



VOICE OF INSTITIÚID
CEIMICE NA HÉIREANN

INSTITUTE OF CHEMISTRY OF IRELAND

20th December 2019

Dear Fellows, Members, Graduates and Associates,

Welcome to the VOICE, the annual Christmas newsletter of the Institute of Chemistry of Ireland.

As you know, the Institute of Chemistry of Ireland is the national professional body representing Chemists in Ireland. Its members are chemists who have satisfied the requirements of the Institute with regard to their qualifications and experience. The Institute also has responsibility for promoting the study of chemistry, sets professional standards and offers advice and comment to Government in areas relevant to the profession.

This is an exciting time to be part of the Institute and the chemistry community here in Ireland. The ICI is fortunate in having records of all its meetings dating back to the very first meeting, which was held on 15th May 1922. In 2022, the ICI will celebrate its 100th anniversary and will mark this impressive milestone by hosting the European Chemical Society (EuChemS) Congress here in Dublin.

A brief update in relation to the membership of Council, the ICI awards and some of the activities of the Institute is provided on the following pages.

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1. ICI Council Membership

May I first and foremost take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank our Council members for their unwavering dedication and commitment to the Institute. A special thanks to Dr. Patrick Hobbs as editor of the Irish Chemical News.

Council membership is currently as follows:

President (Professor C.J. Marmion, RCSI); Vice President (Professor P. Guiry, UCD); Immediate Past President (Professor J.F. Cassidy, TU Dublin); Honorary Secretary (Ms. M. Mullaghy); Honorary Treasurer (Dr. J.R. Keegan); Assistant Honorary Treasurer (Dr. E. McGarrigle, UCD); Registrar (Dr. O. Finlayson, DCU); Irish Chemical News Editor (Dr P.T. Hobbs); International Representative (Dr. A.A. Walshe)

Ordinary Members: Dr. R. Elmes, MU; Dr. E. Coyle, DCU; Dr. C. Quigley (GMIT); Ms. E. McCarron (State Laboratory); Dr. M. Kelada (Young Chemist Representative)

Additional members: Dr. R.G. Leonard; Dr. S.F. Ó Muircheartaigh

Regional Representatives: Dr. B.A. Murray (TU Dublin, East representative); Dr. S. Donegan (WIT, South East representative); Professor J.D. Glennon (UCC, South representative); Dr. T. Kennedy (UL, South West representative); Professor P. Crowley (NUIG, West representative); Dr. S. Reidy (AIT, Midlands representative); Professor P. Robertson (Northern Ireland representative)

2. ICI Awards

A highlight of the Institute each year is the awarding of several honours, as outlined below:

2.1 The Boyle Higgins Gold Medal and Lecture Award

One of the most prestigious honours that can only be bestowed on a member of the Institute is the Boyle Higgins Gold Medal and Lecture Award. This award, which was established in 1985, is an award for research work carried out in chemistry under the headings: (a) Pure Chemistry, (b) Applied and Industrial Chemistry or (c) Chemical Education. The award recognizes a chemist of any nationality working in Ireland or a chemist who is an Irish citizen working overseas who has made an outstanding and internationally recognised research contribution to the advancement of chemistry. On behalf of

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the Institute, may I congratulate **Professor Suresh Pillai (Sligo IT)** on being the recipient in 2019. Professor Pillai received his gold medal and delivered an outstanding award lecture entitled 'Materials in the Nanoscale; From the Laboratory to Industries' at a special ICI award ceremony held in RCSI on 11th April of this year.



Professor Suresh Pillai
Boyle Higgins Gold Medal
and Lecture Award Recipient 2019



Professor A.P. De Silva
Boyle Higgins Gold Medal
and Lecture Award Recipient 2020

A call for nominations for the 2020 award was sent out to all members of the Institute and to all Heads of Schools and Heads of Departments of Chemistry in July of this year. The Institute received a number of outstanding applications. All nominations were sent out for external review to three independent, international experts. All reviewers commented on the excellent standard of the nominations with one reviewer congratulating the Institute 'on such an exquisite choice of candidates'. I am delighted to announce that the recipient of the award for 2020 is **Professor A.P. De Silva (QUB)**. This will mark the 35th anniversary since the establishment of this award. We very much look forward to Professor De Silva's award lecture. Further details to follow early in the New Year.

2.2 The ICI Annual Award for Chemistry (Eva Philbin Public Lecture Series)

This award was inaugurated by the Institute of Chemistry of Ireland in 2005 and since 2007, is named in memory of the late Eva Philbin, who was Professor of Organic Chemistry at UCD. The award, consisting of a commemorative plaque, is made to a practicing chemist, who has made a significant contribution to the advancement of chemistry and who is also an excellent science communicator. The recipient may be employed in academia, industry or in the state sector. The purpose of this award is to promote the benefits of chemistry to the widest possible audience. The recipient presents their award lecture in Dublin and in two other locations in Ireland and the lectures must be open to the general public. Our warmest congratulations to **Professor Anita Maguire (UCC)** on being the 2018 recipient. Her award lecture was entitled 'Using Hazardous Reagents Safely - Go with the flow!'.



