

DPHil Studentship in Organic Synthetic Chemistry and Functional Materials

Title: Dynamic Processes in Organic Functional Materials

Supervisors: Professor Paul R. McGonigal & Dr Alyssa-Jennifer Avestro

Start date: 1st October 2026

Applications are invited for a **DPHil studentship** in **Synthetic and Physical Organic Chemistry** available from October 2026, to work under the supervision of **Prof. Paul McGonigal and Dr Alyssa-Jennifer Avestro** in the Department of Chemistry at the University of Oxford.

The studentship will cover course fees at the Home rate and provide a stipend of no less than the standard UK Research Council rate (currently set at £20,780 p.a.) for 3.5 years in the first instance.

Please note the eligibility criteria set out by the UKRI at:

<https://www.ukri.org/what-we-do/developing-people-and-skills/esrc/funding-for-postgraduate-training-and-development/eligibility-for-studentship-funding/>. The funding is capped at the Home fees rate only. However, all applicants who apply by the 8th January deadline would be automatically considered for funding from Oxford's university-wide scholarship programme, which provides a number of scholarships to outstanding Home and Overseas applicants on a competitive basis.

Research in the McGonigal and Avestro groups focuses on investigating dynamic covalent and noncovalent bonding interactions of strained molecules (including polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons), chiral macrocycles and/or aromatic cations relevant to applications in organic materials. There will also be continuation of ongoing work in, e.g., [shapeshifting molecules](#), [dynamic stereochemistry](#), [strained aromatic cations](#), redox-active helicenes or chiral π -conjugated macrocycles.

Candidates with a first-class or strong upper second-class undergraduate degree in Chemistry are encouraged to apply. The candidate is expected to have a strong commitment to research, synthetic experience, and should have demonstrated the ability to independently learn new skills. The successful applicant will be based in the Chemistry Research Laboratory, Oxford.

Candidates should submit a formal application for DPhil in Chemistry via the Oxford online application system:

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/applying-to-oxford>

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/dphil-chemistry>

Please quote **PRM/Chem/2026** under 'Departmental Studentship Applications'.

Application deadline: **12.00 noon UK time on Thursday 8th January 2026**

Queries relating to the application and admission process should be directed to: graduate.admissions@chem.ox.ac.uk; tel.: +44 (0) 1865 272569.

The Department of Chemistry holds the Athena SWAN Silver Award and the McGonigal and Avestro groups are dedicated to promoting diversity, equality and inclusion.