

# Press Release



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Start-up Air Company wins prize for innovative use of CO<sub>2</sub>

Covestro AG  
Communications  
51365 Leverkusen

## Vodka made from carbon dioxide awarded

- **Covestro, CO<sub>2</sub> Value Europe and nova Institut donate award**
- **Start-ups from four nations in the final**

Contact  
Petra Schäfer  
Telephone  
+49 214 6009 6332  
E-Mail  
petra.schaefer  
@covestro.com

The climate gas carbon dioxide could be used as a raw material for a sustainable vodka or for tangible products like yogamates. Also filters that can capture and store CO<sub>2</sub> with the help of renewable energy sources are possible: The start-ups that have applied for the prestigious award for the most innovative use of climate gas at the nova Institute's digitally-held "8th Conference on Carbon Dioxide as Feedstock for Fuels, Chemistry and Polymers" show how carbon dioxide can be useful. The new solutions are now increasingly benefiting end-users, for whom sustainability is important.

Contact  
Gianna Heintges  
Telephone  
+49 214 6009 5177  
E-Mail  
gianna.heintges  
@covestro.com

The winner of the "Best CO<sub>2</sub> utilization 2020" award is the American start-up Air Company from New York, turning the climate gas CO<sub>2</sub> into high-quality alcohol using a new technology. First application is a sustainable vodka. The start-up receives marketing and PR support. A total of 13 young companies participated in the contest, which Covestro is supporting for the second time as its main sponsor together with nova Institute and the industry organization CO<sub>2</sub> Value Europe. Five business ideas from four nations were shortlisted and were reviewed online by the approximately 100 participants of the conference.

Sucheta Govil, Chief Commercial Officer of Covestro, responsible for innovation, awarded the winner during the online conference: "Start-ups like Air Company are crucial to ensure that CO<sub>2</sub> is no longer seen as a problem only, but as a solution. The ideas presented by the innovative start-ups demonstrate how a meaningful use of CO<sub>2</sub> adds value throughout the value chain. While we use carbon dioxide as a resource, our customers develop products out of CO<sub>2</sub> that are particularly attractive to end users."



Even in the current challenging situation due to the spread of the Coronavirus, developers and founders worldwide continue to work on solutions for climate protection. “This year's conference shows how important research on the use of CO<sub>2</sub> is for sustainable development and that ambitious researchers make important contributions, which are recognized by our prize”, stressed Michael Carus, Director of the nova Institute and organizer of the online conference.

Covestro already successfully uses carbon dioxide as a raw material. Since 2016, the material manufacturer has been using CO<sub>2</sub> to produce polyols as a component for soft polyurethane foam. This is used to produce mattresses and so carbon dioxide finds its way to the end consumer. Within the framework of the Carbon4PUR research project, the company, together with partners, continues to focus on the goal of enhancing the use of waste gases from steel production to manufacture polyurethane.

More about Carbon4PUR can be found here: <https://www.carbon4pur.eu/>

**About Covestro:**

With 2019 sales of EUR 12.4 billion, Covestro is among the world's largest polymer companies. Business activities are focused on the manufacture of high-tech polymer materials and the development of innovative solutions for products used in many areas of daily life. The main segments served are the automotive, construction, wood processing and furniture, and electrical and electronics industries. Other sectors include sports and leisure, cosmetics, health and the chemical industry itself. Covestro has 30 production sites worldwide and employs approximately 17,200 people (calculated as full-time equivalents) at the end of 2019.

*This press release is available for download from the Covestro press server at [www.covestro.com](http://www.covestro.com). A photo is available there for download as well. Please acknowledge the source of any pictures used.*

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