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There was an open call for nominations for this award again this year. Nominations were reviewed by three independent reviewers. It gives me great pleasure, on behalf of the Institute, to announce that the recipient of the award for 2019 is **Professor Declan McCormack from TU Dublin**. Further details in relation to Professor McCormack's lectures will be advertised in due course.



Professor Anita Maguire

ICI Annual Award for Chemistry

Eva Philbin Public Lecture Series Recipient 2018



Professor Declan McCormack

ICI Annual Award for Chemistry

Eva Philbin Public Lecture Series Recipient 2019

2.3 The ICI David Brown Award

This award was established in 2014 to honour Professor David Brown of University College Dublin in recognition of his enormous contribution to inorganic chemistry both nationally and internationally. Professor Brown, together with Professor Bill Davis (TCD) hosted the International Conference on Coordination Chemistry (ICCC) in UCD in 1974. With some funds remaining, Professor Brown set up what became known as the Greystones weekend meetings, which were held in the LaTouche Hotel in Greystones and later in a more formal setting, in Maynooth University, hosted by Dr Malachy McCann every three years until 2005. This was re-launched as a one day Inorganic Ireland Symposium and has been held approximately every two years since then. A highlight of this symposium is the presentation of the ICI David Brown award to a colleague who has made an outstanding contribution to inorganic chemistry. **Dr Malachy McCann** (then NUIM and now MU) received the inaugural ICI David Brown award in 2014. **Professor A. K. Powell** (Karlsruhe Institut fur Technologie, Germany) received the award in 2016. **Professor Sylvia Draper** (TCD) was the most recent recipient where she was presented with this award during the Inorganic Ireland Symposium, which was held in Queen's University Belfast in December 2018. Professor Draper delivered an outstanding award lecture entitled 'Molecular Aromatic Platforms (MAPS): unexpected destinations from somewhat coordinated journeys'.



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It is notable that 2026 will mark the historic return of the International Conference of Coordination Chemistry to Dublin, with special thanks to Professor Draper's efforts in spearheading a successful bid during the 43rd International Conference of Coordination Chemistry in Japan in 2018.



Dr Malachy McCann

ICI David Brown awardee 2014



Professor A. K. Powel

ICI David Brown awardee 2016



Professor Sylvia Draper

ICI David Brown awardee 2018

2.4 The ICI Postgraduate Award

This award is a relative new award of the Institute. First established in 2018, it recognises a registered PhD student in any Chemistry discipline working in an Irish Higher Education Institution. The student must have demonstrated excellence in research through publications. They must also have demonstrated a commitment to supporting and promoting Chemistry within their Institution (e.g. through active participation in public engagement initiatives).

Our warmest congratulations to **Ms Adele Gabba (NUIG)**, working under the supervision of Professor Paul Murphy (NUIG), on being a most worthy recipient of this inaugural postgraduate award. Ms Gabba received her award at a special award ceremony in RCSI in April 2019. She also delivered an outstanding award lecture at the 71st Irish Universities Chemistry Research Colloquium, which was jointly hosted by TU Dublin and RCSI on the 20th -21st June 2019. Adele also kindly agreed to represent the ICI as its **postgraduate ambassador**. In this regard, she surveyed Chemistry postgraduate students to get their feedback on how the ICI can better support them. While they welcomed the introduction of the postgraduate award, they would also like to receive travel grants to support their research. The ICI Council is currently analysing all of the results from this survey.

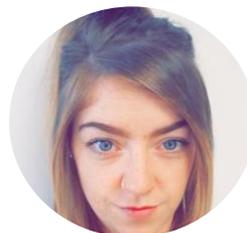
Again, there was an open call for this award in July 2019. I am delighted to announce that the second recipient of this award is **Ms Saoirse Dervin (Sligo IT)**. Saoirse was nominated by her supervisor,

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Professor Suresh Pillai. She will receive her award during a special award ceremony in RCSI in April 2020.



Pictured (from l to r):
Professor John Cassidy,
Ms Adela Gabba (ICI Postgraduate Awardee 2018)
and Professor Paul Murphy



Ms Saoirse Dervin
ICI Postgraduate Awardee 2019

Having a postgraduate award from the national professional body that represents all chemists in Ireland is highly prestigious. Our postgraduate students, many of whom will pursue postdoctoral research, are coming under more and more pressure to find ways in which to distinguish themselves from their competitors when pursuing new and exciting research opportunities upon completion of their PhD studies. I would encourage supervisors to avail of this wonderful opportunity by nominating their students for this prestigious award.

2.5 The ICI Second Level Education Award

The Second Level Education Award recognises a student who has achieved the highest grade in Ireland in their Leaving Certificate Honours Chemistry course. These students are presented with an ICI medal and their respective schools and teachers are provided with a Certificate from the Institute.

Warmest congratulations to **Ms Jessica Murphy** (Mount Mercy College, Model Farm Road, Co. Cork) and **Mr Corey Kissane** (St. Brendan's College, Killarney, Co. Kerry) on being the most recent recipients and to their schools and teachers. Both Jessica and Corey, together with their school principals, Chemistry teachers and proud parents attended the special ICI award ceremony in RCSI in April 2019 where they were awarded their medals which I have no doubt they will treasure. May I thank Ms Mary Mullaghy, our honorary secretary, who delivered a powerful insight into the rigorous review process conducted by the Department of Education and Skills into the selection of these worthy recipients during this award ceremony.



