

Outreach Newsletter: May 2024

Welcome to the May edition of our Outreach newsletter!

Please do pass this on to anyone who may be interested in receiving this bulletin. They are very welcome to subscribe using this [link](#). If you wish to be removed, please email outreach@chem.ox.ac.uk.

Thank you for reading!

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Upcoming Events:

School / Community Workshops **[UPDATE]**

Online Primary Workshop: Plastic Fantastic?

This workshop is for a class of students in Years 5/6 (England and Wales), P5/6 (Scotland) and P6/7 (NI) in a UK primary school. Co-led with the class teacher, the students will interact with Oxford Chemistry ambassadors via MS Teams or Zoom, whilst undertaking small-scale investigations using materials which have been sent to the school in advance.

Due to popular demand, we will be running an additional workshop this academic year on **Friday 24th May, 13.30–15.00**. Places are very limited so please ensure to book before the deadline of **Thursday 9th May**.

BOOK HERE!

Future Events:

KS5 Autumn Chemistry Conference **[NEW]**

We'll be holding our fifth Autumn Chemistry Conference on **Thursday 26th September 16.00–18.00 BST** at the **Inorganic Chemistry Laboratory, Department of Chemistry** (and streamed online). This will be open to all Year 12 and 13 students (or equiv., 16–19 yrs) and their teachers interested in finding out more about the cutting-edge currently research happening in the field of chemistry.

Students are welcome to attend in-person unaccompanied by a teacher provided that they are aged 16 or over on the day of the event and have provided emergency contact details. Priority will be given to local state schools. In-person registrations must be submitted by **11:00 BST on Tuesday 10th September**.

REGISTER HERE!

About the speakers:

Calum Patel is a DPhil student with the Gouverneur Group at the University of Oxford, Department of Chemistry. He completed his Master's degree in Chemistry at Imperial College London and has also studied and worked at F. Hoffman La Roche in Basel, the University of British Columbia, and the SBM CDT in Oxford. His current research looks into the development of novel fluorination methods.



Associate Professor Amy Styring is a Professor of Archaeological Science at St. Cross College and Head of the Stable Isotope Lab. Her research focuses on carbon and nitrogen isotope analysis of human and animal bones and charred plant remains recovered from archaeological sites and use the carbon and nitrogen isotope values of individual amino acids in their proteins to improve predictions of human and animal diet. Her research interests centre on isotopic analysis of plant, animal and human remains, reconstruction of past subsistence practices and land use.



Oxford College Workshops **[REPEAT]**

You are warmly invited to request a **College Workshop** when arranging a group visit with a College. Find out about your link colleges [here](#). *If you do not hear back from your link college within 14 days, do get in touch directly with us.*

Unlock the OxBox – Graffiti Game

A new puzzle box workshop for Year 9 (13–14 yrs), featuring a series of practical and theoretical problems. Minimum of 12 students, state schools please.



Unlock the OxBox – Poison Puzzle

This is for KS4 (14–16 yrs) and is a series of practical and theoretical chemistry problems. Minimum of 12 students, state schools please.

“It is fantastic for the students to have this opportunity to apply their knowledge to a problem-solving activity and so enjoyable for them.” – Teacher

Unlock the OxBox – The Lab Lurker

A series of practical and theoretical chemistry problems for KS5 (16–19 yrs) students. Would suit a class where at least half of the students are studying A level (or equivalent) in Chemistry. Minimum 12 students (at least six studying Chemistry A level, or equivalent), state schools please.

You can mix and match Graffiti Game, Poison Puzzle and Lab Lurker puzzle boxes for groups including Year 9, KS4 and KS5 students, as long as there is a minimum of 12 students in total (a minimum of three from a Key Stage is required).

Top of the Bench Thames Valley Regional Heats 2025 **[NEW]**

Registration is now open for the Thames Valley section regional heat of the 2025 RSC Top of the Bench competition, taking place at the **Chemistry Teaching Laboratory, University of Oxford** on **Wednesday 15th January 2025**.

