

Newsletter October 2025

Dr. Úna McCarthy Fakhry: UCD Alumni Award in Science 2025

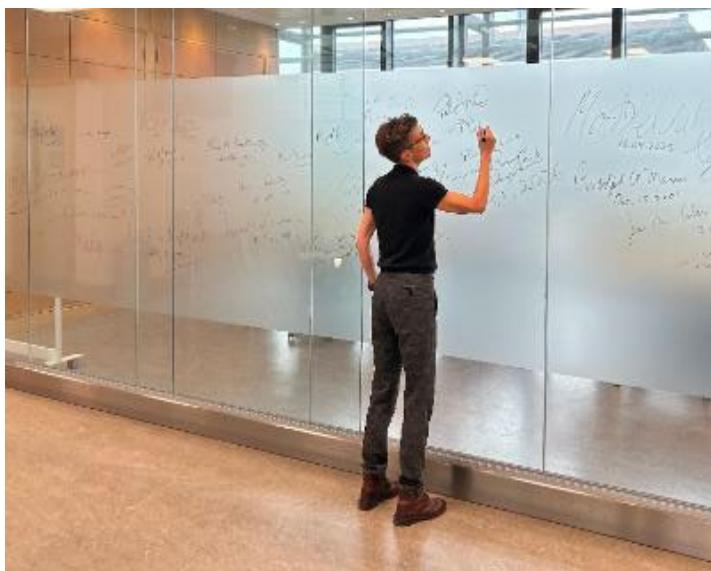


L to R: Celine Erkey, Úna McCarthy-Fakhry, Prof. Orla Feely, UCD President

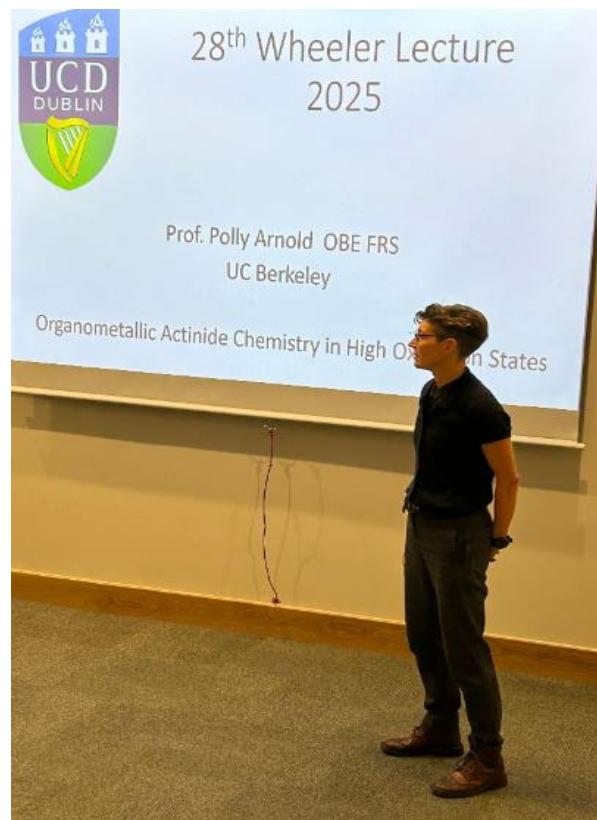
On Friday 17th October 2025 Dr. Úna McCarthy-Fakhry was presented with the [2025 UCD Alumni Award in Science](#) at a ceremony in UCD University Club. Earlier that day we were delighted to host Úna to give a seminar entitled "Beyond the lab: A chemist's journey to inclusive STEM education". Read about Úna, her award, and her visit to UCD School of Chemistry on our [website](#).

Professor Polly Arnold OBE, FRS delivers 29th Wheeler Lecture

On Thursday 9th of October 2025 UCD School of Chemistry held the 28th Wheeler Lecture. We are honoured that [Professor Polly Arnold](#) agreed to deliver the 28th lecture in this series which began in 1964.



Polly signs 'The Wall'



Polly gives her fascinating talk

Earlier in the day, the School EDI Committee invited Polly to a fireside chat following the screening of her film, *A Chemical Imbalance*. Polly, along with Evan Spotte-Smith and Aoibheann Smyth, reflected on the representation of women, gender inclusion and diversity in chemistry and science generally. The session was chaired by Serena Cussen, Joint Chair of EDI. A full account of Polly's visit is available on the School [website](#).



L to R: Aoibheann Smyth, Polly Arnold, Evan Spotte-Smith, Serena Cussen

PhD Viva Voce Celebrations

Well done & Congratulations to Amber, Vanessa, Niamh L., Fahad, Adam, Zoe, Dominik, Niamh D., Aizuddin, Parth, Shane, Aoife, and Periklis on their success at their recent Viva Voce examinations.



Amber Barry successfully defended her PhD thesis by Viva Voce on 30th of September 2025. Amber was supervised by Elaine O'Reilly. We are grateful to the Examination Committee:

Extern: Prof. John Blacker, University of Leeds
Intern: Aniello Palma
Chair: Marcus Baumann

L to R: Aniello Palma, Marcus Baumann, Elaine O'Reilly, Amber Barry, John Blacker

Vanessa Becker successfully defended her PhD thesis by Viva Voce on 30th of September 2025. Vanessa's supervisor was Eoghan McGarrigle. We are grateful to the Examination Committee:

Extern: Prof. Michael Willis, University of Oxford

Intern: Paul Evans

Chair: Elaine O'Reilly



L to R: Eoghan McGarrigle, Vanessa Becker, Michael Willis



Niamh with her supervisor, Patrick Guiry

Niamh Lehane successfully defended her PhD thesis by Viva Voce on 3rd October 2025. Niamh's supervisor was Pat Guiry. We are grateful to the Examination Committee:

