

Europe unveils life-enhancing 2011 inventors award shortlist

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The Munich-based [European Patent Office](#) released a 15-strong shortlist ahead of the awards ceremony in Budapest on May 19, with the theme very much one of saving and improving lives rather than wild and wacky products that sometimes catch on in a big way.

Other inventions on the list were also aimed at improving cancer treatment, heart disease diagnosis or early-warning of Alzheimer's, road

safety, power generation, water purification and fibre optics.

University of Oxford atomic physicist Joshua Silver's adjustable glasses are already being worn by 30,000 people in the world's poorest countries, the European Union said in a statement.

It cited World Health Organization data saying that "uncorrected vision problems are responsible for production losses amounting to around 121 billion euros per year.

"Soon it could cost just a dollar to correct them," it underlined of Silver's nomination in the key research category.

He is up against Estonian scientist Mart Min whose "new method for measuring electrical impedance... has above all made it far easier to diagnose heart disease," and Belgium's Christine Van Broeckhoven, for her work on Alzheimer's drugs and treatments.

Sweden's Per-Ingvar Branemark is nominated for a lifetime achievement award, as one of the pioneers of osseointegration, the titanium-implant treatment that "created a stable connection between the implant and the living bone and today is a standard technique among dentists."

The Czech Republic's Blanka Rihova, responsible for devising a new method of chemotherapy that spares healthy cells, and France's Emmanuel Desurvire, for trailblazing work on high-speed mass data transmission, make up this sectional shortlist.

US, Israeli and Indian scientists behind turbines for power generation in shallow or sluggish water, miniscule camera technology for endoscopy and an ultraviolet technique for water disinfectant are also nominated under a non-European section.

Other nominations cover industry -- from the steel fibres to radar-based cruise control in cars and early detection of power losses -- as well as breakthroughs by small- and medium-sized enterprises, covering silicon implants into tumours, low-emission furnaces and a virtual 3D microscope for scanning tissue samples.

All emerge as having widespread implications for the public at large.

The full list and further details can be found at: www.epo.org/news-issues/europe...entor/finalists.html

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