



Ulrich Award

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Published online: 22 December 2018

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Ulrich Award is a traditional action of ISGS in memoriam of Professor Dr. Don Ulrich in recognition to outstanding contributions made by young scientists in sol-gel fundamentals and applications.

Searching for equal opportunities to young researchers from different countries, the ISGS Board introduced the idea that young is not defined by biological age, but by the time elapsed from the Thesis defense. This increased the number of applications to 18 candidates, many of them excellent, showing that sol-gel activity around the world is vibrant and fast progressing.

The Selection Committee was chaired by David Avnir and composed by Léonard Alexandre, Sara A. Bilmes, Nicola Hüsing, and Clément Sanchez. The Awardees were selected considering the quality and originality of their work developed on their original ideas in sol-gel, and their impact in the Sol-gel community and beyond.

The 2017 Edition has two shared awards and three awardees. This was a singularity because rarely in the scientific community, two persons—in this case twin brothers—request sharing an award.

The awardees delivered an Invited Lecture at the 19th International Sol-Gel Conference held at Liège, Belgium that are published in this Special Issue.

Recipients of Ulrich Award 2017 are:

- Vladimir and Alexandr Vinogradov, ITMO University, Russia;
- Tim-Patrick Feller, Chalmers University of Technology, Sweden.

Vladimir and Alexandr Vinogradov: they share an impressive scientific and technological production. Vinogradov twins make their initial scientific production in a non-top research group and they continue their formation in

complementary sol-gel fields: Vladimir focussed on biomedical applications and Alexandr in advanced coordination chemistry. These young scientists founded a new laboratory of Solution Chemistry of Advanced Materials and Technologies in March 2014 at the University of Mechanics and Optics (ITMO) in St. Petersburg with relevant contributions in fundamental research and technology based on sol-gel materials, i.e., sol-gel foam for firefighting or a thrombolytic formulation. Their “tandem” and passionate activity looks very promising for the successful development of activities promoting sol-gel science and technology¹.

Tim Feller: he contributes to sol-gel science as group leader of MPI Colloids and Interfaces (Germany) and Chalmers University (Sweden)². He is a creative and independent scientist capable of bringing together research in carbon materials and sol-gel processing. In this respect, he drives his research interests by using innovative and original sol-gel pathways for the preparation of carbon-based materials for energy storage applications. The focus of his recent scientific work is to explore and develop the sol-gel chemistry of carbon using uncommon inorganic salt melts as thermally stable solvents for the employment in energy-related and electrochemical applications.

We hope that these awards encourage young scientists to recreate sol-gel routes for developing new tailored functional materials.

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¹ Journal of Sol-Gel Science and Technology <https://link.springer.com/journal/10971>

¹ 2019 Sol-Gel Conference will be hosted by ITMO University at St. Petersburg (<http://news.ifmo.ru/en/news/6918/>).

² Since July 2017, Independent research group leader at the Chair of Technical Electrochemistry, Department of Chemistry, Technical University Munich, Munich, Germany.