects on display. I was particularly impressed by the high knowledge levels of the project leaders, who could answer all our questions in great detail. It was impossible to choose just one jury prize as the standard was so high."
Anna Karaoglou, DG Research, European Commission



Comex Prize

Linearity versus complexity

>>> SOLVAY SOLEXIS

This branching and pseudo-living polymerization technology makes it possible to prepare fluoroelastomers with controlled macromolecular structures, leading to products with unique properties not obtainable by conventional techniques. This 2003 SIT winner has achieved remarkable financial results and strong growth, giving Solvay robust leadership in the high-performance sealing and gaskets markets.