

EU awards first Marie Curie research prizes

November 5 2012



France's President Francois Hollande (C-R) lays a wreath before a statue of Polish-born scientist Marie Curie in Paris in May 2012. Greek, British and Israeli scientists on Monday received the European Commission's first Marie Curie prizes for scientific research, a statement said.

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In the category of "promising research talent", Gkikas Magiorkinis of Greece was rewarded for his work on tracing how the [Hepatitis C virus](#) has spread around the world.

Britain's Claire Belcher's research on the earth's geological past and its impact on plant and [animal life](#) garnered her the prize in the "communicating science" category.

For his part, Sarit Sivan of Israel won in the "innovation and entrepreneurship" category for developing a new treatment for [lower back pain](#).

The prize, comprising a trophy and certificate, is based on the EU programme Marie Curie Actions which the statement said had supported the work of more than 65,000 researchers since its launch in 1996.

"We have created this new award to highlight the excellence and talent of Europe's best young researchers," European education commissioner Androulla Vassiliou told the award ceremony in Nicosia, Cyprus.

"It is vital that we continue to invest strongly in European research, which contributes to solving great societal challenges in areas such as health and the environment," Vassiliou said.

The Marie Curie Actions have a budget of 4.7 billion euros (\$6.0 billion) for 2007-13 and the Commission wants to increase this to 5.75 billion euros in 2014-20.

However, its overall 2014-20 budget based on a 5.0 percent increase to 1.03 trillion euros is controversial, with net contributors such as France, Germany and Britain calling for sharp cuts to match those they are having to implement at home.

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