

Chemistry Update

Newsletter 285, 26th May 2017

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Calendar of Events

Staff Celebratory Wine	
Reception	
Date: Friday 26 May	
Time: 4.30pm—5.30pm	
Location: C/B101	

Chemical InterActions Smartphone Quiz Date: Tuesday 30 May Time: 6.30pm—8.30pm Location: C/A122

Research Seminar

Speaker: Dr Stuart Conway, University of Oxford Date: Wednesday 31 May Time: 1pm—2pm Location: C/A101

Research Seminar

Speaker: Dr Stephen Mansell, Heriot-Watt University Date: Wednesday 14 June Time: 1pm—2pm Location: C/A122

JEOL Postdoc Poster Competition 2017 Date: Thursday 15 June Time: 1pm—4pm Location: C/A122

CODYs: Demonstrator Awards Date: Friday 23 June Time: 1pm—3pm Location: C/B101

Staff Presentation followed by summer punch Date: Friday 23 June Time: 3pm—5pm Location: C/A101 and C/ A102

RSC Tilden Prize Seminar

Speaker: Prof Ivan Parkin, University College London Date: Wednesday 28 June Time: 1pm—2pm Location: C/A101

Open Days

Date: Friday 30 June; Sunday 2 July Time: 9am—4pm

> Date of Next Issue: 30th June 2017

Professor Lucy Carpenter Wins Prestigious RSC Prize

Lucy Carpenter, Professor of Atmospheric Chemistry at the University of York, has been awarded the prestigious 2017 Royal Society of Chemistry Tilden Prize for advances in chemistry.



Professor Carpenter's work focuses on the emissions, chemistry, and impact of processes occurring in the atmosphere above the world's oceans.

Global climate change

She uses a combination of field observations, laboratory studies, and theoretical modeling to help answer important questions about global climate change.

Professor Carpenter said: "I am absolutely delighted and honoured to receive a Royal Society of Chemistry Tilden Prize, and very pleased that advances in chemical research in the field of atmospheric science have been recognized."

Receiving £5000, a medal and a certificate, Professor Carpenter was evaluated on the originality and impact of her research, the quality of results and the importance of teamwork across the chemical sciences.

Professor Duncan Bruce, Head of York's Department of Chemistry, said: "I and my colleagues in the Department are thrilled at the award of the Tilden Prize to Lucy.

"Lucy is a first-rate scientist who has made fundamental and telling contributions in relation to global climate change, and it is wonderful to see her work recognised by this prestigious prize."

Inspiring winners

Dr Robert Parker, Chief Executive of the Royal Society of Chemistry said: "It is an honour to celebrate the innovation and expertise of our community through our prizes and awards.

"We know that chemistry can be a powerful force for good, and quality research and communication of that research are more important than ever before.

"Our charitable mission is to advance excellence in the chemical sciences, and we are proud to celebrate our inspiring and influential winners who share that mission."

An illustrious list of 50 previous winners of the Royal Society of Chemistry's awards have gone on to win Nobel Prizes for their pioneering work, including all of the 2016 chemistry winners: Jean-Pierre Sauvage, Fraser Stoddart and Ben Feringa.

York Chemistry Retains Top 5 Position

Chemistry at York has once again been recognised in the 2018 Complete University Guide, with the Department retaining its 4th position.



This independent and trusted league table rates departments for Research Quality, Student Satisfaction, Graduate Prospects and Entry Standards. York Chemistry gained high scores across the board, most notably in Student Satisfaction and Graduate Prospects.

Since the publishing of league tables in The Complete University Guide, York Chemistry has never left the top 10.

Dr Victor Chechik, Chair of Board of Studies said: "We are extremely proud to once again

achieve 4th place in Complete University Guide. This is an outstanding recognition of the effort of every member of staff in the Department. With our commitment to high quality teaching and research, we work very hard to deliver excellent student experience."

With the recent <u>re-accreditation</u> of our undergraduate and postgraduate programmes by the Royal Society of Chemistry and the introduction of two new pathways in the next academic year, the Department is well-placed to build on this success, and aims to continue improving both research and teaching in the coming years.

York Chemistry 2nd in Guardian University League Table

Chemistry at York have moved to 2nd place in The Guardian University League Table 2018.



