

## Welcome to your 2021 Chemistry Alumni Newsletter



**Dear Alumni,** I am proud that through a year of uncertainty, members of our School have continued their outstanding learning, teaching and research alongside overwhelming professional and personal demands. I know our new graduates will likewise rise to the challenges they encounter. I extend my congratulations, on behalf of the entire School, to the new graduates of 2021. As new graduates join the ranks of our valued alumni, we thank you, our alumni community, for your support and interest.

[Read more from Rachel O'Reilly](#)



## The School of Chemistry in 2030 – a Foresight process

The grand challenges of energy, sustainability and health are at the heart of the School of Chemistry's research strategy. Our School also has a specific profile with unique strengths in critical materials and recycling, polymers, supramolecular chemistry, electrochemistry and other areas. So taking advantage of these capabilities, how should we position ourselves both nationally and internationally to make a real difference in addressing

societal challenges over the coming 10 years? To answer this question systematically and comprehensively we are starting a Foresight exercise, led by the School's Director of Research Professor Tim Albrecht, drawing on expertise from within and external to the School – including you, our alumni community! We're interested to hear what you think the future of Chemistry looks like.

If you'd like to know more, [click here](#) to email our Alumni Relations Manager Grace



### **Speed, simplicity and sensitivity for COVID-19 test**

Birmingham chemists have confirmed the speed, accuracy and simplicity of a novel, highly sensitive testing method for COVID-19 that can be deployed at entertainment venues, airport arrival terminals, and in remote settings where clinical testing laboratories are not available.

[Find out more](#)



### **Recycling of lithium-ion batteries receives £4.8M**

In 2019, the United Kingdom imported over £500M of lithium-ion accumulators, however, we do not have a significant recycling provision for such cells. The Faraday Institution's Recycling of lithium-ion Batteries (ReLiB) project has secured a further £4.8 million in funding.

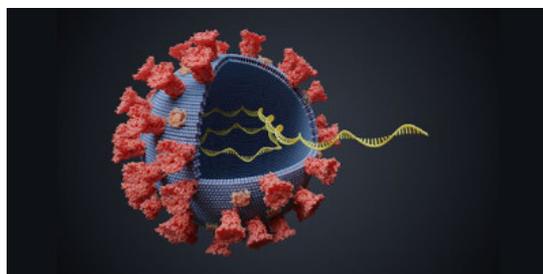
[Find out more](#)



### **Spinout lands funding for rapid development of fluorescent dyes**

ChromaTwist Ltd has secured £300k of seed funding to develop a new class of fluorescent materials for use in bio-sensing and bio-imaging tests for diseases such as cancer and diabetes.

[Find out more](#)



### **Agents that target viral RNA could be the basis for next generation anti-viral drugs**

A new approach to tackling viruses by targeting the 'control centre' in viral RNA could lead to broad spectrum anti-viral drugs and provide a first line of defence against future pandemics.

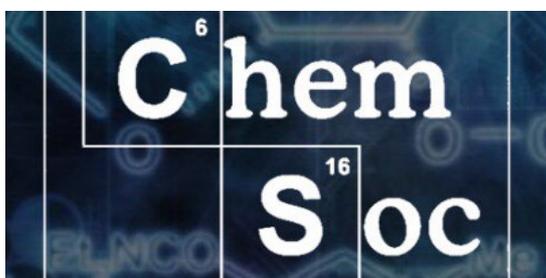
[Find out more](#)



## ChemSoc win big at the EPS Societies' Awards!

For the second year running we took the EPS Societies' Awards online to celebrate our remarkable student groups. The celebrations were not halted and watch parties were held across our societies and Schools! ChemSoc won not one, not two but THREE awards! Huge congratulations to Lizzie Driscoll on winning the Outreach Award, Claire Doswell on her Diversity and Inclusion Award, and to the organising committee of the EPS Running Festival for their Outstanding Event Award!

[Watch the 2021 Virtual Societies' Awards](#)



## A phenomenal year for ChemSoc!

With a hugely successful year in spite of the challenges of multiple lockdowns and remote learning, ChemSoc have 'crossed the finishing line' of a triumphant year, with a brilliant set of virtual and sporting events, and nabbed a few awards in the process.

[Read what ChemSoc have been up to](#)



## Alumni perspective: Dr Nicholas Cundy

Double graduate Nicholas Cundy completed his MSci in 2016 and PhD in 2020. Having spent a year in Canada, he's recently returned to the UK to take up a Postdoctoral Fellow at The Institute of Cancer Research in London.

[Read about Nicholas' career so far](#)

**WE ARE**  
**BIRMINGHAM**  
**ALUMNI**

## Help inspire our students

From recent graduates to industry leaders, you are making important things happen. You can inspire young people and offer an insight into the opportunities awaiting them. What will you share?

[Share your Birmingham story](#)

**MENTORING**

## Could you be a mentor?

We all know the benefits of having someone to bounce ideas off, especially when it comes to our careers. Your advice is invaluable. If you'd like to be that person, we'd love to hear from you.

[Email Grace to become a mentor](#)



## Seventy graduates take part in 'Meet your alumni' series

In March 2021, the EPS Community launched the first event series aimed at introducing students to Engineering and Physical Science alumni from a broad range of sectors. More than 70 graduates and professionals took part in 'Meet your alumni', each with a different experience to share. In Chemistry alone we were joined by four recent graduates for a series of talks from 'Women in Chemistry' sharing an insight into their careers so far.

[Find out more about the Series](#)

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## News roundup

Undergraduate programmes in Chemistry at the University of Birmingham have [ranked highly in the 2021 National Student Survey](#) (NSS).

Innovative 'EPS Futures Foundation Year' programme [supports young people from underrepresented groups](#) to study STEM subjects.

[New hardship grants for students funded by Birmingham graduate](#), Emeritus Professor Barry P Hughes

Medtech spinout behind [new material for 3D printed implants](#) raises £1.6m.

Dr Ruchi Gupta and Lizzie Driscoll [win prestigious Royal Society of Chemistry Awards](#).

UK [Universities Minister visits University of Birmingham](#) to learn how students have been supported through the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Birmingham Centre for Strategic Elements and Critical Materials and the Critical Elements and Materials Network have [formed a panel of experts to help secure the future UK supply of technology-critical materials](#).

Chemistry researchers Dr Otto Mustonen and Dr Stephen Fielden [awarded Prestigious Leverhulme Trust Early Career Fellowships](#).

Global approach is needed on [battery regulation](#).

Professor Andrew Dove discusses [how to make plastics more sustainable](#) in Royal Society of Chemistry webinar.

Electric cars: What will happen to all the [dead batteries](#)?

[Act now to secure the UK's critical materials supply](#), say Birmingham experts.

Researchers working on the Faraday Institution Recycling and Reuse of Li-ion Batteries project have completed the installation of [new battery testing and storage facilities](#).

[New biomaterials can be 'fine-tuned'](#) for medical applications.

Helicates meet Rotaxanes to create [promise for future disease treatment](#).

The School of Chemistry is delighted to announce that Professor Neil R Champness has been appointed as the [new Haworth Chair](#).

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### Do we have the correct contact details for you?

Make sure you update your details to ensure you receive the latest news and information about events in your area. [Update now](#)



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