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Ms Jessica Murphy and Mr Corey Kissane

I am delighted to announce that the recipients of the ICI Second Level Education Award 2019 are Mr. **Óran O'Suillivan (Coláiste Choilm, Ballincollig, Co. Cork)** and **Mr. Brian Durkan (St. Muredach's College, Ballina, Co. Mayo)**. We look forward to welcoming Óran and Brian to RCSI in April 2020 where they will be presented with their ICI medals during a special award ceremony.

3. The 44th ICI Annual Congress

The first ICI Congress entitled 'Pharmaceutical and Fine Chemical Industry' was hosted by UCD in May 1976. This Congress has been running annually since then, with the exception of two years. On behalf of the Institute, may I take this opportunity to congratulate Dr Robert Elmes who hosted the 44th ICI Annual Congress in his home Institution, Maynooth University on 20th May 2019. The program, which comprised oral and poster presentations covered a broad range of topics under the general theme 'Molecular Sensing and Imaging'. Speakers included Prof. Eric Anslyn (University of Texas, Austin, USA), Prof. A. P. De Silva (QUB), Prof. Frances Heaney (MU), Dr. Susan Quinn (UCD), Prof. Donal O'Shea (RCSI), Prof. Silvia Giordani (DCU), Prof. Dmitri Papkovsky (UCC), Prof. Thorri Gunnlaugsson (TCD) and Prof. Tia Keyes (DCU). With over 70 delegates and 7 industrial sponsors, the attendees were treated to a day full of ground breaking chemistry research. Several prizes were also awarded to early career researchers for the presentation of their work.

If you are interested in hosting the 45th Congress of the Institute, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please contact me directly by email at president@instituteofchemistry.org or cmarmion@rcsi.com



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4. 71st Irish Universities Chemistry Research Colloquium

The 71st Irish Universities Chemistry Research Colloquium was jointly hosted by TU Dublin and RCSI on the 20th-21st June 2019. Professor John Cassidy (TU Dublin) and Dr Darren Griffith (RCSI) were co-chairs of the local organising committee. Congratulations to this committee on hosting this highly successful Colloquium, which was much enjoyed by over 170 postgraduate students and staff. Amongst the highlights of the colloquium were two outstanding plenary lectures delivered by Professor Luuk van der Wielen, Director, Bernal Institute and Chair of Biosystems Engineering & Design, University of Limerick and Distinguished Professor for Biobased Economy, TU Delft, The Netherlands and Dr. Francesca Paradisi, Professor in Pharmaceutical and Bioorganic Chemistry, University of Bern, both of whom delivered lectures related to the topic of sustainability. This was particularly pertinent given that sustainability was the theme of the Colloquium. Another highlight was a round table panel discussion with industrial and mentors experts which included Brian Glennon (APC), Brenda Moore, (TE Laboratories), Bernie Capraro (Intel), and Amanda Daly (SFI).

5. EuChemS Congress 2022

As stated earlier, in 2022, the ICI will celebrate its 100th anniversary and will mark this impressive milestone by hosting the European Chemical Society (EuChemS) Congress here in Dublin. This Society, as you know, is an umbrella organisation representing national Chemical Societies (including the ICI) and other chemistry-related organisations in Europe (<https://www.euchems.eu/>). Their Congresses typically attract in excess of 1500 delegates from around the world. What a wonderful opportunity for us to highlight all that is best about chemistry here in Ireland. This is a significant and exciting undertaking for the Institute. We will soon be reaching out to our chemistry community in Ireland for your support and expertise. Professor Thorfinnur (Thorri) Gunnlaugsson has kindly agreed to chair the Local Organising Committee. Our thanks to Professor Patrick Guiry (ICI Vice-President) who represented the ICI at the most recent EuChemS General Assembly at the Politehnica University of Bucharest, Romania in October 2019. Further details in relation to the Congress will be made available on the ICI website (currently under review), by email correspondence and/or in the Irish Chemical News which is circulated by email to all ICI members.

In the meantime, may I draw your attention to the EuChemS Chemistry Congress taking place in Lisbon, Portugal from 30th August – 3rd September 2020 (<https://www.euchems2020.org/>). Following



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consultation with ICI members and Heads of Schools and Departments of Chemistry, Council has already nominated a number of colleagues from our Irish chemistry community as potential convenors and speakers. Professor John Cassidy is also on the International Scientific Committee for this Congress.

Finally, may I thank you for your ongoing support. I look forward to further engaging with you during my term as President over the coming months. If you wish to provide any feedback, please do not hesitate to contact me by email at president@instituteofchemistry.org or cmarmion@rcsi.com.

In the meantime, on behalf of Council, may I wish you and your loved ones every happiness and good health for 2020.

Yours sincerely,

Celine Marmion

Professor Celine J. Marmion FICl
President, Institute of Chemistry of Ireland

