

I was lucky enough to take part in a scientific conference that took place in the small Bavarian town of Lindau. At first glance it was an ordinary conference with lots of scientific presentations, one poster session and coffee breaks. However, something was different. All the presentations were given by Nobel laureates. Moreover, there was an opportunity to talk to them and other young researchers coming from different countries in an informal atmosphere during coffee breaks, lunches, dinners and various get-together events.

Lindau meetings have a long tradition and history. The idea of this annual event belongs to two physicians from Lindau, Gustav Wilhelm Parade and Franz Karl Hein. The first meeting was organized shortly after World War II in 1951 with the support of Count Lennart Bernadotte, who had connections with the Stockholm Nobel Foundation. As German science was isolated at that time, it was absolutely necessary to create new networks and internationalize the conference. Those three persons succeeded in establishing an important meeting to connect Nobel laureates and young researchers from all over the world to foster scientific exchange between different generations. Since 1951, Lindau Nobel Laureate Meetings brought together 373 Nobelists and 30000 young scientists from 91 countries. Annual Lindau Meetings are dedicated alternately to three natural science Nobel Prize disciplines: Medicine or Physiology, Physics and Chemistry. Also interdisciplinary meetings revolving around those three are occurring every 5 years.

This year I participated in the 66th Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting, held from 26 June to 1 July, that was dedicated to the field of physics. Undoubtedly, this conference was the most unusual conference I have ever been to. In this meeting, 29 Nobel Laureates and 400 young scientists from 80 different countries were gathered together. Quite extraordinary, since more Nobel Laureates could be met only in Stockholm during the Nobel Prize Award Ceremony. Young researchers had an opportunity to live “Lindau spirit” for one week and be involved into discussions with famous people in science, ask advice, exchange thoughts about scientific career and personal life. For me the meeting with Nobel laureates began one day earlier as I was invited to take part in the Summer Festival of Science organized by German federal minister of education and research Johanna Wanka. There I met 40 fellow young scientists and for the first time in my life talked to a Nobel laureate. It was **Bill Phillips**, who started a conversation by saying: “We [Nobel laureates] are here because of you, let’s talk.” Later on I realized how lucky I was to be the first one to talk to Bill. During the Meeting, it was very hard to approach him because young scientists were constantly orbiting around Bill like electrons around the nucleus in an atom.

The scientific program of the 66th Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting consisted of lectures, panel discussions, young scientist discussions, master classes, poster session and science breakfasts. We had lots of memorable presentations starting from talks about very small things like elementary particles (neutrinos, Higgs particles) and ending with talks about enormously big things like our universe. So, **Takaaki Kajita** talked about Kamiokande and Super-Kamiokande experiments with atmospheric neutrinos, while **Arthur B. McDonald** talked about experiments in the Sudbury Neutrino Observatory related to solar neutrino studies. Both experiments showed that neutrinos have mass and thus open a window to study physics beyond the Standard Model of particle physics. The Higgs particle was discussed by **Gerardus ‘t Hooft** and **Martinus J.G. Veltman**. **Brian P. Schmidt** presented the understanding of our universe since its beginning, introducing unanswered big cosmology

questions like “What is dark matter and dark energy?” and “Why do neutrinos have mass?”. **George F. Smoot** talked about the recent detection of gravitational waves, coming from two merging black holes, which opens a new era in astrophysics. **Hiroshi Amano** talked about his revolutionary discovery of blue light emitting diodes and how it changed our world for the best. **Klaus von Klitzing** spoke about how his discovery of quantum-Hall effect contributed to the redefinition of the kilogram and resulted in a decision to replace current international system of units by a new system based on constants of nature by 2018. Special guest **Vinton G. Cerf** (A.M. Turing Award 2004) also known as one of the “Fathers of the Internet” made a presentation about the evolution of the Internet. **Carl E. Wieman** was giving advice on how to learn and teach physics more effectively. There were many other magnificent talks that are available to the general public on the Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting website – www.lindau-nobel.org.

Many young scientists were interested to know the recipe for getting a Nobel prize. Klaus von Klitzing in a humorous way suggested to move to Switzerland and eat lots of chocolate, since in a correlation between the number of Nobel laureates and chocolate consumption per 10 million population Switzerland is the leader. The second and the easiest option to get a Nobel Prize was to ask Klaus to hold his medal. Since I had the privilege of having a dinner in the company of Klaus von Klitzing I caught this opportunity. Now I can say that I got a Nobel Prize...for two minutes. Seriously speaking, spending one week with Nobel laureates I realized that if you are optimistic, think hard, do what you love and work on what you are passionate about, then everything is possible.

Lindau Meeting was something extraordinary. It was educative, inspiring and fun. During this meeting I created a big network of friends with whom I hope to collaborate on scientific projects in the future.

Now, I am a bit jealous of people who still have the chance to take part in this inspiring event. You can participate only once, unless you get a Nobel prize, of course, then you are welcome to come back and share your recipe for success. Next year’s meeting will be dedicated to chemistry. Apply, be selected, get inspired and then create a better world! Below you can see some photographs taken during the meeting.



Beautiful Lindau. The photo was taken from the boat on our way to Bregenz for the international get-together.



Panel discussion with four Nobel laureates: (from left to right) David J. Wineland, William D. Phillips, Gerardus 't Hooft and Serge Haroche. The Nobelists are discussing the topic "Is the quantum technology the future of the 21st century?"



Two Nobel Laureates, William Phillips and Brian P. Schmidt, surrounded by the crowd of young scientists on our way back after the traditional trip to Mainau island.



After the discussion session with Theodor W. Hänsch, who received his Nobel Prize in Physics in 2005 for the contributions to the development of laser-based precision spectroscopy, including the optical frequency comb technique. I managed to ask three questions, so he could not refuse to take a photo with me. I was amazed by his immense motivation and enthusiasm for science.



This is the Nobel Prize medal I borrowed for the photo from Klaus von Klitzing on his birthday; Klaus got this for the discovery of the quantized Hall effect in 1985. Although it looks like a gold chocolate medal, this one is real. I checked.



Having lunch with Arthur B. McDonald and young researchers from different countries. Talking about women underrepresentation across almost every level of science and sharing ideas of what could be done to improve the situation. Arthur got his Nobel Prize in 2015 for the discovery of neutrino oscillations, which shows that neutrinos have mass.



I got a moment to talk to Hiroshi Amano and thank him for his inspiring and honest lecture. Hiroshi won a Nobel Prize in 2014 for the invention of efficient blue light-emitting diodes (LEDs) which has enabled bright and energy-saving white light sources. In a way, we can blame him for our addiction to smartphones.



This is the last photograph I took during the Lindau Meeting. I left the yacht earlier as my hotel was on our first stop from Mainau island and when I turned back I saw this epic view. All the participants, including many friends that I made on this conference, were waving at me. I could not hold back a tear. Lindau Meeting is over. What an experience!

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