



Rathenau Instituut

Meeting of Young Minds Award Call for Proposals

For the most inspiring, relevant and well-prepared Science and Society SynBio Debate.

Sponsored by the Rathenau Instituut, The Hague

On the Friday night preceding the next African-European iGEM Jamboree in Amsterdam (5 October 2012) the Rathenau Instituut will stage the Meeting of Young Minds Debate 2012, in collaboration with the regional iGEM organization committee.

Last year the Meeting of Young Minds offered Dutch political youth organizations a stage to debate their views about synthetic biology with members of the iGEM community. This year we invite iGEM teams to prepare for a debate involving young people representing the worlds of science, the public and policy making. Teams from Africa and Europe are encouraged to propose topics for debate. We welcome (international) collaboration between teams.

Topics for debate should relate to the potential significance and implications of SynBio for society, including current controversies and possible future developments, public responses and political challenges, issues of risk and regulation, as well as more inclusive and intrusive transformations that may be expected from SynBio for our societies and daily lives. Below you find a non-exclusive list of potential applications and issues in the field of synbio, just to trigger your imagination and creativity. You might conceive of any combination of applications and (multiple) issues.

Fields of application	Issues
Biobased economy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biofuels • Photosynthetic energy production • Biochemicals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation • Regulation • Biosafety • Biosecurity / dual use • Distributive justice • Intellectual property • Sustainability • Naturalness • Biodiversity • Playing God?
(Global public) health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production of pharmaceuticals • Diagnostic products • Therapeutic products • Targeted delivery • Vaccins 	
Agriculture, food and environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crop enhancement • Biosensors • Remediation 	
Exotic applications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resurrection of extinct species • Artificial life 	
Consumer and lifestyle products <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cosmetics / personal hygiene • Pets 	
Do-it-yourself Bio <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just for fun • Or more? 	
Military / Terroristic applications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New biological arms race? • Applications other than weapons 	

We invite iGEM teams to submit proposals that include (1) a well-defined topic for debate, (2) major issues and questions that might be highlighted, (3) relevant sources of information to prepare for the debate, and (4) an indication of the major stakeholders and audiences to be involved.

Proposals (500 words) should be submitted to the Rathenau Instituut before 21 May 2012 (to be sent to Virgil Rerimassie: email address below). From the proposals, the Rathenau Instituut will select, in collaboration with the regional iGEM committee, three topics that will be staged for debate during the Meeting of Young Minds 2012.

Teams that have been selected will have to prepare a well-argued position paper (2500 words) in which they further develop the proposed topic and issues for debate. The content of the paper should be informed by relevant literature, as well as the views from relevant stakeholder groups and audiences. Teams should also propose a scheme for the organization of a fifty minutes round of debate during the Friday evening of the Meeting of Young Minds, including major questions to be debated. The three selected teams (or combinations of teams) will be offered support for their preparatory work by a network of European institutions working in the field of technology assessment.

During the Friday night Meeting of Young Minds members of the teams will be invited to debate their topic, views and position on stage with a selected group of young people, representing a diversity of scientific, political and societal organisations. The iGEM team which performs in a most inspiring and excellent way during the debate will be awarded the Meeting of Young Minds Debate Medal.

As a general support for the preparation and elaboration of proposals for debate a Meeting of Young Minds webpage will be available on the website of the Rathenau Instituut:

<http://www.rathenau.nl/en/themes/project/synthetic-biology.html>

For more information please contact Virgil Rerimassie: v.rerimassie@rathenau.nl