

Acceptance Speech by Professor
Jean M.J. Frechet
2019 Co-Laureate of the King Faisal Prize
in Science
41st KFP Awards Ceremony
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It is a great honor and a privilege to be here today to receive a share of the King Faisal Prize in Science from the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman Ibn Abdulaziz Al Saud.

Let me also thank the King Faisal Foundation and its CEO His Royal Highness Prince Khalid Al-Faisal whom I had the honor to meet when he visited King Abdullah University of Science and Technology in 2013.

Throughout my career at four Universities, the University of Ottawa, Cornell University, the University of California, Berkeley, and King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, I have been able to develop and apply fundamental scientific principles to pursue a host of applied projects in science and engineering, which have led to this award.

Early work at the IBM laboratories in California and the University of Ottawa, in collaboration with my great friend Grant Willson, led to notable advances in the field of microelectronics, which have impacted nearly all of the electronic devices we use today: our phones, computers, cars, and other consumer and business goods. Later research in nanoscience, including collaborations with Craig Hawker and Justin Mynar, who are here today, led to advances in dendrimers: promising new nanomaterials that are currently in development for a variety of applications including clinical trials for cancer therapy. Finally our work in chemical separations, with Frantisek Svec and others, have led to new materials that are used today in the analysis and purification of chemical and biological substances.

While I did not carry out research personally at KAUST, my nine years in the Kingdom have been a true highlight of my career. Working with luminaries such as Choon-Fong Shi, Jean-Lou Chameau, Nadhmi Al Nasr, Tony Chan, and many others, I have been able to both witness and contribute to the development of a first rate Saudi Research Institution that rivals the best in the world. I am confident that KAUST will prove to be an enormous asset for the Kingdom, rekindling the tradition of scientific excellence within Islamic lands and contributing to economic development and diversification of this great Kingdom.