

German-Ukrainian Academic Society, press-release 16 September 2021

**The Winners of the UKRAINET PhD Thesis Presentation Contest 2021 announced
at the Days of Ukraine in Berlin and Brandenburg**



The winners and the UKRAINET PhD Contest Jury members (left to right): Prof. Olga Garaschuk, Kseniia Kravchenko – the 1st place, Nataliya Yadzhak – the 2nd place, Pavlo Burdiak – the 3rd place, Prof. Matthias Eppe, Prof. Theocharis Grigoriadis, Dr. Olesia Lazarenko © CEDIS/ FU Berlin

The Days of Ukraine in Berlin and Brandenburg took place in Berlin on 16-17 September 2021 under the motto “Fostering German-Ukrainian Academic Cooperation and Building a Stronger Europe Together”, marking the 30th Anniversary of the Independence of Ukraine and the 70th Anniversary of the Institute for Eastern European Studies at Freie Universität Berlin (FU Berlin). This scientific and networking conference was organized by the FU Berlin and chaired by Prof. Theocharis Grigoriadis, Institute for East European Studies at FU Berlin, in cooperation with the German-Ukrainian Academic Society (Deutsch-Ukrainische Akademische Gesellschaft e.V./ DUAG). This event was supported by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) within its GoEast Program from funds of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF).

The highlight of the event was **the 2021 Final of the annual UKRAINET PhD Thesis Presentation Contest**, organized by the German-Ukrainian Academic Society for the fifth time, supported by the Embassy of Ukraine in Germany and sponsored by Nomad Bioscience GmbH. With this contest, the Society promotes aspiring PhD candidates and fosters academic cooperation with Ukraine. The contestants are either Ukrainians carrying out their PhD research abroad, or, irrespective of nationality, PhD students whose research is related to Ukraine and/or is carried out in collaboration with Ukrainian scientists. This year 17 candidates applied from Germany, Hungary, the UK and Ukraine, and after a peer review by independent experts eight PhD students were invited to the Final, with a challenge to introduce themselves and present their PhD research in just five minutes. Neuroscientist Prof. Olga Garaschuk (University of Tübingen/DUAG President), economist Prof. Theocharis Grigoriadis (HU Berlin), chemist Prof. Matthias Eppe (University of Duisburg-Essen/ DUAG Vice-president) and linguist Dr. Olesia Lazarenko (European University Viadrina/ DUAG member) judged the Contest.

The PhD Contest winners 2021 are:

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- **The 1st place:** **Kseniia Kravchenko**, Leibniz Institute for Zoo and Wildlife research (IZW), FU Berlin, Germany (Population Biology), for the talk “: Migratory bats and Global climate change: climate-driven changes in migratory behaviour and distribution of the common noctule bat (*Nyctalus noctula*)”;
- **The 2nd place:** **Nataliya Yadzhak**, Ivan Franko National University of Lviv/ Ukraine & University of Clermont Auvergne/ France (Material Sciences), for the talk “Development of the model for short crack growth in metallic materials under long-term loading and operation environments”;
- **The 3rd place:** **Pavlo Burdiak**, University of Szeged, Hungary (International Law), for the talk “Interaction of states and social media platforms in preserving the freedom of expression on social media”.

In addition to book prizes – personally signed copies kindly provided by the conference keynote speaker Prof. Serhii Plokhii (Ukrainian Research Institute, Harvard University, USA), the winners received the monetary award of €300 for the first, €200 for the second and €100 for the third place, which has been endowed by the Contest’s long-standing supporter Nomad Bioscience GmbH.

This scientific networking conference brought together over 100 researchers, students, higher education professionals and members of the interested general public from Berlin, Frankfurt (Oder), Potsdam and other German cities and Ukraine gathered in Berlin. A selection of outstanding speakers offered cooperation highlights as testimonials to their successful academic collaboration. Furthermore, diverse insights into a broad range of Ukrainian studies research in the region were presented. On the second day of the conference, representatives of funding agencies provided a comprehensive overview of relevant funding opportunities from both German and EU funders with a view of stimulating future funding applications for new German-Ukrainian and international projects in higher education and research. All conference presentations were also live-streamed and recorded for the digital brochure of the event, which will be made available from its web-site.

