

EFCATS – Young Generation Catalysis Challenge

Three Days of Work – Inspiration & Making new Friends

9. – 11.07.2018; Wageningen, NL

For the first time young scientist from all over Europe met in Wageningen NL for the “EFCATS Young generation Catalysis Challenge” to compete on ideas to foster a more sustainable society. Thirty one motivated participants from 17 countries, selected by their national committees, took the chance to work in groups of five on a 10 page proposal with a predefined topic.

From the first moment on intense and fruitful discussions started about how to convert nowadays challenges into opportunities to create concepts for a sustainable future. The competition was accompanied by three inspiring talks about concept for catalytic biomass conversion (Prof. H. Bitter), recent progress of advanced and *operando* characterization techniques (Prof. B. Weckhuysen) and the role of



Mars-van-Krevelen mechanism in Ammonia synthesis (Prof. J. S. J. Hargreaves). These talks were ideal to support a creative mind-set of participants and illustrate how versatile opportunities in heterogeneous catalysis can be. Motivated by the talks all groups worked hard until late night and managed to finish their proposals right on time. Not being aware of the topics elaborated by the other groups, it was fascinating to realise how diverse the created ideas on the same task could be. Each group presented a fully individual concept to tackle nowadays challenges for a sustainable future. The topics covered broad range wherein heterogeneous catalysts are the key element: from biomass conversion into valuable molecules such as furfural and BTX, over combined concepts of photo- and electrochemistry towards conversion of CO₂ into methanol and DME. We had deeply scientific discussions about each of the concepts. Only the best could win. At this point, I like to congratulate the three winning teams of the challenge for their convincing concepts.

Besides intensive work, this challenge was a fruitful experience and a chance to get in contact with highly motivated young researcher at the same level. Realizing how creative and motivated young researchers from all over the Europe are, convinced me of the high potential of research growing in the European countries. For that reason, this event is an exceptional, valuable networking opportunity enabling young researchers to create a network and to start European collaborations already at an early stage of their career.

I gratefully thank the German Catalytic Society (GeCatS) for choosing me and giving me the opportunity to participate in this event enabling me to finding new colleagues and potential future partners from all over Europe.

I also thank the EFCATs committee for organizing the event and bringing young researchers together. I hope the event will be held on a regular basis and that a lot more young researcher can benefit from it.

Yours sincerely,
Tanja Franken