The Guardian scored departments for satisfaction with teaching, the course and feedback, student-to-staff ratio, spend per student, average entry tariff, value added and career prospects after six months of leaving the course.

Out of 53 chemistry departments, York was ranked in an outstanding 2nd place, up two places from last year. York gained high scores across all areas with an overall score of 96.6% and 87.1% for feedback satisfaction; the highest of all of departments.

Professor Duncan Bruce, Head of Department said "It is fantastic to see the Department recognised in this way, which reflects so well on our staff and their commitment to delivering a first-class experience for our students."

Wellcome Trust Senior Fellowship Renewed

The Wellcome Trust have renewed Professor Fred Antson's Senior Research Fellowship in Basic Biomedical Science for a further five years.



The fellowship award provides a grant of £1.8M for 2017-2022, for research employing state-of-the-art molecular imaging techniques (cryo-electron microscopy and X-ray diffraction), to study molecular machines present in several viruses such as Zika and herpes.

The research will provide detailed information about what the machines look like and how they function, which will in turn inform the development of new treatments that can prevent or reduce virus infections.

The Wellcome Trust is a global charitable foundation dedicated to achieving extraordinary improvements in human and animal health.

BLCS Young Scientist Prize Winner

Dr Richard Mandle has won the 2017 British Liquid Crystal Society Young Scientist Prize.

Richard, a Postdoctoral Researcher with John Goodby and John Moore, won the award based upon his work on developing highly-soluble, liquid crystalline dyes for use in low-power, next-generation display technology.

Richard was given £250 and a certificate and, as part of the prize, gave a presentation on his work entitled *'Liquid-Crystalline, Oligomeric Twist-Bend Nematogens'* at a joint meeting of the UK and German Liquid Crystal Societies in April.

The BLCS Young Scientist Award is normally presented annually for significant research contributions to the field of liquid crystals.

Vice Chancellor's Teaching Awards



Dr Moray Stark has been awarded a Vice Chancellor's Teaching Award for 2017.

The award recognises the innovative ways in which Moray has incorporated safety into the undergraduate programme and his sustained creative approaches to the teaching of chemistry.

Moray will receive his award during the summer graduation.

Dr Jon Agirre Awarded Royal Society University Research Fellowship



Dr Jon Agirre, Postdoctoral Research Associate in the York Structural Biology Laboratory (YSBL), has won a Royal Society University Research Fellowship for his proposal '*Methods for building meaningful atomic models of carbohydrates*'.

Two years ago, a team of YSBL scientists, led by Dr Agirre, reported systematic problems affecting published X-ray structures of carbohydrates, which are molecules of great biochemical significance.

Dr Agirre's project, funded by The Royal Society, will address this problem, providing computational tools that will ensure that carbohydrate structures can now be determined with confidence.

These fellowships are awarded to outstanding scientists in the UK who are in the early stages of their research career and have the potential to become leaders in their field.

Royal Society of Chemistry Centenary Prize Winner

Professor Odile Eisenstein has been awarded the 2017 Royal Society of Chemistry Centenary Prize.



Professor Eisenstein, Honorary Visiting Professor of Chemistry and Honorary Graduate of the University of York, was awarded the prize for seminal contributions to the theoretical understanding of transition metal complexes and the successful prediction of unknown properties and pathways.

She is currently Research Professor Emeritus at the National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) in France and adjunct Professor at the University of Oslo. Over the years she has delivered numerous courses and talks at the University of York.

There were three prizes awarded and the winners each receive £5000, a medal and certificate and a UK lecture tour. The winners were chosen by the RSC Awards Working Group.

Updated Online Department Suggestion Box



The online Equality and Diversity suggestion box has been extended to be a suggestion box for the whole Department. You can submit your thoughts / suggestions / ideas for general Departmental matters as well as matters relating to Equality and Diversity. You can find the new Google form on the intranet homepage or at this link.

Chemistry Student's Laidlaw Scholarship Success

A chemistry undergraduate student has won one of the first Laidlaw Scholarships in York.



Laura Berga, BSc student, is one of 25 students to receive a Laidlaw Undergraduate Research and Leadership Scholarship. This is a new programme that equips undergraduate students with the skills to become leaders in their chosen occupations.

