

Press Release

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EMMANUELLE CHARPENTIER RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS AWARD GÖRAN GUSTAFSSON PRIZE AWARDED TO HZI SCIENTIST

Prof Emmanuelle Charpentier from the Helmholtz Centre for Infection Research (HZI) in Braunschweig is one of the winners of the most renowned award for scientists in Sweden — the Göran Gustafsson Prize. The award was presented at the Annual Ceremony of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences on 31 March 2014 and is endowed with prize money of 150.000 US Dollar for research in Swedish laboratories.



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Since 2013 Charpentier is the head of the department “Regulation in Infection Biology” at the HZI and is a leading scientist in the field of RNA regulation and molecular infection biology. Furthermore, she holds a professorship at the Hannover Medical School (MHH) which closely cooperates with her group at the HZI.

One of her most outstanding achievements is her research about the bacterial immune system CRISPR Cas, which bacteria use to fight off pathogens. The system detects foreign DNA, cuts it up and thus makes the invaders harmless. This mechanism can be exploited in the laboratory as it allows scientists to eliminate or add genes in a more targeted manner than before. Using this method, diseases caused by gene mutations could be treated faster and more precisely. However, there is still a lot of work to be done before this kind of medical usage will be possible. Still there are high hopes that the method will become a powerful tool in genetic engineering and in the therapy of diseases.

The Göran Gustafsson Prize is awarded yearly to five researchers in Sweden for their outstanding work in molecular biology, physics, chemistry, mathematics and medicine.

The original press release by the Royal Swedish Academy of Science can be found [here](#).

At the **Helmholtz Centre for Infection Research (HZI)** in Braunschweig, scientists are studying microbial virulence factors, host-pathogen interactions and immunity. The goal is to develop strategies for the diagnosis, prevention and therapy of human infectious diseases. www.helmholtz-hzi.de/en