



## Sociedad Española de Mineralogía

[www.ehu.es/sem](http://www.ehu.es/sem)

### CRYSTALLIZATION CONTEST AT SCHOOL

Early in the morning of Saturday, May 10, in the central building of the Spanish Research Council (CSIC) in Madrid, forty teams of school students and their teachers were mounting their stands to display the crystals they had grown. It was the finale of the Crystallization Contest at School, an initiative to celebrate the International Year of Crystallography. Prior to this final contest, 7013 students, 286 teachers, and 189 schools competed in seven regional contests. The students worked in their school laboratories or in their home kitchen trying to obtain good crystals in one or several of the four modalities of the contest: crystallization of ammonium di-hydrogen, geode formation, crystallization of sodium chloride, and crystallization in gels.

The idea for the contest was born within the Factory of Crystallization, a Spanish research project headed by Juan-Manuel García-Ruiz in the Laboratory of Crystallography (CSIC) in Granada. The first contest took place in Andalusia and Puerto Rico during the 2010–2011 academic year. The successful idea spread quickly to other Spanish regions during the following years.



Students, teachers and members of the jury at the final event of the Crystallization Contest at School

What is behind these events? One may think that the main idea is to learn about how crystals grow or how temperature and impurities influence the shape, transparency, and color of the final product. That's true. One could easily see how much knowledge the students had absorbed when they explained their experiments in the poster session. The contest, however, goes beyond that goal. Students also experienced how important systematic analysis and careful laboratory work are, and teachers were taught a new way to learn about crystals and crystallography. But, even more importantly, students, teachers, and parents all have seen how attractive and fun science can be.

For details: [www.lec.csic.es/concurso/](http://www.lec.csic.es/concurso/).



## Société Française de Minéralogie et de Cristallographie

[www.sfmc-fr.org](http://www.sfmc-fr.org)

### NATIONAL CRYSTAL-GROWING COMPETITION

In the context of the International Year of Crystallography, the French steering committee, of which the SFMC is part, and the Union des Professeurs de Physique et de Chimie organized a crystal-growing competition at the national level, which was open to all students of primary or secondary schools (ages from 11 to 18). This competition was a great success! Almost 10,000 students participated, with 900 groups from 300 schools, and 569 crystals were grown and evaluated. The winners for the two categories were:

#### Primary schools

- 1<sup>st</sup>: Collège Fénelon, Cambrai
- 2<sup>nd</sup>: Collège Val de Rosemont, Giromagny
- 3<sup>rd</sup>: Collège Paul Verlaine, Malzéville

#### Secondary schools

- 1<sup>st</sup>: Lycée Georges Leygues, Villeneuve sur Lot
- 2<sup>nd</sup>: Lycée Camille Vernet, Valence
- 3<sup>rd</sup>: Lycée Thomas Helye, Cherbourg Octeville

On May 26, 2014, the six winning groups received their prizes at a ceremony held at the Museum of Mineralogy of MINES ParisTech. Students were welcomed with a tour of the museum followed by a lunch. The afternoon was dedicated to short scientific talks that illustrated crystallography through history and the diversity of crystals in all domains, from everyday life to scientific research. More information can be found at [www.aicr2014.fr/](http://www.aicr2014.fr/).



The young audience during the talks illustrating crystallography

## METHODES D'ANALYSE

DES MINERAUX ET MATERIAUX

20 et 21 novembre 2014



- Microscopies
- Spectroscopies
- Expérimentation
- Diffraction
- Microsondes
- Modélisations

UNIVERSITÉ PIERRE ET MARIE CURIE, PARIS

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