



PRESS RELEASE

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Finalists Announced in the Elsevier Grand Challenge

Scientists Assess Life Science Tools to Accelerate Science

Amsterdam, January 6, 2009 Elsevier, a leading global healthcare and scientific publisher, has announced the four finalists chosen in the Elsevier Grand Challenge, a competition inviting researchers to prototype tools dealing with the ever-increasing amount of online life sciences information. (www.elseviergrandchallenge.com). The semifinalist round was held on December 15th at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston and featured each of the nine Grand Challenge teams providing demonstrations to a distinguished panel of judges and fellow contestants. The applications used technologies ranging from semantic search engines, image query to social networking tools, and interactive visualizations.

The four finalists chosen by the panel of judges represent the tools thought to be most innovative and implementable:

- **Seán I. O' Donoghue, Lars Jensen Heiki Horn, Evangelos Pafilis, Michael Kuhn, Nigel P. Brown, and Reinhard Schneider**, Germany, for "Reflect: Automated Annotation of Scientific Terms"
- **Vit Novacek, Tudor Groza, Ioana Hulpus, and Siegfried Handschuh**, Ireland, "CORAAL – Dive into Publications, Bathe in the Knowledge "
- **Amr Ahmed, Andrew Arnold, Luis Pedro Coelho, Joshua Kangas, Abdul-Saboor Sheik, Eric Xing, William Cohen and Robert F. Murphy**, USA, "Structured Literature Image Finder"
- **Stephen Wan, Cecile Paris, Robert Dale, Michael Muthukrishna, Ilya Anisimoff and Julien Blondeau**, Australia, "Citation Sensitive In-Browser Summarisation of Cited Documents"

"This was an amazingly complementary collection of proposals on how to optimize the access to the information in the literature," added Judge Alfonso Valencia, Director of the Structural Biology and BioComputing Programme of the Spanish National Cancer Research Centre in Madrid. "I was truly impressed by the variety and quality of the proposals—ones that can shape the future of scientific publishing."

"I was delighted not only with the quality of the presentations, but also with the discussions that resulted both with the judges and the other teams," added Challenge Judge David Rosenthal, of Stanford University Libraries in Palo Alto.

Finalist Sean O'Donoghue (Research Scientist, EMBL, Germany) agreed: "All participants of the meeting this week are already winners: the meeting was the reward. Personally, I made 2 or 3 strong collaborations during that meeting, as well as getting and giving feedback and advice. The meeting put so much more life on the bones of the Elsevier Grand Challenge, and encourages us to go forward and participate more."

"The Grand Challenge was a great example of Elsevier's initiative to accelerate science by collaborating with scientists." said Challenge Judge Rafael Sidi, VP of Product Management with ScienceDirect. "Scientists from very different disciplines were able to meet and exchange ideas on scientific communication."

“In hosting the Challenge, we have made contact with a very large, and heterogeneous group of researchers interested in improving the way science is published,” commented Anita de Waard of Elsevier Labs, Researcher Disruptive Technologies and co-organizer of the Challenge. “There is a community of people out there interested in tackling these issues, and some of us have met through this event – in the next iterations of the challenge, we hope to build on and stay in touch with this community”.

Elsevier Grand Challenge Finalists are invited to present their vision papers to the judges and the public in April 2009 at the [Experimental Biology](#) Conference in New Orleans. Their work will then be presented at a live [webinar](#) during which the winner will be chosen.

The first place winner will receive a cash prize of \$35,000 and the runner up will be awarded a \$15,000 prize. Semifinalists and finalists can also be offered the opportunity to commercially develop their tools, in collaboration with Elsevier.

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Notes to Editors:

For more information about the awards, visit www.elseviergrandchallenge.com