The programme comprises of two elements: the student carries out a research project, supervised by an academic research mentor and the completion of a leadership development programme, which can lead to an Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) qualification.

The scholarship also provides the student, mentor and their relevant department with a generous stipend.

To apply for the scholarship, Laura has to complete an application form, including designing her own research project and attend a Cognitive Ability Test (CAT).

Laura said "I am very lucky and privileged to be one of 25 Laidlaw Scholarship winners. It is an excellent opportunity to develop new skills, participate in the Leadership Programme and conduct the research, which for me is the most exciting part.

"The application process was challenging but definitely worth it. The most difficult part was writing the research proposal, which had to explicitly explain my ideas and choice of my research topic.

"I am very glad that my Academic Mentor is Seishi Shimidzu, who challenged me to think outside the box."

Dr Seishi Shimizu, Laura's academic research mentor, said "Laura is bright and remarkably resilient. I have asked her many tough questions without any compromise and she is always up for a challenge.

"We very much look forward to working with her on the notoriously difficult historical question: cellulose solubilization mechanism."

Laura will commence her research project during the summer vacation.

New Starters

Dr Anibal Cuetos Fernandez, PDRA in Enzymology / Biocatalysis working with GJG in YSBL Room: B/M232; Extension: 8833; Email: <u>anibal.cuetosfernandez@york.ac.uk</u>

Alex Heyam, Experimental Officer in NMR Spectroscopy, working with Heather Fish Room: C/A172A; Extension: 4531; Email: <u>alex.heyam@york.ac.uk</u>

Joshua Bray, PDRA in Organic Chemistry working with IJSF Room: C/E114; Extension: 2584; Email: <u>joshua.bray@york.ac.uk</u>



Launch of the International Sustainable Chemistry Collaborative Centre (ISC3) in Berlin

The new International Sustainable Chemistry Collaborative Centre (ISC3) was launched in Berlin on 18 May by the German Federal Environment Minister, Barbara Hendricks and in the presence of ambassadors from several countries.

Professor James Clark, Director of the Green Chemistry Centre of Excellence (GCCE), who chaired the ISC3 Advisory Council, attended the ceremony and gave presentations on the Future of ISC3 and on existing international networks.

ISC3 will have its headquarters in Bonn with hubs in Frankfurt and Leuphana (see <u>www.isc3.org</u>).



2nd Green and Sustainable Chemistry Conference

Professor James Clark gave the opening lecture at the 2nd Green and Sustainable Chemistry Conference (14-17 May) in Berlin on "The promises of green and sustainable chemistry". Rick Taylor, Online Resource Developer in the GCCE, also attended the conference and gave an invited lecture on "Online tools to promote the uptake of green and sustainable methodologies in pharmaceutical synthesis". There were also posters from postdoctoral researchers, Dr Javier Remon Nunez and Dr Alexandra Inayat.

Professor North's South American Adventure

Professor Michael North spent the first two weeks of May in South America at a conference and building links with green chemists in Brazil and Chile. He flew first to Rio de Janeiro where he gave a seminar at the SENAI Green Chemistry Institute. This is a teaching and applied research institute, close to the Maracanã football stadium. The green chemistry unit is relatively newly established, but is very well equipped with analytical equipment to monitor the waste produced by Brazilian industries. They are keen to collaborate, and with their industrial links, would make good partners for GCRF applications.

Over the first weekend, there was time to explore Copacabana, Ipanema and Botafogo including some sites made familiar by the Olympic triathlon, cycling, rowing and sailing events. As a true CO_2 chemist, Professor North also tested the effect of rising atmospheric CO_2 levels on the water temperature of Copacabana beach and found time to drink a caipirinha (or two).

