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Curious2018

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Ulrich A. K. Betz  
Editor

# Curious2018

Future Insights in Science  
and Technology

 Springer

*Editor*

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## Foreword

Not many institutions, let alone pharmaceutical companies, are able to celebrate a 350th anniversary. But Merck was in the enviable position to do just that. The Curious2018—Future Insight Conference, held in Darmstadt, Germany, to commemorate Merck’s 350th anniversary, brought together a special group of scientists under the leadership of Ulrich Betz with the challenge to think about the future of medical science and how to innovate for a better future. Three and a half centuries of successfully developing therapies to benefit humankind provide a unique background to ponder the future. I was honored to participate in the conference and to provide some of my ideas on using genomics and advanced phenotype screening for early detection and even prevention of diseases. I am pleased to see that Ulrich has brought much of the flavor of the forward-looking presentations into this book so that many can better understand the challenges of pharmaceutical development from cognitive diseases to neglected parasitic infections in Africa.

May 2019

J. Craig Venter  
Founder, Chairman and CEO  
J. Craig Venter Institute  
La Jolla, CA, USA

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## Preface

2018 was an outstanding milestone for the world's oldest pharmaceutical and chemical company, Merck, which celebrated its 350th anniversary in that year. It was also an outstanding year for all involved in the science and technology workstream of the corresponding special anniversary activities which among several other projects involved the inauguration of Curious—Future Insight, one of the world's most renowned conferences around the future of science and technology. This book gives the details on how it came about and provides an overview on the background, content, and outlook of this initiative, including chapters written by many of its keynote speakers. The project was started to contribute to securing another 350 years of success for the company, being aware of the key trends that influence our world, being in contact with the people that shape the future of science and technology and to become a part of it. But now today what is Curious—Future Insight? It is much more than a conference, it involves a new research prize, the Future Insight Prize, that helps to make visionary dream products important for the future of humanity a reality, it is a special project involving bright young talent from innovation hotspots all over the world brainstorming with retirees in a meeting of the generations for new breakthrough ideas, and it is, with the Darmstadt Science Declaration, a call to all nations, societies, and organizations to dedicate more resources to the advancement of science and technology to solve the global challenges of today and to enable the dreams of a better tomorrow. It is an initiative open for other partners to join. It is a bright positive utopian view of the future, a belief that together we can create a better world for everybody, it is a call to action.

Darmstadt, Germany

Ulrich A. K. Betz

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