

Poster Presentation

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Towards a world-wide crystal growing competition

L. Van Meervelt¹

¹*KU Leuven, Department of Chemistry, Leuven, Belgium*

Since many years regional and national crystal growing competitions are successfully organized for pupils in countries such as Australia, Belgium, Canada, England, France and Singapore, and for sure in many schools on a more local basis. For most competitions pupils have to grow single crystals in the class room during a limited period of time (e.g. four weeks) of a limited amount of starting material provided by the organizers. Submitted single crystals are then judged by a jury based on the weight and the quality of the crystal. Typical compounds used as starting materials for such competitions are alum (aluminium potassium sulphate dodecahydrate), copper (II) sulphate pentahydrate, borax (sodium tetraborate decahydrate), ammonium iron (II) sulphate hexahydrate, potassium dihydrogen phosphate and ammonium magnesium sulphate hexahydrate. To celebrate the International Year of Crystallography a small IUCr working group of coordinators of current crystal growing competitions took the initiative to stimulate as many countries as possible to organize a regional or national crystal growing competition. To facilitate this, the IUCr offers all possible support for newcomers in the form of a time line, protocols and suggestions for judging and prize awarding. This information is available on the IYCr website www.iycr2014.org/participate/crystal-growing-competition, together with a brand new animated video 'How to grow a single crystal - with Johanna' illustrating the protocol. With the celebrations of the International Year of Crystallography in mind the lead partners IUCr and UNESCO organize also a world-wide crystal growing competition. The aim of this competition is that participants grow their own crystals (whether involved in a regional/national competition or not) and convey their experience through a short video or essay. A panel of judges will evaluate the entries using criteria such as creativity, esthetic value, description of working plan and experimental work, clarity of explanations and scientific background. For countries where no crystallographers can take the lead to initiate a competition in 2014 the network of UNESCO schools will be used, an initiative which will start in September 2014.



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