The competition is free to enter and is open to teams of 4 pupils (two from Year 9 and one each from Years 10 and 11). The day will involve a practical lab challenge and a careers talk. The winning team will go through to represent the Thames Valley region in the national finals.

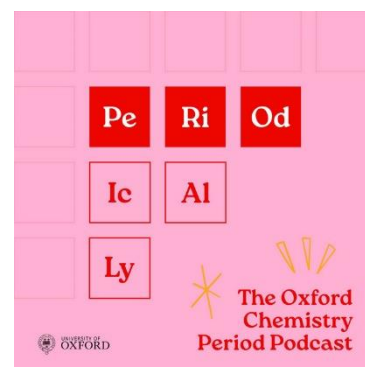
There are bursaries available to support state school attendance. The programme will take place during the school day and lunch will be provided. Teams need to be accompanied by an adult (this does not have to be chemistry teacher).

Please apply using [this form](#) (use [this link](#) to check if your school is in the Thames Valley region).

Other Opportunities:

PERIODically Podcast **[NEW]**

PERIODically is a podcast created by undergraduate and postgraduate Chemistry students at the University of Oxford to discuss their experiences of how having a period has affected their time studying Chemistry. The podcast aims to discuss how the physicality and intensive nature of chemistry study can be affected by symptoms of periods (such as cramps, mental health and medical issues) and seeks to shed light on these problems, tackle stereotypes and misconceptions, and start a conversation on how study can be improved for those with periods.



Season 1 is available to listen to now, with Season 2 launching shortly! You can find further information and links to listen [here](#).

RSC Women in Chemistry **[REPEAT]**

In-between our scheduled RSC Women in Chemistry events, a reminder that there are lots of exciting opportunities to participate in practical work, including Science Clubs. Do keep an eye on our [website](#) and [Twitter](#) for further information on future events and activities!

The Big Oxplore Video Competition 2024 [REPEAT]

Entries are now open for the 2024 Oxplore Video Competition, open to students at non-selective UK state secondary schools. Entrants should produce a short video response to this year's question 'Should cars be banned in your region?'. There are two categories for years 7-9 (3-minute video) and years 10-13 (5-minute video), with the first prize in each category being £100 in Amazon vouchers.



Further information and guidance on how to submit can be found [here](#). The deadline for submissions is **11:59 BST on Friday 3rd May**.

St Johns Chemistry Inspire Study Day [REPEAT]

Applications are now open for the St John's Inspire Chemistry Study Day on Thursday 6th June 2024. The day will feature talks and workshops led by Chemistry tutors, along with the information about the Oxford course, admissions tips and the opportunity to meet current St John's students.

The Study Days are open to high-achieving Year 12 students at non-selective state schools. Participants must be predicted to achieve at least AAA at A-level (or equivalent). Lunch is provided but students must make their own travel arrangements to and from Oxford.



The application for can be found [here](#). The deadline for applications is **midday on Wednesday 8th May 2024**.

Work experience [REPEAT]

It is with regret that we are unable to offer work experience placements in the 2023-24 academic year. We do understand that many students are keen to undertake work experience having had these opportunities severely curtailed in the pandemic. We are hopeful to be able to offer placements in the future, which will be advertised via our website. Please do not send us unsolicited requests for work experience opportunities in the meantime, thank you.

Learning Resource: 19th Century Medicine Chest [NEW]

While researching the 19th century as part of the *Into the Blue* theme of our Building Bridges project this year, we stumbled upon this fascinating artefact housed at the History of Science Museum in Oxford. DPhil in Biological Sciences Sophie Andrews shows us the typical contents of such a 19th century medicine chest – including ‘Bark Powder’ – one variant of which contained willow bark (a nice fact for your A level chemists to contemplate!) – as well as the opioid-based laudanum, smelling salts and apothecary weights. You can explore the contents [here](#).

