

Athena Swan Ireland Awards Ceremony 2025



Kristy Stanley, Head of EDI, attended the Athena Swan Ireland Awards Ceremony 2025 on the 12th of November where she accepted a Silver Athena Swan Award on behalf of the School of Chemistry. The ceremony was followed by a panel discussion and Q&A by representatives from South East Technological University, Atlantic Technological University, Dublin Business School, University College Cork, and University of Galway.

The School would like to thank Elaine O'Reilly, The Athena Swann Self-Assessment Team and the EDI committee for their hard work over the past several years to bring all of this together. We would also like to thank every member of our school community for attending events and focus groups, filling out surveys and sharing opinions, you guide the changes we all hope to see and help to build a stronger community.

Declan Gilheany's Last Lecture

Prof. Declan Gilheany gave his last lecture before retirement on Weds 26th November 2025 at 12 pm.

It was on module CHEM30110 Instrumental Analysis, a module that Declan created and has dedicated considerable efforts to over the years.

As is now the school tradition (shhh!!) academic, technical officers and admin staff surprised Declan by gathering with the 3rd years in S1.67 at the start of the lecture to mark the occasion.



The 3rd year students had decorated the room for the occasion with Good Luck in your Retirement banners and balloons with chemical structures on them. They bought Declan flowers and wine and a large cake.

Pat Guiry (on behalf of James Sullivan, Head of School) congratulated Declan on his many years of work in the School of Chemistry and teaching to hundreds of students over the years across a huge number of modules.

Declan commented that he was glad that his last lecture was on CHEM30110 as this module is very dear to him and he has enjoyed sharing his passion with students. CHEM30110 is designed to prepare students for a

scientific career to use instruments to make measurements of various physical and chemical properties and to interpret data and assess its quality and whether it was recorded in a sensible way using the right instrument.

Both Pat and Declan sincerely thanked the 3rd year class for their kind and thoughtful gifts and for decorating the room which helped to make it a memorable day.

The large group of staff who attended is testament to the warmth and respect in which Declan is held by his colleagues.

We all wish him a long and happy retirement but note that he plans to spend some time in the research lab in the coming year and we are grateful that he will still be a regular presence in the school.

PhD Viva Voce Celebrations

Well done & congratulations to Jonathan Devlin, Rachel Lynch, Marie Clara Michel, and Wanting Zhang on their success at their recent Viva Voce examinations.



Jonathan Devlin successfully defended his PhD Thesis by Viva Voce on 3rd of November 2025. Jonathan was supervised by Marcus Baumann. We are grateful to the Examination Committee:

Extern: Professor Duncan Browne, University College London.

Intern: Peter Byrne

Chair: Eoghan McGarrigle

L to R: Duncan Browne, Peter Byrne, Jonathan Devlin, Marcus Baumann, Eoghan McGarrigle

Rachel Lynch successfully defended her PhD thesis by Viva Voce on 13th November 2025. Rachel was supervised by Peter Byrne. We are grateful to the Examination Committee:

Extern: Dr Jordi Bures, Institute of Chemical Research of Catalonia (ICIQ)

Intern: Patrick Guiry

Chair: Serena Cussen



L to R: Dr Jordi Bures, Rachel Lynch, Peter Byrne, Patrick Guiry



Marie Clara Michel successfully defended her PhD thesis by Viva Voce on 20th of November 2025. Marie Clara was supervised by Peter Byrne. We are grateful to the Examination Committee:

Extern: Professor Ann Marie O'Donoghue, University of Durham.

Intern: Paul Evans

Chair: Joseph Byrne

L to R: Joseph Byrne, Prof Ann Marie O'Donoghue, Marie Clara Michel, Paul Evans

Wanting Zhang successfully defended her PhD thesis by Viva Voce on 17th of November 2025. Wanting was supervised by Kenneth Dawson. We are grateful to the Examination Committee:

Extern: Dr Neus Feliu, Fraunhofer Centre for Applied Nanotechnology

Intern: Gerard Cagney, School of Biomolecular and Biomedical Science

Chair: Xiangming Zhu



Nikitin Research Group News

Engagement with the Irish Blue Economy

The SINFERT Project initiated discussions on the future of phosphorus recovery from marine waste at the Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) meeting in Killybegs on 20 October 2025.

The presentation engaged leaders of the Irish fish industry to explore practical, circular economy solutions for transforming underutilised marine by-products into high-value resources. This aligns SINFERT with the emerging Blue Bioeconomy sector.



European Critical Raw Materials Week

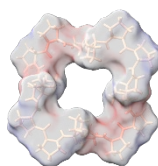
The SINFERT Project was successfully presented in Brussels during the European Critical Raw Materials (CRM) Week (November 17-21, 2025), at the ESPP CRM Workshop.

Our team, including Dr. Kirill Nikitin and Ms. Ema Vranic, met with leading global industry specialists and stakeholders in the phosphorus value chain, including representatives from LANXESS, Preyon, and ICI. These high-level discussions focused on integrating the SINFERT technology into sustainable European supply chains.

Palma Research Group News



Congratulations to Camilla Di Girolamo (Palma team), who has not only been awarded a competitive travel bursary to attend the RSC MASC 2025 meeting in the UK but has also been selected to deliver a 15-minute presentation on her PhD project. Well done, Cami!



Loh Research Group News

Charles Loh was an invited speaker in 3 Indian cities for three different international conferences over a span of 8 days.