Conference participants were able to learn more about Ukraine through two exhibitions, which were shown during the event. “**50 Inventions bestowed by Ukraine to the world**” exhibition highlighted the outstanding discoveries and inventions, from WhatsApp to the Big Bang theory, that arose from the ingenuity of researchers and engineers born in Ukraine, whereas “**The science is her/ Наука – це вона**” focussed on the contribution of Ukrainian female researchers to the world science.

Background information:

Event web-site of the Days of Ukraine in Berlin and Brandenburg:

The **German-Ukrainian Academic Society** (The Deutsch-Ukrainische Akademische Gesellschaft e.V.) has been founded in Berlin in July 2016 as a not-for-profit organization to support the Ukrainian Academic International Network (The UKRAINE Network/ UKRAINET) in and from Germany with the main goals to:

- foster academic cooperation with Ukraine;
- increase the visibility of Ukrainian researchers and their academic achievements;
- improve knowledge about Ukraine abroad and *vice versa*;
- promote the career development of young researchers, and
- support reforms in Ukrainian science.

Currently DUAG has 68 members, with almost a third being professors and research group leaders, active in different areas of sciences and humanities both in academia and industry and located in Germany, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine and the USA.

For more information and/ or to subscribe to receive the Newsletter:
visit our web-site: www.ukrainet.eu

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or join our LinkedIn group: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/8473594>.

More information on the current and previous **PhD Contest winners**:

Exhibition “50 Inventions Bestowed by Ukraine to the World” consists of 50 artworks, created by professional artists and illustrators of the Direct96 creative group, which highlight the discoveries of Ukraine-born inventors. If you are interested to learn more both about the art and the science behind it, please visit the web-site of the Second Floor Art Center in Kyiv to view the art and read the brief descriptive summaries of the corresponding inventions and discoveries, covered by the exhibition. The exhibition materials were provided by The Ukraine Crisis Media Center and The Embassy of Ukraine in the Federal Republic of Germany sponsored the organization and funded the translation and publishing of the accompanying book (German/Ukrainian), which was presented at the event as well.

<http://secondfloor.gallery/en/exhibitions/50-inventions-bestowed-by-ukraine-to-the-world/>

Exhibition “The science is her/ Наука – це вона”

This exhibition highlighted the contribution of Ukrainian female researchers to world science as exemplified by 12 prominent Ukrainian mathematicians, physicists, biologists and representatives of other disciplines. The creative texts to portraits are the winner essays of the Ukrainian national essay contest, selected from 561 works submitted by young female students from all over Ukraine, aged between 14 and 21. This educational art project was organized by STEM is FEM with the support of the international UN organizations “Women in Ukraine” and the United Nations Children's Fund in Ukraine (UNICEF). The project is part of UN Women's Generation Equality campaign to promote gender parity among youth and ensure women's leadership in technology and innovation.

STEM is FEM is a non-profit educational project that promotes technical fields among Ukrainian female high school students: <https://stemisfem.org/>

Sponsor:

Nomad Bioscience GmbH is a plant biotechnology company founded in 2008. The company is developing a broad range of biotechnology products manufactured in plants. Corporate offices are headquartered in Munich, Germany and the company's Research Division is located in Halle, Germany. NOMAD Bioscience GmbH has two subsidiary companies: Nambawan Biotech GmbH (Halle, Germany) and UAB Nomads (Vilnius, Lithuania). This highly innovative biotechnology company sponsors this PhD contest from its beginnings. It was founded and is directed by Professor Yuri Gleba, a member of the Leopoldina and Ukrainian National Academy of Sciences among his many other achievements.

<http://nomadbioscience.com>