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Dr. Josep Cornellà receives Germany's most important award for young scientists

Junior Research Group leader awarded with Heinz Maier-Leibnitz Prize by DFG and BMBF



Dr. Josep Cornellà

The Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation) and the Federal Ministry of Education and Research have announced the recipients of their most important prize for young scientists in Germany, the Heinz Maier-Leibnitz award. Dr. Josep Cornellà, who heads the “Sustainable Catalysis for Organic Synthesis” group at the Max-Planck-Institut für Kohlenforschung, is one of the award winners. The Spanish researcher receives the prize for his development and implementation of practical and efficient methods for organic synthesis based on sustainable and cheap catalysts, according to the DFG statement. The award serves as recognition and encouragement for Cornellà's further research career. The jury highlighted the relevance of his scientific work for industrial use in pharmaceuticals research and production. The Heinz Maier-Leibnitz Prize is endowed with 20,000 euros and named after the nuclear physicist Heinz Maier-Leibnitz, who served as president of the DFG from 1974 to 1979. The prizes will be awarded to the ten selected laureates at a virtual event on May 4.

Dr. Josep Cornellà studied at the University of Barcelona and obtained his PhD with a thesis on organic chemistry at Queen Mary University in London. In 2012, he went to the Spanish Institute for Chemical Research (ICIQ) in Tarragona as a postdoctoral researcher. Subsequently, he also conducted research at the renowned Scripps Research Institute in La Jolla, California. Since 2017, Cornellà has been an independent research group leader at the Max-Planck-Institut für Kohlenforschung in Mülheim, and has published a high number of high-profile research results. His research group has developed a novel class of nickel and bismuth complexes, which have received exceptionally high levels of interest due to their potential application in industrial settings. The 36-year-old has already received numerous awards for his research, including an ERC Starting Grant in 2019 and the Bayer Early Excellence in Science Award 2020. The city of Mülheim also honored him with its Ruhr Prize for Art and Science.

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