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8. September 2015

Press release

More than 100 young scientists from all over the world took part in the third Summer School hosted by the Max Planck Institute for Chemical Energy Conversion in the Wissenschaftspark in Gelsenkirchen. Under the title "Methods in Molecular Energy Research: Theory and Spectroscopy" the students learned a lot about spectroscopic methods and their theoretical calculations. The aim of the Summer School is to acquaint the students with the methods and to update them to the status quo of the current research.

Prof. William Tolman (University of Minnesota) and Prof. Stefan Grimme (University of Bonn), two most renowned chemists, were invited as keynote speakers for the event. Besides a broad number of lectures, held for example by MPI Director Prof. Frank Neese, the main focus was on practical sessions. "We wanted the participants to study the programs by themselves, since this is the only way to really understand how they work", explained Frank Wennmohs, leader of the ORCA-group at the MPI CEC. Besides the handling of the quantum chemical program ORCA, which was developed by Prof. Neese and his group, the students learned the data analyses with different spectroscopic methods like EPR, MCD, XAS/XES, Mössbauer and Raman.

"The Summer School was a fantastic experience. It was a great chance to learn from people who are at the forefront and who invented the techniques and wrote the codes. I can definitely recommend this school!" said a participant from the United States. Another student adds: "I gained a lot of interesting insights into the possibilities of theoretical calculations."

For the organizers it is very important to teach students how to use spectroscopy and theory in a combination, and do so with a lot of practical exercises. We can teach further aspects and go into much more detail here than universities can offer, explained Frank Wennmohs. Also during breaks and so called „poster sessions“ in the evenings, participants had the chance to ask all their questions, and discuss their own research results.