AkzoNobel announces 2018 Imagine Chemistry challenges

AkzoNobel Specialty Chemicals has announced the challenges for its latest Imagine Chemistry program, which has fast become a key element of the company’s collaborative innovation approach.

First launched to great success in 2017, Imagine Chemistry is an opportunity for startup and scale-up firms and researchers to solve real industry challenges and create sustainable business opportunities in chemistry. The overall winners will be awarded joint development agreements with AkzoNobel to help bring their ideas to market.

The 2018 edition calls for solutions within the following six areas:

- Sustainable small particle technologies
- Wastewater-free chemical sites
- Intelligent chemical plants
- Revolutionizing chlorate production
- Sustainable powder technologies
- Zero footprint surfactant platforms

“This program has shown that startups and corporates can work together efficiently to break barriers in innovation, benefitting both sides,” said Peter Nieuwenhuizen, Chief Technology Officer at AkzoNobel Specialty Chemicals. “We had a tremendous response to Imagine Chemistry in 2017 and formed development partnerships with three winners based on ideas for more sustainable chemistry. We’re now looking forward to uncovering new business opportunities through the 2018 challenge.”

Imagine Chemistry stands out in the industry due to its collaborative approach – all participants obtain tailored feedback from a range of company experts throughout the challenge to improve their solutions. The challenge is organized along with KPMG’s innovation team, and is supported by ICOS capital fund and Lux Research. In addition, Chalmers University of Technology from Sweden has joined as a partner and will host the finals of the 2018 edition.

One of last year’s winners, Brian Miller of startup firm uFraction8, commented: “AkzoNobel really thought the process through with us and made the collaboration work for both sides. Every facet of the company was represented and offered guidance and opinions and advice to help us shape everything into what became a winning proposal. That hands-on approach makes this challenge very unique.”

Participants can already submit their ideas via a dedicated online community, where they receive feedback and suggestions from experts throughout the submission phase. In June 2018, 20 finalists will be invited to an intensive three-day event at Chalmers University of Technology in Gothenburg, Sweden, where they will work with experts in finance and research to further develop their ideas.

For more information and to participate in the challenge, visit www.imaginechemistry.com
For more information on the 2017 winners, visit www.imaginechemistry.com/2017-edition
Click here to see an inspiring video about the 2017 challenge

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About AkzoNobel Specialty Chemicals

Industries worldwide rely on our essential chemistry in the manufacture of everyday products such as paper, plastics, building materials, and personal care items. Building on the dedication of our employees and our shared commitment to safety, sustainability, and open innovation, we have established a world-class business and built strong partnerships with our customers. We operate in over 80 countries around the world and our portfolio of industry leading brands includes Eka, Dissolvine, Trigonox, and Berol.

About AkzoNobel

AkzoNobel creates everyday essentials to make people’s lives more liveable and inspiring. As a leading global paints and coatings company and a major producer of specialty chemicals, we supply essential ingredients, essential protection and essential color to industries and consumers worldwide. Backed by a pioneering heritage, our innovative products and sustainable technologies are designed to meet the growing demands of our fast-changing planet, while making life easier. Headquartered in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, we have approximately 46,000 people in around 80 countries, while our portfolio includes well-known brands such as Dulux, Sikkens, International, Interpon and Eka. Consistently ranked as a leader in sustainability, we are dedicated to energizing cities and communities while creating a protected, colorful world where life is improved by what we do.

Not for publication – for more information

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