

SIN bio-inspired materials workshop leads to a prestigious £2million EU grant

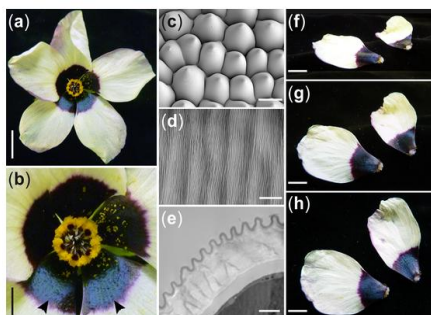
Thanks to a SIN partnering event, a British-Swiss-German consortium of research centres won £2m from the European Commission to set up an Innovative Training Network (ITN) on Plant-inspired Materials and Surfaces.

SIN Switzerland worked with Cambridge University to establish a group of UK and Swiss researchers interested in sharing their experience in using biomimetics principles for a range of applications, particularly in smart surfaces, coatings, sensors, medical diagnostics and even space life support systems.

Leading academics came together with industry experts for a SIN-led two-day workshop held in Cambridge early 2013. The event encouraged academia and industry to join forces and maximise opportunities from existing EU funds. In May 2016, a consortium between Cambridge (UK), Fribourg (CH) and Freiburg (DE) universities announced they had won £2m funding from the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions to establish the Plant-Inspired Materials and Surfaces Innovative Training Network (ITN).¹ This academic network of excellence is strengthened by industrial partners in the UK and Germany, including Mars Chocolate and BASF SE².



EU ITNs bring together universities, research centres and companies from different countries in Europe to offer doctoral students high quality academic training within a multidisciplinary framework along with temporary industrial internships. The aim is to boost scientific excellence and business innovation, and enhance researchers'



career prospects through developing their skills in entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation. PlaMatSu students will have access to existing competence centers for bio-inspired research at the participating universities, such as the Swiss NCCR Bio-Inspired Materials and the Bio-Inspired Photonics and Chemistry lab at Cambridge UK.

The SIN workshop helped European leaders in biology, chemistry and physics coordinate their research activities and teaching approach. The established trans-national collaborations will work together to develop the next generation sustainable, resources efficient, ethical and cost-effective materials.

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¹ <http://www.plamatsu.eu/>

² <https://www.basf.com/en.html>

