

PRESS RELEASE

Cooperation of the Year 2016:

Czech science and research appeal to the global market. The winning project means a revolution in materials analysis

Prague, 28 April 2016: The winners of the fifth annual Cooperation of the Year awards are the Central European Institute of Technology (CEITEC) at Brno University of Technology, the start-up AtomTrace and Tescan Brno with the Sci-Trace project. These entities' cooperation on the development of a globally unique solution for analysing materials was recently recognised by the Association for Foreign Investment (AFI) and the American Chamber of Commerce in the Czech Republic (AmCham) together with partners. The awards ceremony was attended by Minister of Industry and Trade Jan Mládek, who presented the Special Prize of the Ministry of Industry and Trade.

The AFI and AmCham recently held the fifth Cooperation of the Year competition, which has the purpose of selecting and honouring the best works of innovation arising on the basis of cooperation between the public and private sectors. *"During the five years that Cooperation of the Year has been in existence, the expert jury has assessed the results of a total of 257 working teams from public research institutes, universities and companies. It is astounding how many extraordinary research and development projects are implemented through cooperation between numerous public and commercial entities every year in the Czech Republic. Better promotion of such projects is one of the main objectives of the competition,"* says Kamil Blažek, Chairman of AFI.

The winning projects originated in fields of research and development that are traditionally strong in the Czech Republic – **electron microscopy and spectrometry, cybersecurity and mechanical engineering** – and are fully unique on the national and global levels in terms of their technology, high degree of innovativeness and practical impacts in the commercial sphere.

"The examples of research we award in the Best Cooperation of the Year are the key element to successful future economy of the Czech Republic. We have a strong manufacturing base and we need to connect it with a strong research and development base. Especially in recent months, technology transfer from research institutions and universities to companies is discussed intensively and successful business cases show that they have many positive effects. We hope that public research will be more concentrated in the future on outcomes that create production, jobs and exports," Weston Stacey, Executive Director of AmCham comments the awards.

All of the involved private entities – **Tescan Brno, AtomTrace, Netcope Technologies, TOS Varnsdorf and Honeywell** – are uncompromisingly targeting the global market with their research efforts. Even though the exact financial impacts of the project cannot yet be determined for all of the winners in this phase, it can be expected that they will reach hundreds of millions of Czech crowns or more.

The public science institutes serving as partners for the above-mentioned firms were **CEITEC**, the **CESNET academic network**, **VÚTS** and the **Czech Technical University**, which in the course of cooperation benefit primarily from the possibility to gain practical experience with applying their scientific findings in the commercial environment and the means of considering their development in the context of real-world business. Students thus increased their chances of future employment on the labour market.

"I am personally very pleased to meet with those whose concepts, ideas and, above all, actions are pushing the performance of our economy forward and opening the door for us to join the group of the economically strongest European countries. Sophisticated support for competitiveness and innovation is necessary for the long-term success of the nation," says Minister of Industry and Trade Jan Mládek.

The results of the winning projects should become apparent in other areas and sectors including, among others, geology, construction, the automotive industry, production of monitoring systems and high-precision machining in the aerospace industry. "Cooperation between the academic and private spheres puts new concepts into practice, gives ideas their form and uses, and brings forth benefits. Therefore, new technologies are the objective on which we are intensively focusing. And the share of investments bound to research and development activities is increasing. In 2014, this share amounted to only twelve percent, whereas last year it reached thirty percent," says CEO of CzechInvest Karel Kučera.

The winning project is the **extraordinarily advanced laboratory instrument Sci-Trace**, which is capable of analysing any solid, gaseous or liquid sample without any preparation within only a few seconds. This is a unique instrument without parallel on the global scale.

"It's obvious that a cooperation of business companies, universities and other public research institutions brings about excellent results. The most recent example is a unique solution for analyzing materials based on LIBS technology, which has been developed by a business company, a university and a start-up, and it ranked first in the Cooperation of the Year 2016 Award," says Member of the Board of Česká spořitelna Pavel Kráčmar and adds: „Support to innovations belongs to Česká spořitelna's strategic goals. Acting as the general partner of the Best Cooperation of the Year 2016 reflects our ambition to work as an intermediary between business and public sectors in developing ambitious innovation projects. On top of that, we provide active support to innovation activities of business companies, start-ups, universities and the public sector through specialized financial programs.“

Winners of Cooperation of the Year 2016:

1st place: [Advanced analysis of solid, liquid and gaseous materials using a laser](#)

Project name: Development of the Sci-Trace instrument for elemental analysis of materials by means of laser-induced breakdown spectroscopy (LIBS)

Project originators: Brno University of Technology – CEITEC and AtomTrace s.r.o., Tescan Brno s.r.o.

2nd place: [Unique system for monitoring networks with data tokens with the speed of three DVDs per second](#)

Project name: Distributed system for monitoring high-speed networks

Project originators: CESNET, z.s.p.o. and Netcope Technologies, a.s.

3rd place: [Milling head for demanding industrial machining in the value of tens of millions of Czech crowns](#)

Product name: Continuously adjustable milling head

Project originators: VÚTS, a.s. and TOS Varnsdorf, a.s.

Special prize of the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic: [Project for controlling the operation of heat pumps with 15% energy savings](#)

Project name: Advanced control and optimisation of heat-pump operation

Project originators: Czech Technical University, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Honeywell, spol. s r.o.

About the competition:

The Cooperation of the Year competition is organised by the Association for Foreign Investment and the American Chamber of Commerce in the Czech Republic. The objective of this unique competition is primarily to give recognition to successful projects implemented through cooperation between



AmCham 

American Chamber of Commerce
in the Czech Republic

research institutes and the corporate sphere and to promote the results achieved by Czech scientists and researchers in the Czech Republic and abroad. The fifth annual edition of the event was held under the auspices of Deputy Prime Minister of the Czech Republic for Science, Research and Innovation Pavel Bělobrádek, Minister of Education, Youth and Sport Kateřina Valachová and Minister of Industry and Trade Jan Mládek. Česká spořitelna is the general partner of the project. The main partner is CzechInvest. The event was also supported by the Technology Agency of the Czech Republic, South Moravian Innovation Centre, Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic, Czech-German Chamber of Commerce and Industry, AC&C Public Relations and Zátíší Group.

The jury selected the winners among working teams from public research institutions and their corporate counterparts, whose cooperation will demonstrably lead to the introduction of innovations in the given companies. The criteria evaluated by the jury included the scope and impact of the projects' results and their financial volume and benefit, as well as the course of cooperation, which had to be conducted or completed in the period from 1 July 2014 to 31 December 2015.

This year's jury was composed of Lukáš Kačena (Technology Agency of the Czech Republic), Vít Kavan (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport), Jiří Krechl (CzechInvest), Václav Marek (Czech Brain), Marian Piecha (Ministry of Industry and Trade), Jan Slovák (Masaryk University), David Uhlíř (South Moravian Innovation Centre), Dagmar Vránová (Ministry for Regional Development) and Tomáš Žďára (Česká spořitelna).

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