Subsequently, Professor North attended and gave a keynote lecture at the 8th International Symposium on Acid-Base Catalysis which was held in a different part of Rio, close to

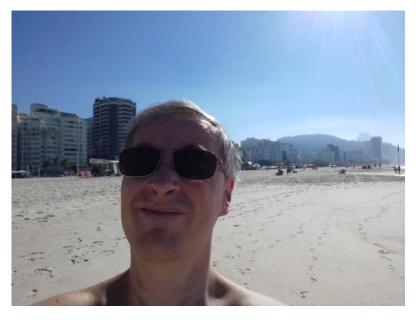


Professor North delivering his keynote lecture at ABC8.

the Olympic park. Sadly, the park is now closed and locked whilst the state of Rio de Janeiro decides what to do with it and how to pay for it. However, it was possible to see the infamous diving pool (with its colour changing water) from the adjacent road. The conference was organised by Professor Claudio Mota and featured a wide range of lectures and posters, mostly on heterogeneous catalysis and covered theoretical as well as experimental aspects. Exactly how to quantify the Lewis / Brønsted acidity of zeolite based catalysts was a recurring theme. Claudio Mota is already collaborating with the GCCE through a previous Newton grant and whilst at ABC8, he and Professor North finalised a Royal Society GCRF grant which has since been submitted.

At the end of ABC8, Professor North made a short hop (just a 4.5 hour flight) from the Atlantic to Pacific coast of South America to visit the Catholic University of Santiago in Chile. Here he was hosted by Professor Rene Rojas Guerrero who holds the chair in inorganic chemistry. A PhD student of Professor Guerrero spent four months in York in 2016 and during the visit, progress on writing a paper on her work was discussed. Professor North also met Professor Jose Correa in the chemical engineering department who visited York last year to establish a collaboration in the area of extraction of chemical feedstocks from waste biomass. During the visit, Professor North delivered a seminar on green chemistry to the chemistry department.

After a Saturday spent examining the air pollution in Santiago by taking a cable car to a city centre mountain to view it from above, Professor North returned home on the longest non-stop flight that BA fly, to the joys of exam marking and the British summer.



Selfie of a green chemist testing the water temperature on Copacabana beach with Sugarloaf Mountain in the background (taken at 8am!).



View of Santiago and the Andes showing the smog that envelops the city.



A post lecture lunch with Professor Guerrero, his group and other members of the chemistry department at a local bar / restaurant in Santiago.

Equality & Diversity News

LGBT+ Scientists



Professor David Smith has recently been on tour delivering lectures about diversity in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and, in particular, the representation and activity of LGBT+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Plus) scientists. As inclusion and diversity move up the scientific agenda, attention is increasingly focussing on often 'hidden' areas of diversity such as LGBT+. This is of interest in the university sector, and also amongst a wide range of employers who employ STEM professionals and want to develop inclusive workplaces in which all talent can thrive.

Dave spoke at Procter and Gamble in Newcastle about the benefits of 'Bringing Your Whole Self to Work' and took part in a panel discussion on the subject with a head teacher and a senior lawyer. He has also recently given well-received and well-attended lectures at the Universities of Nottingham and Lancaster on the subject of LGBT+ scientists as part of their equality and diversity programmes.

In early May, Dave was a keynote speaker at UNIT2017 in Berlin. This is the leading international conference for those who identify as LGBT+ and work in technology or science, with over 500 attendees. Other keynote speakers included Jon 'Maddog' Hall, a pioneer in the development of UNIX/LINUX who came out as gay aged 62, and Lynn Conway, a transgender technologist, who pioneered vital aspects of the microprocessor design which underpins modern computers. Uniquely, this was the first time Dave has lectured in a gay club - complete with glitter ball - although sadly, it wasn't turned on for his talk.

Staff Performance Review Meetings

Many of you will have a performance review meeting (or a probation meeting) over the next few months. Now is a perfect time to look back at last year's paperwork, see how you are performing against your objectives and to start thinking about what you'd like to get out of your meeting.

Postdoctoral Researcher Reps Needed on Departmental Committees

Currently, there are two Departmental Committees in need of PDRA representatives:

- Equality & Diversity Group (Chair: Caroline Dessent, meets termly)
- Environmental Performance Group (Chair: Duncan Macquarrie, meets termly)

This is a great opportunity to gain experience of committee membership, learn how the Department is run and allow you to contribute your expertise in an area which interests you.



If you would like to know more or would like to apply for either position, please get in touch with Derek Wann (derek.wann@york.ac.uk) ASAP with a couple of sentences about your fit to that committee and what you hope to get out of being a member. Derek will then consult with the committee Chairs to make appointments.

International / EU Postgrad Socials

The Chemistry Graduate School is always keen to consider ways to improve the experience of postgraduate students during their time in the Department.

