

## Press Release

### **Aquila Capital announces winner of its second Transformation Award**

- **Award recognizes Ning Yan for the paper “A membrane-free flow electrolyser operating at high current density using earth abundant catalysts for water splitting”**
- **This year's theme: “Solving the climate crisis through innovation”**
- **Research award is endowed with 20,000 euros**

**Hamburg, 29 November 2021** – Aquila Capital’s second “Aquila Capital Transformation Award” recognizes Dr. Ning Yan, assistant professor at the Van ’t Hoff Institute for Molecular Sciences at the University of Amsterdam. A high-profile jury awarded the lead author for the paper “A membrane-free flow electrolyser operating at high current density using earth abundant catalysts for water splitting”. The annual Aquila Capital Transformation Award supports research for mitigating climate change and is endowed with 20,000 euros.

The jury concluded that Ning Yan and his team presented an exciting and innovative way how green hydrogen can be produced more cost-efficiently and at larger scale by combining the advantages of different electrolyser concepts. Using a membrane-less solution coupled with a novel cyclic operation, he introduces a new low-energy water-splitting process to produce pure hydrogen, which will be an important element of our future energy system.

Roman Rosslenbroich, Co-founder and CEO of Aquila Capital, comments: “Acknowledging the additional need for breakthrough innovations to advance the renewable energy transition, the Aquila Capital Transformation Award recognises another outstanding practice-oriented work that has the potential to play a central role in decarbonizing our economies. With his new approach to cost-efficiently produce sustainable hydrogen, Dr. Yan is a true trailblazer for a greener future.”

The expert jury consisting of Prof. John Schellhuber, Director Emeritus at the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research, Prof. Eicke R. Weber, former director of the Fraunhofer Institute for Solar Energy Systems ISE, and Prof. Yukari Takamura, professor at the University of Tokyo at the Institute for Future Initiatives as well as two managers from Aquila Capital selected the paper out of several high-quality submissions received from renowned universities

and research institutions worldwide. All submissions were evaluated by three criteria: Originality, quality, and impact.

Eicke Weber, member of the jury, comments on the decision: “Green hydrogen is a key element for future energy storage. It is also needed for the decarbonization of energy-intensive industrial processes like steel and cement production. This publication presents an innovative and very promising way to open doors towards more effective green hydrogen production.”

Ning Yan is an assistant professor at Van 't Hoff Institute for Molecular Sciences at the University of Amsterdam in the Netherlands. He received his Bachelor of Engineering in Materials Science and Engineering from Huazhong University of Science and Technology (China) in 2009. In 2013, he received his PhD in Materials Engineering from the University of Alberta (Canada). In 2014, Yan joined the University of Amsterdam, leading the group for fuel cells and electro catalysis research and focusing on the development of novel electrochemical reactors for energy conversion and storage. He has received various internal and external grants from both the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) and the EU, including the prestigious NWO-Vidi personal grant.

The paper in close second place came from Asegun Henry from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) with his elaborated research on Thermal Energy Storage.

With the 2021 theme “Solving the Climate Crisis through innovation”, the Aquila Capital Transformation Award honours outstanding work by researchers who focus on applicable solutions to combat climate change. In addition to providing financial support for the research, the award is aimed at joining forces regarding practical application of the underlying researched concepts and solutions.

Further information on the Aquila Capital Transformation Award and the criteria for the 2022 submission can be found on: <https://www.aquila-capital.de/en/about-us/transformation-award>.

### **About Aquila Capital:**

Aquila Capital is an investment and asset development company focused on generating and managing essential assets on behalf of its clients. By investing in clean energy and sustainable infrastructure, Aquila Capital contributes to the global energy transition and strengthens the world's infrastructure backbone. The company initiates, develops, and manages these essential assets along the entire value chain and lifetime. Currently, Aquila Capital manages around EUR 13 billion on behalf of institutional investors worldwide. Our primary objective is to generate performance for our clients by managing the complexity of essential assets.

Today, the company manages wind energy, solar PV and hydropower assets of more than 12 GW capacity. Additionally, 1.8 million square metres of sustainable real estate and green logistics projects have been completed or are under development. Aquila Capital also invests in energy efficiency, carbon forestry, and data centres. Aquila Capital has been carbon neutral since 2006. Sustainability has always been part of our value system and is an integral part of our investment strategies, processes, and management of our assets. The company has around 600 employees from 48 nations, operating in 15 offices in 13 countries worldwide.

Further information: <https://www.aquila-capital.de/en/>

**Press contact Aquila Capital:**

Eliza De Waard  
Group Head Corporate Communications  
Aquila Capital  
Phone: +49 40 87 5050-101  
Email: [eliza.dewaard@aquila-capital.com](mailto:eliza.dewaard@aquila-capital.com)

Robin Hagenmüller  
Finsbury Glover Hering  
Phone: +49 211 430 79-261  
Email: [robin.hagenmueller@fgh.com](mailto:robin.hagenmueller@fgh.com)