

PFAS Alternatives Workshop Speakers

Royal Society of Chemistry, Burlington House, 6 February 2025



Maia Benstead, Technology Analyst at IDTechEx

Maia Benstead is a Technology Analyst at IDTechEx, currently focusing on sustainable technologies, with a particular interest in fuel cells and the hydrogen economy.

Prior to joining IDTechEx, Maia graduated from Durham University with an MChem (Masters of Chemistry). During her final year, Maia joined a research team at KU Leuven, Belgium, where she focused on the sustainable recycling of lithium-ion batteries using hydrometallurgical processing.



Emil Damgaard-Møller, PhD, Senior Consultant at the Danish Technological Institute

Emil Damgaard-Møller is a defining specialist within PFAS alternatives at the Danish Technological Institute (DTI). Having earned a PhD in materials chemistry from Aarhus University in 2020, Emil transitioned to DTI as a consultant. His career has been marked by diverse project involvements, with a dedicated focus on PFAS since the start of 2023.



Jonatan Kleimark, Head of Corporate Sustainability at ChemSec

Jonatan Kleimark has background as a PhD in organic chemistry and experience from working as a project manager within different sectors, including MedTech, automotive and pharmaceutical industry. At ChemSec, he coordinates the different projects and leads the work on PFAS, with a focus on safer alternatives to PFAS, as well as being responsible for the ChemSec Business Group.



Johann Liebeton, Business Development at BioHalo ApS

Johann Liebeton is a Business Developer at the start-up BioHalo in Copenhagen. He studied Biology at TU Darmstadt in Germany and Bioentrepreneurship in Copenhagen. At BioHalo, he works on the commercialization of biobased high-performance materials. Since 2020, he has been a Bioeconomy Youth Champion of the International Advisory Council on Global Bioeconomy (IACGB).



Professor Ian Kinloch, Chief Scientific Officer at the Henry Royce Institute and Professor at the Uni of Manchester

Professor Ian Kinloch became Professor of Materials Science at the University of Manchester in 2012. He has driven research strategy across a number of departments within the university and collaborated with researchers at other universities and in industry. He is recognised for taking a 'holistic' research approach that follows nanomaterials from their production through to their processing and ultimately to applications in the composites and the energy transition. His research bridges the academia-industrial divide with industrial collaborations including the co-development of a nanotube production route which was commercialised during his post-doctoral position at the University of Cambridge through to his recent RAEng Research Chair with Morgan Advanced Materials.

Since 2024, Ian has held the role Chief Scientific Officer at the Henry Royce Institute, where he leads Royce's national science research strategy, working with the Royce Research Area leads and their Steering Groups as they support national programmes and initiatives.



Priya Mandal, Research Fellow at University College London

Priya is a materials scientist specialising in interfacial science, bioinspired liquid-repellent coatings, and nanoengineered surfaces. My research focuses on the development of sustainable, multifunctional interfaces for applications in energy and healthcare, integrating fundamental principles with applied innovations. Currently, I am exploring advanced porous materials, such as metal-organic frameworks (MOFs) and covalent-organic frameworks (COFs), to engineer robust liquid-repellent surfaces. I hold a PhD in Physics from Shiv Nadar University, India, and currently working as a postdoctoral researcher at University College London (UCL).



Izzi Monk, Policy Advisor at the RSC

Izzi Monk is the Policy Adviser, Environment at the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC), the UK's professional body for the chemical sciences. She leads the organisation's policy portfolio on the circular economy of materials, which includes a focus on critical minerals, foundation materials and plastics. Before joining the RSC, Izzi read geology at the University of Edinburgh before training and working as a secondary school chemistry and physics teacher. She previously led the RSC's work on sustainability in the school chemistry curriculum before taking on her current role in science policy. Izzi also holds a research MSc in Sustainability and Behaviour Change with Liverpool John Moores University and the Centre for Alternative Technology. Her varied background in science, education and policy gives Izzi a unique perspective on sustainability challenges and the role the chemical sciences can play in tackling them.



Aysha Riaz, PhD student at University College London and Policy Intern at the RSC

Aysha is studying for a PhD in Chemistry from University College London working on transparent conducting oxide materials. She has now joined the University of Oxford chemistry department as a research assistant as she finishes her thesis. Before this, she undertook an internship at the RSC with the Policy team contributing to their efforts on PFAS regulation and managing hazardous electronic waste.



Amanda Rensmo, PhD student at Stockholm University

Amanda holds a BSc in Chemistry and Physics (Hope College, Michigan, US) and a MSc in Chemical Engineering (Uppsala university, Sweden). Her master thesis resulted in a critical review article on per- and polyfluorinated substances (PFAS) in lithium-ion batteries published in ESPI, which won their Outstanding Paper award in 2023. She has worked two years in the energy sector at the global consulting firm WSP. Amanda joined Stockholm University in June 2024 to pursue a PhD in the field of environmental science where the focus will be on PFAS in the so-called green energy technologies. She will survey the use of PFAS in these applications, explore possible alternatives and investigate the potential for PFAS emissions during recycling.



Dr. Karina Reynolds-Young, Senior Consultant at WSP

Karina is a senior consultant at WSP in the Environmental Policy and Economics team. Her main focus areas of work are chemicals and chemical policy, with a particular interest in persistent organic pollutants. Karina has supported both governments and industry in efforts to investigate PFAS. Her work has supported the PFAS restriction proposal, as well as enacting change within industry by highlight noncritical uses of PFAS. Karina is passionate about chemical policy and ensuring factual information is shared at an audience appropriate level. Karina enjoys consultancy as it gives her an opportunity to work on a number of projects with a variety of clients, and feels it provides an outlet to enact real world change.



Nuno Sereno PhD, Technical Manager at Victrex

Technical Manager within the Victrex R&D team, focused on developing application and technology solutions for Victrex High Performance Polymers across its markets. Prior to joining Victrex, completed a PhD and post-doctorate research in Food Science with the University of Nottingham.



Dr. Shubhi Sharma, Scientific Researcher at CHEM Trust

I work for CHEM Trust as their scientific researcher, mainly focusing on toxic and persistent chemicals such as PFAS and other EDCs. Prior to this, I worked at the University of Edinburgh as a research assistant and tutor in sustainable development for 5 years whilst doing my PhD in environmental studies.



Richard Shepherd CEng MWeldI, Consultant at AMI

Richard has an extensive background, and experience of engineering applications for Polymers in the Oil & Gas, Civil Engineering, Aerospace, Automotive and Medical sectors. Having trained as a Mechanical Engineer he was one of the founders of MERL (Materials Engineering Research Laboratory - now part of Element) before joining TWI. Most recently, as Subject Matter Expert for non-metallics at ExxonMobil he was responsible for materials selection and specification including safety critical sealing applications in upstream operations, currently he works with AMI to develop report and conference content.



Dr Alan Taylor, Technology Fellow at TWI

Alan is a Technology Fellow at TWI specialising in the characterisation of functional surfaces with a focus on durable repellent coatings. Over 29 years he has led over 200 industrial projects covering every sector.

He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry and the Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining. He is a board member of the Surface Engineering Leadership Forum; an expert reviewer for the EC; the EPSRC Future Leader Fellowship Scheme and has reviewed proposals for the Royal Society. His current interests centre on supporting industry to navigate through the changing environment related to PFAS.