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Chemistry

Platform of the Swiss Academy of Sciences

Platform Chemistry – Enhancement of the Board

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The «Platform Chemistry» (PFC) has significantly expanded its project work and intensified its appearance in both the academic environment as well as in the public sphere since mid 2008. In addition, the platform chemistry will actively participate in the 'International Year of Chemistry' in 2011 as well as additional projects, which requires a significant extension of the activities. For this reason the Board of the «Platform Chemistry» has been enhanced by two additional members, who were elected by the Executive Board of the Swiss Academy of Sciences on March 27, 2009. The new members are:

- Prof. Dr. **Katharina M. Fromm**
Professor for Inorganic Chemistry at the University of Fribourg
- Prof. Dr. **A. Dieter Schlüter**
Professor of Polymer Chemistry at ETH Zürich

Additional information about the «Platform Chemistry» and its activities may be found at www.chemistry.scnat.ch



Katharina M. Fromm was born in Germany, raised in France, Germany and USA. She studied chemistry in Karlsruhe, Germany and Strasbourg, France. Katharina Fromm obtained her PhD with Professor Evamarie Hey-Hawkins (University of Karlsruhe) on organometallic compounds with metal–phosphorous double bonds (Mo, Nb, Ta) in 1994. After post-doctoral research stays in Germany (Prof. D. Fenske, Karlsruhe and Prof.

J. Strähle, Tübingen) and France (Prof. J.-M. Lehn, Strasbourg) from 1994 to 1998, she did her habilitation with Professor Alan F. Williams at the University of Geneva, which she received in 2003. She was briefly appointed at the University of Karlsruhe with an Emmy Noether grant II (DFG), and then took the position of an assistant professor (SNF) at the University of Basel before she became a full professor at the University of Fribourg in October 2006. Her main research topics are cluster and coordination compounds, with a view to applications in the wide field of materials.

Teaching chemistry, she is highly interested in improving the general image of chemistry in society. Thus, in addition to her administrative tasks as study advisor, president of the study commission, and member of the Bologna commission, she organizes every year a Christmas lecture as well as experimental shows for school classes, is currently responsible for the activities for children of 8–12 years old, and supervises matura project stu-

dents and candidates of 'Schweizer Jugend forscht' in her research group. She is also active in the mentoring programs of the University of Fribourg and of the Schweizer Studienstiftung. The activities within the Platform Chemistry will complete her initiatives at a national level.



A. Dieter Schlüter was born in Germany and studied chemistry and geophysics at the University of Munich, where he also received his PhD in organic chemistry with Prof. G. Szeimies in 1984. After post-doctoral work with Prof. K. P. C. Vollhardt (Berkeley, USA) and Prof. W. J. Feast (Durham, England) he joined the Max Planck Institute for Polymer Research in Mainz in 1986, where he concentrated on preparative macromolecular

chemistry in the department of Prof. G. Wegner and received his habilitation in 1991. He was briefly an associate professor at the University of Karlsruhe before accepting a chair professorship for organic and macromolecular chemistry at the Free University of Berlin in 1992. In spring 2004 he became full professor of polymer chemistry at the Department of Materials at ETH Zürich. His group's research is motivated by the novelty of the molecular structures aimed at and by the demand to achieve a visible progress in polymer synthesis.

Besides being passionate about research, Dieter Schlüter is interested in the policy of science. This includes how to excite people for science and help to reduce a perceived gap between the society and what happens at the research front. It is important that students are guided as early as possible to personally encounter the thrill of discovery and the satisfaction when after a long struggle finally understanding is gained. They should be encouraged to think independently and unconventionally, and to be willing to take risks and fight for an idea. He believes that those who are 'infected' by this curiosity for the new and, at the same time, respect high ethical standards are likely to have the largest societal impact. They are the natural ambassadors to mediate the benefits of science to society and help work against the above-mentioned gap. All organizational and financial instruments that help furthering the awareness for this and lead young researchers to also consider unpaved paths for their career are of concern to him.

In the present global situation the economic success of a society increasingly depends on brilliant ideas and putting them into reality in form of truly innovative commercial products. This is a motivation for him to also support all measures that make the most creative heads consider an academic career, thus ensuring that the innovation chain starts at the optimum level.

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