

FameLab International 2011 Information on national winners



Austria: Phillip Ambichl

Phillip is currently studying Technical Physics at the University of Technology in Vienna. One of his ambitions in the FameLab competition was to prove that “theoreticians are perfectly normal people with perfectly normal interests”. Specialising in waves and wave mechanics, he proved his point by giving a very entertaining account of a stressed wave and its links to people running against walls whilst casually explaining the theory behind a time-delay operator.



Bulgaria: Alexandrina Al-Djassem

Alexandrina has a BA in Molecular Biology and is currently studying towards her MA in Genetics at Sofia University. She is 24 years old and for half of her life she has been taking care of an unusual pet – a tarantula. She claims that it is probably her pet that got her into biology in the first place. Alexandrina won FameLab Bulgaria with an exciting presentation on chimeras – people who have different types of DNA which would lead to diverse DNA profiles in tissue samples from different organs.



Croatia: Iva Pritišanac

Iva is a third year Bachelor student of Molecular Biology in Zagreb. She loves molecular biology and is fascinated with all types of chemistry, especially the one present in the structures and interactions of macromolecules in cells. She has always wanted to be in the spotlight and even spent ten years in a ballet company. During the summer she works on the coast as a tourist animator. She likes long bicycle rides, swimming with flippers and snorkelling, instrumental piano music and scientific discussions (in her case monologues) with whoever wants to, or is forced to listen to her, and is still bravely struggling to stop always being late.



Cyprus: Myrtani Pieri

Myrtani holds a PhD in Molecular Biology from Oxford University and is trying to understand how the protein that lives in our small intestine and kidney transports drugs into our bloodstream. She also did a Post Doc in Oxford, this time using the same protein to transport chemotherapeutic drugs straight into cancer cells. She returned to Cyprus to try to find out why some Cypriot families develop kidney failure due to a mutation they have in their DNA while others with the same mutation are healthy and happy! She is passionate about biology and research. Learning about it, talking about it, doing it! When she's not in the lab, she tries to learn how to play the guitar, without any success so far.



Czech Republic: Michal Babic

Michael is a polymer chemist who loves to talk about science and – of course – loves to do science too. He cooperates with surgeons and microbiologists in a relatively new area called regenerative medicine and cell therapy. He works at the Institute of Macromolecular Chemistry of the Czech Academy of Sciences in Prague. In his free time, Michael likes cycling, cross country skiing and freediving.



Egypt: Mahmoud Abu-khedr

Mahmoud is a 3rd year student at the University of Alexandria's Faculty of Engineering, Mechanical Department. He is very interested in automotive science, playing volleyball, making projects around robot fights. He is a member of the committee of culture at the student union, and a member of the Society of Automotive Engineering and he also worked on a special programme for space technology and satellite building. He participated in an International Science and Engineering Fair in the USA.



Germany: Carsten Graf von Westarp

Carsten lives in a small village near Hamburg in Northern Germany with his wife and three little children, a cat and eight horses. He studied Physics and Meteorology at the University of Hamburg and is now writing his doctoral thesis on semiconductor physics. His research is on new electronic devices to construct faster and smaller computer chips. After completing his studies he would like to work for some producer of semiconductor devices or airplane parts. He says he is fascinated with physics because of its philosophical view on nature and its benefit for everyday life.



Greece: Isidoros Sideridis

Isidoros was born 29 days after the fall of Greek military Junta in 1974. Since he was a child he played with Lego and naturally decided to study Mechanical Engineering and satisfy his passion for constructions. As every IT self-respecting businessman he quitted his studies as a graduate and together with four university friends founded SiEBEN where he has been working for the past 11 years. Now, besides his work, he is in love with the study of science (theoretical physics, philosophy of mathematics, biology, astronomy, etc.) and technology, and sometimes thinks it's pure "magic."



Hong Kong: Kaamil Ur Rahman Mohamed Shibly

Kaamil is an undergraduate student in mechanical engineering from the University of Hong Kong. He was the youngest competitor in Hong-Kong, but originally comes from Sri Lanka! A non-Chinese person winning FameLab HK is interesting in that it shows what a diverse place HK is.



Israel: Karen Lavi

Karen has a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from The Open University in Israel and is currently a Ph.D. candidate in The Gonda Center for Multidisciplinary Brain Research at Bar-Ilan University and in The Department of Neurobiology & Ethology at University of Haifa.

Her research is in the field of memory and learning. She finds "science communication crucial both for scientists and the public. "I hope that the FameLab experience will widely open the door to this amazing world", Karen says.



Lithuania: Justas Stasionis

Justas is a PhD student of Computer Engineering at the Institute of Mathematics and Informatics of Vilnius University in Lithuania. His research concerns global optimization methods and solutions. Justas is also an assisting lecturer in a distance learning programme between four Lithuanian universities. He teaches global optimization, as well as game and probability theories. Justas has done all sorts of IT related jobs but has also been involved for ten years in various activities at Vilnius University. Besides studying and research, he is member of the Student Parliament, does a lot of sports and also acts in the academic theatre.



Portugal: Leonor Medeiros

Leonor has a first degree in Archaeology from the New University of Lisbon and has completed a Masters degree in Heritage Management at the University of Birmingham. Her main research field is Industrial Heritage - she has analysed best practice in the management of mining landscapes. She organizes an annual festival of archeology in Portugal and leads workshops for children.



Romania: Flavia-Bianca Cristian

Flavia studies Biology in Cluj and is passionate about neuro-linguistics, a domain bordering between neurobiology and communication and where she also thinks FameLab stands. In her presentation Flavia explained why mosquitoes bite only some of us. And no wonder she chose biting as her topic – Flavia comes from Transylvania, also known as the home of Count Dracula.



Serbia: Mariana Jaskov

Mariana is in her 3rd year of Astrophysics at the Faculty of Sciences in Novi Sad. While still at high school in her hometown of Zrenjanin Mariana begun volunteering in the „Imagineground“ creative centre for children. Despite her dyslexia Mariana enjoys reading and when she is not studying she loves drawing and practices - juggling with burning ropes. She hopes in the future to have an opportunity to work with young people.