

## GreenCHEM Kick-off - Better Together

Start Time: Thursday, October 26, 2023

End Time:



On October 6th was the kick-off of GreenCHEM. The motto of the evening was “better together”, and it was evident on this night in many different ways. The room was filled with an unusual optimism about the promise of collaboration and partnerships in the field of Green Chemistry.

After a musical interlude of the song “Better Together” by Jack Johnson, the evening began with an inspiring talk from GreenCHEM director Martin Rahmel, outlining the background, goals, and partners of GreenCHEM. It was followed by talks by Dr. Ramón Kucharzak from the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), Prof. Dr.-Ing. Stephan Völker, Vice President for Research and Appointments at TU Berlin and representative of the Berlin University Alliance (BUA), and Dr. Henry Marx, State Secretary for Science in the State of Berlin.

As a special guest, Green Chemistry pioneer Prof. Dr. John C. Warner took part in the launch event and offered some heartening words: “Change doesn’t happen by wanting it, but by doing it – and Green Chemistry does a lot of work. Chemistry has one language and brings everyone together. And Berlin is the Silicon Valley of Green Chemistry.”

**What is GreenCHEM?**

[GreenCHEM](#) is a consortium consisting of the three Berlin universities (FU, HU, TU) and 26 other partners from industry, science, and government institutions. “The goal is to build an ecosystem for innovations in Green Chemistry in the Berlin region,” says GreenCHEM director Martin Rahmel. Creative, forward-looking ideas are supported in “research push” and “industry pull” formats, with a focus on scientific spin-offs (start-ups and spin-offs). In addition, the concept of Green Chemistry is being carried into society in the form of teaching and further training in order to stimulate change towards a new type of chemistry that uses sustainable, non-toxic resources and follows a circular economy. The project is funded by the BMBF with ten million euros as part of the T!Raum program.

### The Green Chemistry Commitment

The Green Chemistry Commitment (GCC), initiated by [Beyond Benign](#) in 2013, was developed as a framework for international cooperation within the Green Chemistry industry. The Beyond Benign Association was founded in 2007 by Amy Cannon and John C. Warner. The GCC's goal is to bring Green Chemistry into higher education and provide scientists with the skills necessary to develop products that are less dangerous to human health and the environment. TU Berlin was the first European university to sign the GCC in January 2021. Prof. Dr. Martin Kaupp, deputy managing director of the Institute of Chemistry at TU Berlin said: “Since signing the Green Chemistry Commitment, it has already enriched our master’s degree program with Green Chemistry.” As part of the kick-off event, HU Berlin and FU Berlin have now joined the 138 universities that have signed the GCC. This means that there are now eight European universities in the network. “We are pleased to join a community of like-minded people,” said Prof. Dr. Mathias Christmann, Managing Director of the Institute of Chemistry at the Free University of Berlin. Prof. Dr. Christoph Arenz, Managing Director of the Institute of Chemistry at HU Berlin, added: “My hope is that sustainability is taken into account with every new discovery in chemistry.”

In the spirit of “better together” – let’s keep working together for a better and more sustainable future for chemistry!

Congratulations to everyone at GreenCHEM and all the best ahead!