

Dear Young Scientists,

Mankind today faces many challenges. Global grand challenges like climate change, the threats to the environment, scarcity of fresh water, the need of new energy sources, growing population, increasing social cleavages and financial crises demand new knowledge and innovative approaches. Many other local and particular problems need to be solved as well.

Only through science and new knowledge we can hope to find new and better ways to deal with these problems. Science carries a strong social responsibility. Universities, research institutions and researchers worldwide struggle to create the knowledge that their societies and mankind are in need of.

Both basic science as well as applied sciences are of course needed to fulfill our social responsibility. Applied research cannot develop in an environment without strong basic science. The most important breakthroughs in science, with far-reaching practical consequences, have originated in curiosity-driven basic research.

Science is a collective process. New scientists build on the work of their predecessors. As rector of a strong research university I am happy to see so many young new scientists looking for a place in the research community. We, the universities and research institutions, need you to continue our work. Society and mankind need you to help us meet the challenges we are facing.

I wish you all success in the Contest for Young Scientists. Not everybody can win, but everybody can enjoy participating in an event that offers you new perspectives on the European scientific community.

Thomas Wilhelmsson

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