

Press release, 6.10.2016

Slush opens the way for science: 100,000 euros for the best research idea

This year at Slush, 100,000 euros will be handed out for academic research that does not directly aim at commercialization. Science is valuable on its own.

The Slush Science Track is organised together by Kaskas Media and Slush from Tue. 29.11. – Thur. 1.12.2016. The science segment is composed of the opening event in the Science Centre Heureka, the science pitching competition held on Slush's pitching stage, and keynote speeches from scientists. The main prize of the science pitching competition, the Skolar Award, is 100,000 euros and will go to the presenter of a novel research idea.

The largest startup event in the Nordic countries gives science and research a chance to shine. This year, the people with influence in the economy gathered at the event will be inspired by researcher's presentations as well as business ideas.

"We want science to have a stronger presence at Slush, because quality research supports the development of new and existing businesses," says Slush's CEO **Marianne Vikkula**.

"Research is slow compared to the business world. The exciting information found today might only generate a business around it years later. Or it may just as well not generate one. Development does not come about without new information," elaborates the project's accountable manager, Kaskas Media's **Annina Huhtala**.

The Slush Science Track has three goals: raising the appreciation of science, bringing top quality research closer to the business world and enabling research proposals that encourage risk taking.

The Skolar Award is awarded to the postdoctoral researcher or their group who presents the most interesting research proposal. Semi-finalists will receive training for creating their pitch presentations from Kaskas Media, who specialize in research communication. The Slush Science Track is made possible by seven Finnish foundations and associations: Duodecim, Tieteen tiedotus ry, the Foundation for Economic Education, the Paulo Foundation, the Runar Bäckström Foundation, the Walter Ahlström Foundation, and the Helsingin Sanomat

Foundation. A jury appointed by the foundations will select the participants for the science competition. The international competition is open to all branches of science.

”Postdoctoral level researchers are often mainly offered scarcity. It leads to avoiding risks. Now, you can get funding for a brave idea with a three minute pitch,” explains **Annina Lattu**, the project manager of the project.

Last year’s Science Pitching competition, organised as a trial, took virus researcher and competition participant **Vincenzo Cerullo’s** career in a surprising direction. His superb presentation on Slush’s stage lead to him being contacted by a financier, and now a company as well as a research team composed of the best experts in the field have formed around his idea.

“Scientists can’t discover things for the sake of discovery. If we want to change the world, we have to disseminate our findings. For me Slush was a way to do that”, he recalls.

The competition’s application period opens on 14.10.2016 and ends on 3.11.2016.

More information:

Slush Science Track: www.skolar.fi/skolaraward

Slush: <http://www.slush.org/sciencetrack>

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Kaskas Media is a science communication office founded in 2013, whose mission is to improve the societal effectiveness of research. Kaskas Media’s clients include researchers and research projects, as well as organisations in the public and private sectors.