Recent feedback has suggested that it might be beneficial for students from outside of the UK to have an opportunity to regularly meet with other international/EU students. We have a number of students from around the world who are currently studying in the Department, but as students may often be spread around different research groups, they may not all get an opportunity to meet one another.

Therefore, we decided to introduce a regular opportunity for non-UK postgraduate students to meet up with each other in the Department. These informal socials will be approximately once a month with tea/coffee/biscuits provided. Please feel free to come along to chat to others who may have had similar experiences to you when moving to the UK and getting settled in to postgraduate study.

The sessions have been scheduled as below. Further dates will be added later for the new academic year when new students will be arriving. If the sessions prove to be popular, it would be nice for them to be more student-led. All these sessions are on a Tuesday in room C/A122- no need to sign up, just come along:

- 20 June 15.00 15.45
- 25 July 10.45 11.30
- 22 August 15.00 15.45
- 19 September 15.00 15.45



Chemistry Postdoctoral Researchers: You Said – We Did

Support for postdoctoral researchers forms a key part of the Department of Chemistry's Athena SWAN activities. Here are some examples of things that have been done as a result of feedback from surveys, focus groups and directly to us.



should not be happening.



"Can we have dedicated slots for PDRAs to meet with visiting speakers?"

 Regular invitations are now offered to
PDRAs to meet with speakers and lunch can be given over to this when timing permits.



"I would benefit from having a mentor"

 In addition to all staff getting a buddy mentor, we are part of the new <u>Mentoring pilot for research staff</u> in partnership with RETT.

Seven chemistry researchers have recently been matched with academic mentors.

"Can we have a Postdoc Society noticeboard?"

 Done. It's just before you reach the HoD Admin Office. "Fellowship options should all be centralised in one place"

 Information on independent fellowships has now been collected together on the department webpages and funding opportunities regularly circulated.

A fellowships information day was held in March with talks from research support staff and current fellows.

Have your say: Please fill in the Staff Survey and/or contact Derek Wann with any feedback.



Chemical InterActions Upcoming Events



Smartphone Quiz

The next event on the Chemical *InterActions* calendar is a **Smartphone Quiz on Tuesday 30 May at 6.30pm in A122**.

The event is open to everyone - staff and students - and no Chemistry knowledge is needed! The event is a pub-style quiz with general knowledge questions and some music thrown in as well.

Just turn up to play - either in a team, or you can always join up with others to make a team on the night.

Tablets with the Smartphone App will be provided so you don't even need to use your own. Just bring along your own drinks and nibbles and be ready to hit the virtual buzzer.

International Picnic



Last year, Chemical InterActions held an International Picnic and invited everyone to bring along some food from their region or country. The event was a great success with a number of delicious dishes and snacks being provided and lots of people having an opportunity to try something different.

We plan to hold another International Picnic this year on a date to be confirmed so watch this space!

Chemical *Inter*Actions is a society within the Department of Chemistry at York open to all staff and students. The society aims to create an inclusive atmosphere, provide opportunities

for people to get to know each other and to celebrate the diversity of the Department by running regular events for all. We also have some financial support from the RSC to help us run events. The group is run by volunteers within the Department including staff and students, but as people come and go we would always welcome new members to join the team to offer ideas for future events and / or some help in organising them. It does not have to be an onerous task; staff support is there so you would not be expected to arrange large events on your own. We are just looking for ideas and enthusiasm!

The group is open to everyone – staff and students in all categories. If you would like to find out more, please email the group on <u>chemical-interactions-group@york.ac.uk</u>.

Clarke Group News

Sam Griggs Lectures at 23rd RSC Grasmere Heterocyclic Symposium

"I attended the 23rd RSC Grasmere Heterocyclic Symposium from 4-8 May. The strong 40-speaker lineup included the likes of Paul Wender, Neil Garg, and more notably, Ei-Ichi Negishi. Negishi gave a lecture I'll never forget... I can't imagine many people here have heard a Nobel Prize Winner sing the periodic table to the alphabet song!

"There was an incredibly high standard of talks over the 4 days from both academics and industrialists, and I was delighted to be given the opportunity to be one of the speakers! I was one of 12 'early career researcher' speakers, of which only 5 were PhD students, so to be given the chance to speak was an honour. Thankfully, the talk itself went very smoothly, even if I was the only speaker of 40 to have issues with the projector!



