

Some Beautiful Minds: 4th Heidelberg Laureate Forum 2016

by Manjil Saikia - Monday, September 19, 2016

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This week (17 Sep, 2016 to 23 Sep, 2016), the German city of Heidelberg will be host to over 20 extraordinary minds as the [4th Heidelberg Laureate Forum \(HLF\)](#) is under way and we shall be reporting on the events of the HLF as it progresses. The HLF is modelled after the [Lindau Nobel Laureate Meetings](#), where every year a different discipline of the Nobel Prize is selected and past winners meet young scientists in that area over a few days where they discuss their work and the implications of science on other aspects of life. In the HLF, a similar thing happens, but this time we have the superstars of mathematics and computer science: the winners of the [Fields Medal](#), [Abel Prize](#) and [Turing Award](#), who converge at the beautiful city of Heidelberg and meet and discuss with 200 young researchers who come from all over the world. For a week, Heidelberg will probably have the highest population ratio with the most number of widely recognized geniuses in the entire world!

The first HLF was held in 2013, and since then it has been an annual event with many giants of mathematics and computer science passing through and meeting the young researchers. This year the HLF was officially opened yesterday by Beate Spiegel (Chairperson of the HLF Foundation) in the presence of numerous distinguished guests including Theresia Bauer (Minister of Science, Research and the Arts of Baden-Wuerttemberg), Prof. Dr. Eckart Wuerzner (Lord Mayor of the City of Heidelberg), Prof. Dr. Jean-Pierre Bourguignon (President of the European Research Council) among others. Also present were the president of the International Mathematical Union (which awards the Fields Medal) and the president of the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters (which awards the Abel Prize).

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The laureates at this years HLF include Sir Michael Atiyah (winner of both the Fields Medal and the Abel Prize), [Sir Andrew Wiles](#) (the most recent Abel Prize winner and the person who proved [Fermat's Last Theorem](#)), Vinton Gray Cerf (recognized as the father of the internet) to name a few (the full list can be found [here](#)). Many of them will deliver plenary talks on each day (except Wednesday 20 Sep, 2016) aimed at the young researchers in the audience, the rest will be close at hand to talk to anyone who wishes to speak to them. This open exchange of ideas and thoughts is what makes the HLF an unique event much like the Lindau Nobel Laureate Meetings and has attracted quite a bit of attention since its inception. The representative of the countries from which the young researchers come is wide, ranging from India to Ukraine to Nigeria and naturally Germany.

We will be updating our readers more on the events of the HLF as we move along, including something about Konrad Zuse, on whose work an exhibition is being curated at the University of Heidelberg as part of the HLF. We leave now, with an excellent saxophone quartet performance that was part of the opening ceremony of the HLF yesterday.

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