

THE “CHE ARIA” PROJECT AT THE “GIOVANI RICERCATORI CERCANSI” (YOUNG RESEARCHERS NEEDED) CONTEST: EXCELLENT RANKING FOR THE GALILEI HIGH SCHOOL

September 25, 2020

Three students from the Trento-based high school for science have ranked second in the "basic research" category with a project based on a school-to-work experience at FBK

The participation of three young students from the “Galilei” high school in Trento in the [“Giovani ricercatori cercansi”](#) contest stemmed from a collaboration between the **Autonomous Province of Trento, EURAC, University of Innsbruck** and **Alpine Mittelschule Davos**, which collects virtuous research projects submitted by high school students from Trentino, Alto Adige, Tyrol and the Canton of Grisons.

The three girls from the “Galilei” High School – **Viola Scrinzi, Anna Bresciani** and **Selina Longato** – came in second in the “basic research” category with the **“MaNa: study of macro-effects with the use of nanomaterials”** project, based on a school-to-work experience conducted at FBK as part of the [“cheAria”](#) project. The award ceremony took place at MUSE in Trento on **September, 18**.

The “cheAria” project, carried out in collaboration with the **Provincial Agency for the Protection of the Environment (APPA)**, involved numerous schools in the province during the **2018/2019** school year, with the aim of studying a gas sensor capable of monitoring urban environments, building three interconnected prototypes and preparing a strategy to bring it to market.

The experience of the “Galilei” high school, later further developed by the three students participating in the “Giovani ricercatori cercansi” competition, mainly focused on the study of the

chemical features of the sensor. Starting from the analysis of the data on the air quality of the city of Trento, the girls studied the different types of “**sensing materials**” that can constitute the chemical sensor and their reactions with the various gases present in the atmosphere, with the aim to identify the most suitable sensitive material for the purpose.

Andrea Gaiardo, a researcher with the MNF unit, closely followed the students in the project – coordinated by the head of the FBK Micro Nano Facility (MNF) research unit, **Pierluigi Bellutti**, and by the [FBK Junior](#) team. «The “cheAria” project was very stimulating not only for the students, but also for us tutors. The goals have been fully achieved, both from a scientific and teaching point of view and in terms of raised awareness among students on the issue of atmospheric pollution», Gaiardo said. «The experience gained and the goals achieved pushed “Galilei” high school students Viola, Anna and Selina to expand the work done by their class within the project, and to submit it to the “Giovani ricercatori cercansi” contest. The in-depth work they did was excellent, as demonstrated by the second place obtained in an international and very competitive contest. As a tutor, it is a real satisfaction to be able to see that the knowledge transferred within the project has been appropriated by the students and developed in order to propose their own project».

For the three students, the project also represented an excellent opportunity to challenge themselves in the **world of research**. “The project we worked on was an important opportunity both to expand our knowledge in chemistry, exploring areas unknown to us such as **sensors**, and to **apply this knowledge to research**, which would lead to the development of a usable product on a large scale», Viola Scrinzi said. “We are definitely satisfied, in particular, to have had the opportunity to have a concrete experience of what it means to “**do research**”, and we are aware that we have acquired a way of working that can be used across various fields in the future”.

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