Extern: Prof. John Bower, University of Liverpool

Intern: Marina Rubini

Chair: Aniello Palma



L to R: Prof. Fawaz Aldabbagh, Paul Evans, Fahad Alkhathami, Marina Rubini, Peter Byrne

Fahad Alkhathami successfully defended his PhD thesis by Viva Voce on 3rd of October 2025. Fahad's Principal supervisor was Paul Evans and his co-supervisor was Marina Rubini. We are grateful to the Examination Committee:

Extern: Prof. Fawaz Aldabbagh, Kingston University

Intern: Peter Byrne

Chair: Serena Cussen



Adam Cruise successfully defended his PhD thesis by Viva Voce on 6th of October 2025. Adam's supervisor was Marcus Buamann. We are grateful to the Examination Committee:

Extern: Prof. Maurizio Fagnoni, University of Pavia

Intern: Aniello Palma

Chair: Pat Guiry

L to R: Marcus Baumann, Aniello Palma, Maurizio Fagnoni, Adam Cruise, Pat Guiry

Zoe Beato successfully defended her PhD thesis by Viva Voce on 6th of October 2025. Zoe's supervisor was Xiangming Zhu. We are grateful to the Examination Committee:

Extern: Prof. Christian Pedersen, University of Copenhagen

Intern: Charles Loh

Chair: Demetra Achilleos



L to R: Christian Pedersen, Zoe Beato, Xiangming Zhu, Charles Loh



Dominik Duleba successfully defended his PhD thesis by Viva Voce on 7th of October 2025. Dominik's supervisor was Robert Johnson. We are grateful to the Examination Committee:

Extern: Prof. Guy Denault, University of Southampton

Intern: Gareth Redmond

Chair: Aniello Palma

L to R: Aniello Palma, Robert Johnson, Dominik Duleba, Guy Denault, Gareth Redmond

Niamh Disney successfully defended her PhD thesis by Viva voce on 10th of October 2025. Niamh was supervised by Marcus Baumann. We are grateful to the Examination Committee:

Extern: Prof. Antimo Gioiello, University of Perugia
Intern: Declan Gilheany
Chair: Elaine O'Reilly



Niamh and Marcus



L to R: Grace Morgan, Wilhelm Risse, Sandrine Heutz, Aizuddin Sultan, Paul Evans

Parth Naik successfully defended his PhD thesis by Viva Voce examination on 16th of October 2025. Parth's supervisor was Marcus Baumann. We are grateful to the Examination Committee:

Extern: Prof. Oliver Kappe, University of Graz
Intern: Paul Evans
Chair: Serena Cussen



L to R: Marcus Baumann, Oliver Kappe, Parth Naik



Shane O'Neill successfully defended his PhD thesis by Viva Voce on 17th of October 2025. Shane's supervisor was Robert Johnson. We are grateful to the Examination Committee:

Extern: Prof. Marloes Peeters, University of Manchester
Intern: Dermot Brougham
Chair: Elaine O'Reilly

L to R: Robert Johnson, Shane O'Neill, Marloes Peeters, Dermot Brougham

Aoife Martin successfully defended her PhD thesis by Viva Voce on 22nd of October 2025. Aoife's supervisor was Elaine O'Reilly. We are grateful to the Examination Committee:

Extern: Prof. Caroline Paul, Delft University of Technology
Intern: Peter Byrne
Chair: Declan Gilheany



Aoife and her supervisor, Elaine O'Reilly



Periklis Karamanis successfully defended his PhD thesis by Viva Voce on 29th of October 2025. Periklis' supervisor was Marina Rubini. We are grateful to the Examination Committee:

Extern: Prof. Christopher Coxon, University of Edinburgh
Intern: Aniello Palma
Chair: Peter Byrne.

L to R: Christopher Coxon, Periklis Karamanis, Aniello Palma, Marina Rubini

Other News

Ashwini Mishra (P Byrne Research Group) completed a three-month placement (July–September) with the Process & Development Lab at Clarochem Ireland Ltd and attended the Beilstein Organic Chemistry Symposium 2025 (October 14–16) in Limburg, Germany. Ashwini said that both were fantastic and enriching experiences.



Baumann Research Group News

Congratulations to PhD student Sara Ferrario who visited us for a 6-month period from the University of Milan to conduct research on photochemical flow reactions that has just been published as a joint paper in *Organic Letters*! "Photocatalytic Addition of *N*-Oxazolidinone Radicals to Arenes and Heteroarenes in Batch and in Flow Mode." Sara Ferrario, Sergio Rossi, Niccolò Intini, Julia Bruno-Colmenarez, Marcus Baumann and Maurizio Benaglia *Org. Lett.* **2025** asap. <https://doi.org/10.1021/acs.orglett.5c03828>.

Publications

Hans Eckhardt: "Towards a circular food system: Biomass profile, antioxidant properties, and cytotoxicity of marine and freshwater microalgae cultivated on digestate" by Fangting Bai, Aoife Cahill, Prafulla Sabbanwar, Mengsong Xiao, Hans-Georg Eckhardt, Stephen Nolan, Stafford Vigors, Ronald Halim. 2025

Upcoming Events

24th Annual CSCB Symposium - 12th December 2025 in UCD Village. Organised by Prof. Pat Guiry.

Speakers:

- Professor Benjamin Palmer (University of Bristol, UK)
- Professor Varinder Aggarwal (University of Bristol, UK)
- Professor Frank Glorius (University of Muenster, Germany)
- Professor Cristina Nevado (University of Zurich, Switzerland)
- Professor Declan Gilheany (UCD)

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](#).
