



Media Release

For immediate release

Monday September 14, 2020

A Chemistry Conference in the Time of COVID-19

It's clean, it's green and it's on screen.

Macquarie University is proud to host the Science Teachers Association NSW 2020 K-12 Chemistry Conference. It's bringing real-world science to the classroom, to inspire the next generation of environmental science warriors.

The Online Conference, which kicks off on September 14, will be opened by Executive Dean of the Faculty of Science and Engineering, Professor Magnus Nydén.

"Conference Delegates will hear the latest research from Macquarie University about tackling the issues of plastic pollution, climate change and sustainability", says Professor Nydén.

A chemist by training, he has a long-standing interest in sustainability and the circular economy, and before taking up his current role, was Chief Technology Officer for an alternative fuels company.

Conference Convenor Oriana Miano says, "It's an honour to be working with some great thought leaders at Macquarie University for this year's chemistry conference, which will focus on tackling the big questions facing our society today. How do we apply what we know of chemistry to ensure a sustainable future?"

"We wanted to use the UN Sustainable Development Goals to frame the program for this conference so that teachers could be exposed to some of the latest innovations in green chemistry and hear from colleagues how to take this back to the classroom", says Ms Miano.

Ms Margaret Shepherd, President of the Science Teachers Association NSW, says, "Green chemistry is about looking after our planet using our resources in a sustainable way that reduces harm. It applies to all industries – industrial, manufacturing, medicine, pharmaceuticals – and it should be ingrained into research and development. It needs to be part of our students' philosophy when they leave school to reduce our footprint on the planet".

Science Teachers from across the state can join in this conference online, in bite-sized chunks, over two weeks.

Starting from September 14, delegates can simply log on between 3:30 pm and 5:30pm every weekday, and enjoy the conference experience in comfort and safety. [Bookings are open for the full conference, and for single sessions.](#)

The aim is to contextualise Chemical World content in Stages 1 to 5 Science, and to examine concepts covered in Stage 6 Chemistry through this lens. This will provide teachers with professional learning experience which can help them to make real-world, relevant, authentic links in the classroom for their students.

There will also be a separate K-6 Primary program stream offered with a focus on Material World integrating Digital Technologies.

The keynote address will be delivered by Professor Alison Rodger, Head of Department, Department of Molecular Sciences, a world-leading biophysical spectroscopist and long term dedicated proponent of sustainable technology. She will be discussing sustainability and what it means in Australia.

Professor Rodger says, "I am delighted that we have been able to work together with the Science Teachers Association NSW to enable the conference to go ahead in an innovative way. We all need the encouragement of interacting with our professional communities – especially in challenging times. The conference theme is one close to our hearts in Molecular Sciences at Macquarie as much of our research and teaching at Macquarie is motivated by our passion to establish a sustainable future for the next generation of Australians. "

The conference draws on Macquarie University's expertise in synthetic biology research, as the home of the ARC Centre of Excellence in Synthetic Biology. Several speakers are involved in research that aims to create renewable biofuel sources.

Appropriately for an event taking place in a pandemic, there is also a strong health focus, with sessions on developing pharmaceuticals from bush medicines, nuclear medicine, the search for new antibiotics, and characterising amyloid proteins.

Conference Details

Science Teachers Association NSW Chemistry Conference

14 – 25 September – 3.30 - 5.30pm

Online via Zoom Webinars

Contact Details

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