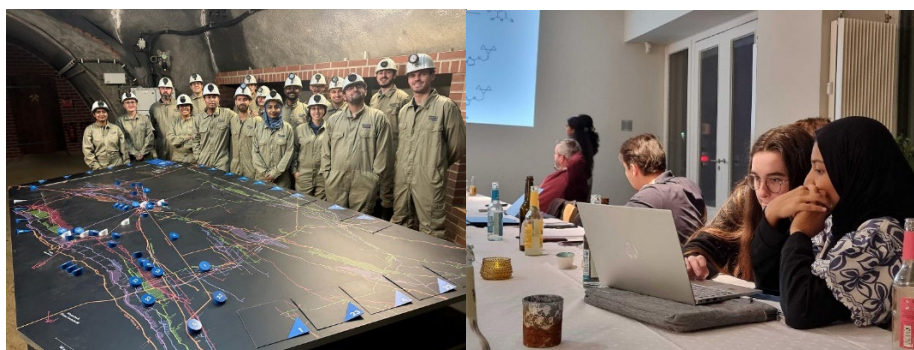
Together with an international entourage of prominent carbohydrate chemistry/Organic Chemistry researchers featuring Prof. Alexei Demchenko, Prof. Carmen Galan, Prof. Valentin Wittmann, Prof. Michaela Wimmerova, Prof. Debabrata Maiti, Prof. Christina White, Prof. Suvarn Kulkarni, Prof. Srinivas Hotha and Prof. Pawel Dydio etc, a range of frontier topics ranging from catalysis to advances in carbohydrate chemistry were being discussed in a vibrant and engaging atmosphere.



- ChemSpirit 2025, Current and Future Trends in Chemical Sciences, IIT Hyderabad, India (17th-19th Nov 2025) <https://www.chemspirit.com/>
- CARBO-XXXIX: Emerging Trends in Glycoscience, Banaras Hindus University, Varanasi, India (21st-23rd Nov 2025) <https://etgg-bhu-2025.in/>
- Workshop on Chemistry and Biology of Glycans, IIT Bombay, Mumbai, India (24th Nov 2025) <https://glycobiology2024.wixsite.com/2025-symposium/speakers>

Guiry Research Group News

Ramsiya Poolamanna, Stage 1 PhD student with the Guiry Group, took part in the introductory course of the Cataloop Doctoral Programme in Chemnitz University of Technology, Germany.



Ramsiya at the Cataloop Doctoral Programme in Chemnitz University of Technology

McGarrigle Research Group News

Congratulations to Bodhayan on winning a poster prize at the 39th International Carbohydrate Conference on Emerging Trends in Glycoscience and Glycotechnology (ETCG-2025).



School ChemisTrees

Thanks to Chief Elves Reid Davis (Johnson Research Group) and Breno Moura Motta (Dawson Research Group) who put up the School Christmas Tree on Friday 21st of November, just in time for the last week of the Autumn trimester.

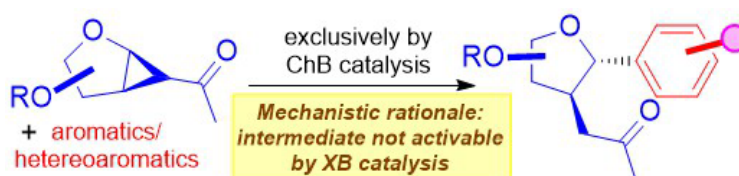
Technical Officers Kristy Stanley's and Aisling Fleming's outstanding Chemistree on the 2nd Floor Undergraduate Teaching Labs corridor.



Publications

The **Loh group** published a research article in Angewandte Chemie showing a highly stereoselective

chalcogen bonding catalyzed C-glycosylation that arose due to privileged mechanistic access into an otherwise inaccessible stereoselective pathway.



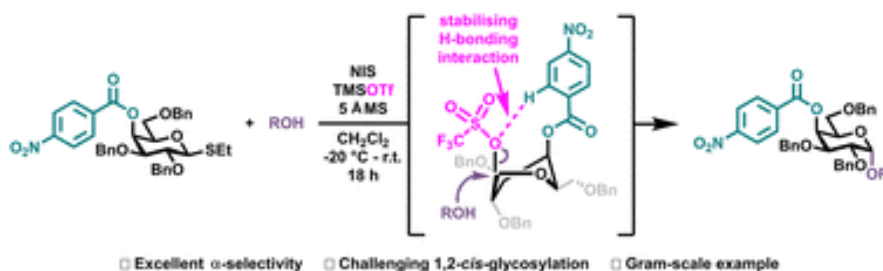
H. Guo, C. C. J. Loh* Angew. Chem. Int. Ed. 2025, early view, DOI: 10.1002/anie.202517553

Congratulations to Katie, Joe and Dionissia of the **McGarrigle Group** on their publication in *Org. Biomol. Chem.*

It describes a new mechanistic understanding in glycosylation chemistry and demonstrates

applications for this understanding. The new theory that challenges the existing paradigms arose through a combination of DFT calculations and experimental investigations. The work was funded by Research Ireland and calculations were made possible through ICHEC and UCD's SONIC high performance computing facilities. The paper is OpenAccess and is available at the link below:

Org Biomol Chem **2025**. K Donaghy, D A Pepe, J J Ruddy, E M McGarrigle* — H-bonding, not remote participation, explains the influence of remote substituents on stereoselectivity in α -galactosylations. DOI: [10.1039/D5OB01495F](https://doi.org/10.1039/D5OB01495F)



Upcoming Events

Seminar Series 2025/26 – The busy schedule of seminars by invited guests and visiting extern examiners continues. Details of all upcoming seminars can be found on the [School website](#).