The O'Brien group, with Grasmere in the background.

"A major plus of the symposium was the absence of afternoon lectures, so we were given the opportunity to hike in the Lake District, including a 14km hike on the final day it's a brilliant way to network! I went on all the walks, and saw some incredible views!

"In all, it was an excellent conference. For those who do heterocyclic organic chemistry I cannot recommend it enough. I've made new friends, networked well, and can't wait for the 24th Symposium in 2019!".

- Sam Griggs



The final night of last people standing!

Dr Glenn Hurst Visits the University of Leeds for Pedagogy Masterclass



On 18 May, Dr Glenn Hurst was invited to visit the Department of Chemistry at the University of Leeds for a masterclass on problem solving and pedagogic methods for measuring student attainment with Professor Tina Overton. This proved to be fabulous opportunity for Glenn to learn from one of the leaders in the field of chemical education together with an excellent chance to network with colleagues across the UK. Glenn is grateful to the Department for covering travel expenses.





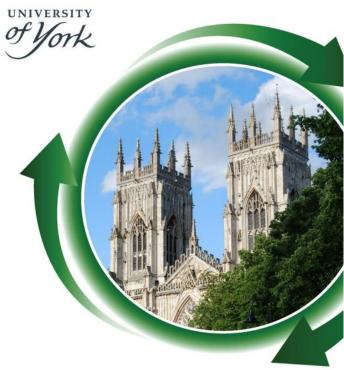
3rd EuGSC

3rd EuCheMS Congress on Green and Sustainable Chemistry

PLENARY SPEAKERS

Ben Feringa, University of Groningen Paul Anastas, Yale University James Clark, University of York Babette Pettersen, Capricorn Venture Partners Michael Grätzel, EPFL Nicholas Gathergood, TUT

Poster abstract deadline: 30 June www.york.ac.uk/3EUGSC



Special non-residential rate to any staff or students in the Department of Chemistry

- £150 not including the conference banquet.
- £220 including the conference banquet (at the National Railway Museum).

To take advantage of this reduced rate, email <u>3eugsc@york.ac.uk</u>.

JEOL Postdoc Poster Competition 2017

Thursday 15th June A122

All staff and students are welcome to attend the annual Chemistry Department JEOL Postdoc Poster Competition

> Poster viewing between 1pm and 4pm Refreshments served at 3pm Winners announced at 4pm

Please contact Derek Wann for more information derek.wann@york.ac.uk



Generously sponsored by JEOL (UK) Ltd and the Department of Chemistry







2017

TUESDAY 20 JUNE

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMEN

UNIVERSITY OF YORK LEARNING AND TEACHING CONFERENCE

The York Pedagogy making it work

The York Pedagogy defines our institution's learning culture and sets clear expectations for the design of our programmes and student work. This conference reviews its implementation and considers opportunities for ongoing enhancement.

PROGRAMME

There will be a range of discussion papers and workshops delivered across two parallel sessions, in addition to a dedicated poster event, lunch, afternoon tea, and concluding with a faculty themed review session. Topics include:

- Designing authentic assessment tools for experiential learning
- Students as partners in curriculum design
- Programme-level approaches to skills development in modular degrees
- Freedom to learn? Assessment and the student experience
- Peer assisted learning in an interdisciplinary social science degree
- Enabling active learning through technology

The conference will provide an excellent opportunity to share ideas, and to celebrate and disseminate best practice in teaching and learning. All staff and students are welcome to attend, and registration is now open through the link **bit.ly/2p2WN4q**

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Prof John Robinson, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Teaching, Learning and Students will reflect on the principles that shape the Pedagogy, the successes and the challenges, what we have learned and what we'd do differently Further information about this conference, including the programme of events is available at the bit link bit.ly/2es0a2R

PROGRAMN

FORMATIVE FEEDBACK

LEADERS

DOING

Registration now open

FALLING WALLS LAB YORK



bit.ly/fallingwalls-york

Join the audience as walls fall

York's best and brightest identify the breakthroughs that will change science and society

23 June 2pm-4.30pm Spring Lane Building University of York

In cooperation with Founding Partner











The organisers are independent partners of the Falling Walls Foundation.