

PRESS RELEASE

Award ceremony: €420,000 for young researchers

The Jung Foundation for Science and Research honours two young doctors with the Jung Career Advancement Award and awards the Jung Gold Medal for Medicine



From left: Jochen Spethmann (Chairman of the Board of the Jung Foundation), Dr Maximilian U. Friedrich (Jung Career Advancement Award 2024), Dr Christine Maria Poch (Jung Career Advancement Award 2024), Prof. Rudolf Zechner (Jung Gold Medal for Medicine 2024). Prof. Dr Blanche Schwappach-Pignataro (Member of the Board of the Jung Foundation)

Hamburg, May 3, 2024. There was a premiere at the award ceremony hosted by the Jung Foundation for Science and Research yesterday evening: for the first time, the foundation presented the Jung Career Advancement Award to two promising young researchers. Both will receive the full funding sum of €210,000, highlighting the Jung Foundation's current focus on supporting promising scientific young talents – a focus that it already set back in 2023 by awarding five scholarships to doctoral students

as well as launching a new call for applications for a fellowship in medical history. The two Jung Career Advancement Awards went to cardiologist Dr Christine Maria Poch and neurologist Dr Maximilian U. Friedrich. In addition, the Jung Foundation also presented the Jung Gold Medal for Medicine to Prof. Rudolf Zechner in recognition of his lifetime achievement in the field of medical research. The three laureates received their awards among the invited Jung family with personal acceptance speeches.



The Jung Foundation's prize-winners in 2024, from left: Dr Maximilian U. Friedrich (Jung Career Advancement Award 2024), Dr Christine Maria Poch (Jung Career Advancement Award 2024), Prof. Rudolf Zechner (Jung Gold Medal for Medicine 2024)

Stimulating discussions, moving tributes, stirring acceptance speeches and much applause for the laureates: the atmosphere at this year's award ceremony hosted by the Jung Foundation for Science and Research was lively and reverential. On the evening of May 2, 2024, in the company of the invited Jung family, the foundation presented this year's awards for medical achievements at a ceremonial dinner held at the Anglo-German Club on the

banks of Hamburg's Outer Alster Lake. For the first time ever, two young researchers were the delighted to be awarded with the Jung Career Advancement Award: cardiologist Dr Christine Maria Poch and neurologist Dr Maximilian U. Friedrich both received €210,000 in prize money, which they can use as they see fit to continue their respective research projects. The Jung Foundation also presented the Jung Gold Medal for Medicine to Prof. Rudolf Zechner.

Dr Christine Maria Poch was presented with one of the two **Jung Career Advancement Awards 2024** for her research project entitled 'Research into Cardiac Regeneration through Human Ventricular Progenitor Cells'. The young cardiologist simulates heart diseases in an innovative three-dimensional model with the help of 3D printing technology, thus creating not only valuable platforms for researching cardiovascular diseases, but also the basis for new forms of therapy. She will now be given €210,000 by the Jung Foundation to continue this work.



Dr Christine Maria Poch, recipient of the Jung Career Advancement Award 2024



Dr Maximilian U. Friedrich, recipient of the Jung Career Advancement Award 2024

Another **Jung Career Advancement Award** was presented this year to **Dr Maximilian U. Friedrich** for his project entitled 'Brain in Balance: Translational Neuroanatomy and Connectome-Based Network Analysis of the Vestibular System'. The young neurologist is aiming to provide a better understanding of the brain networks of the vestibular system and thus create a basis for the development of innovative therapeutic approaches for neurological diseases such as stroke, multiple sclerosis and Parkinson's disease. The Jung Foundation is

making €210,000 available to him so that he can continue to pursue this approach.

The Jung Gold Medal for Medicine 2024 was presented to **Prof. Rudolf Zechner**. He has received the award for his life's work in the field of medical research, which has made a significant contribution to the study of lipid metabolism. Over the course of this work, he has not only fundamentally changed biochemistry and physiology textbooks, but also demonstrated promising strategies for treating metabolic disorders. In particular, his discovery and exploration of the



Prof. Rudolf Zechner, recipient of the 2024 Jung Gold Medal for Medicine

adipose triglyceride lipase (ATGL) enzyme and its essential co-activator CGI-58 provided insight into the development and possible treatment of long-standing lipid storage diseases. The prize is accompanied by a **scholarship totalling 30,000 euros**, which Professor Zechner can award to a junior scientist of his choice.



From left: Prof. Maria Grazia Spillantini (Member of the Jung Foundation's Board of Trustees), Jochen Spethmann (Chairman of the Board of the Jung Foundation), Prof. Dr. Gary R. Lewin (Member of the Jung Foundation's Board of Trustees), Dr. med. Maximilian U. Friedrich, Petra Scharner-Wolf (Member of the Board of the Jung Foundation) Prof. Blanche Schwappach-Pignataro (Member of the Board of the Jung Foundation and the Jung Foundation's Board of Trustees), Univ.-Prof. Dr. phil. Rudolf Zechner, Prof. Jens Brüning (Member of the Jung Foundation's Board of Trustees), Verena Strasoldo (Managing Director of the Jung Foundation), Dr. Christian Flach (Member of the Board of the Jung Foundation). Dr. med. Christine Maria Poch, Prof. Thomas Boehm (Member of the Jung Foundation's Board of Trustees),

About the Jung Foundation for Science and Research

The Jung Foundation for Science and Research, based in Hamburg, Germany, annually provides up to three awards in recognition of fundamental and advanced research projects of significant clinical relevance. To date, the foundation has invested more than 15 million euros in supporting researchers whose projects build a bridge between research



and the bedside. Under the motto of 'Excellence in human medicine', the foundation makes a significant contribution to the development of new treatment methods. The Jung Prize for Medicine, the Jung Gold Medal for Medicine and the Jung Career Advancement Award for Medical Research are among the most highly endowed medical prizes in Europe. With the additional awarding of fellowships and German scholarships, the foundation provides a total funding of up to 650,000 euros annually.

Further information is available at www.jung-stiftung.de

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