

Press Release

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DPU and AIT organize symposium on nanoplastics

Efficient detection methods for the "next generation" of environmental pollutants are sought.

New environmental pollutants such as nanoplastics are among the major future issues facing mankind. As far as is known so far, microscopic plastic particles are already found in all habitats of the world, they are taken up by plants and animals and influence them. Nanoplastics are also passed down the food chain. Thus, nanoplastics pose a serious threat to global ecosystems and, it is feared, to human health. The same is true for other emerging environmental pollutants that have different properties than those known so far.

Many unanswered questions around new pollutants

This major challenge must be addressed in order to maintain and improve human well-being, quality of life and an intact environment.

An important step in this effort is the development of methods to detect and identify pollutants within the ever-changing spectrum of exposures from anthropogenic sources. Detection methods must be specific, cost-effective, and rapid - and they must be flexible so that they can be easily adapted to rapidly changing problems and to the structure and nature of the "next generation" of pollutants.

Accurate analysis is the basis for new measures to assess risk to humans and the environment, and for prevention and treatment technologies. This raises many new questions, such as. What are the effects of nanoplastics on organisms? How should we deal with environmental exposure? What are the societal implications? Is a new legal framework necessary?

International conference in Vienna seeks answers

These issues will be discussed at an international symposium titled "One Health: human and environmental threats assessment, sensing, remediation, prevention, awareness, legislative efforts, and societal impact" in Vienna on September 15 and 16, 2022.

The conference, which will be attended by around 30 scientists from eight European nations, is being jointly organized by Danube Private University (DPU) in Krems and the AIT Austrian Institute of Technology.

The conference is chaired by the top French researcher Corinne Nardin (L'Université de Pau et des pays de l'Adour). Other participants are scientists from the Universities of Ulm (D), KTH Royal Institute of Technology (SWE), Szeged (HUN), Essex (UK), Strassbourg (FRA), Twente (NED), Aachen (D), Warsaw (PL) and Graz (AUT) as well as the CNRS (FRA).

The aim of the symposium is, on the one hand, to find answers to the many open questions and, on the other hand, to form a powerful interdisciplinary consortium for future research projects, in which all the competences needed to deal with the complex topic of nanoplastics are represented.

Danube Private University (DPU)

Danube Private University (DPU) was founded in 2009 and has gained an international reputation as an elite university in dentistry and has also established itself internationally in research - among other things with the International Laboratory for LifeScience Technology (LiST). More than 2,000 students from 66 nations are enrolled at the DPU.

AIT Austrian Institute of Technology

The AIT Austrian Institute of Technology is Austria's largest research and technology organization. Around 1,400 highly qualified employees conduct research on key infrastructure topics of the future, including health and bioresources, energy, mobility, automation and digital security.

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