

# Biological Barriers and Nanomedicine

## Saarland University Welcomed the Pharmaceutical Community



Source: Saarland University, Photo: Winkler



Source: Saarland University, Photo: das bilderwerk

Every two years, the Saarland University becomes an international meeting point for pharmaceutical scientists from academia and industry. This recurring event that has been launched 14 years ago by Prof. Claus-Michael Lehr and Dr. Ulrich Schäfer as an educational program for junior scientists, has grown to a world-renowned forum for Advanced Drug Delivery and *In-vitro* Test Systems.

### The "Galenos" Network

Galenos Euro-PhD in Advanced Drug Delivery is an innovative European postgraduate certificate for young pharmaceutical scientists, funded by the EU Marie Curie EST program.

Founded in 1995, the Galenos Network in Pharmaceutical Sciences was launched to promote the training of young researchers in Advanced Drug Delivery. The network now comprises more than 50 European university partners throughout Europe. Each partner is involved in Advanced Drug Delivery research and promotes education and training within the pharmaceutical sciences.

In addition to the university partners, the Galenos Network also includes a number of corporate organisations from the pharmaceutical industry with all commercial levels of this sector represented. Membership of the network is open to all pharmaceutical science departments at European universities.

For further information, please visit [www.galenos.net](http://www.galenos.net).

This February, the biannual International Conference and Workshop on "Biological Barriers and Nanomedicine" took place for the seventh time. More than 200 graduate students and postdoctoral fellows, as well as scientists and technicians working in pharmaceutical and related industries from all over the world met at Saarland University to exchange ideas and discuss the latest developments in this exciting area of pharmaceutical science. The 10-day program was primarily aimed at early stage scientists involved in the Galenos Euro-PhD program. The young scientists have been invited to attend laboratory courses, which provided the opportunity to gain



hands-on experience of cutting-edge methods in advanced drug delivery and *in vivo* testing techniques. Keynote lectures by international experts addressed the most recent scientific developments in their particular fields.

Due to the growing importance of nano-biotechnology and its enormous potential to improve drug delivery, the main focus of this year's event was on nanomedicine. Nano-scale drug carriers play an important role in the safe and efficient delivery of active compounds to their intended site of action, but there are still challenges that need to be solved, like the targeting of specific cell tissues or organs and to overcome biological barriers such as the skin, intestinal, respiratory mucosa or blood-brain-barrier.

But not only physiological barriers have been discussed during this event. In his philosophical evening talk "Steps Across Borders", Prof. Ringsdorf from the University of Mainz discussed the scientists' role in the society and claimed their responsibility for the society.

For the PhD students, the event was a first step on their way to the "Euro PhD in Advanced Drug Delivery", an additional academic certificate for PhD students that has been launched by Prof. Lehr and his European colleagues and which is sponsored by the EU within the context of the Marie-Curie-Early-Stage-Training (EST) Program (see infobox). Four students finished this qualification this year and received their Euro-PhD certificates during the awards ceremony. The fellows also founded their own foundation, entitled "Alumni and Friends of Galenos".