

# FemChem Newsletters

Issue 1, February 2019



## FEMCHEM ACTIVITIES 2018

### From the Kick Off to the first Board Elections

2018 has been an exciting year for FemChem. It started with the Kick Off Meeting in April, where major decisions on the future structure and directions were made. Different activities followed: Scientific presentations and networking at the 1<sup>st</sup> FemChem Scientific Workshop, Brigitte Ratzer's workshop on Identity and Diversity, and the Annual Meeting in November. Throughout the year, the FemChem members gathered for several meetings to push the FemChem initiative forward, as well as for the collegial FemChem lunches once a month. Finally, the Kick Off phase was concluded with the first Board and Chair Elections. FemChem is now looking forward to 2019, which promises to become a very special year due to the "100 years of female students at TU Wien" anniversary and its interesting activities.



### A Look Back at 2018 ...

- Apr. 6<sup>th</sup> Kick Off Meeting
- June 25<sup>th</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> FemChem Scientific Workshop
- Oct. 10<sup>th</sup> "Identity & Diversity" Workshop with Brigitte Ratzer
- Nov. 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting
- Nov. 29<sup>th</sup> Board Elections
- 8 Travel Grants Awarded

### ... and Forward to 2019!

- Jan. 23<sup>rd</sup> Zsigmondy Medal for Ingrid Steiner
- Jan. 30<sup>th</sup> "Von Frau zu Frau" (Sabine Seidler, Simone Knaus)
- June 14<sup>th</sup> Presentation of FemChem (in the framework of "100 Years Female Students at TU Wien")

# STRIKING NEW PATHS – SHAPING FEMCHEM'S FUTURE

Kick Off Meeting // April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018

CONCLUDING FEMCHEM'S INITIAL START-UP PHASE, a Kick Off meeting was held in April 2018 to present the initiative to other women within the faculty besides the original core team (2 women of each institute + 1 representative from the Committee on Equal Treatment) and motivate them to join in and actively participate. Additionally, strategic decisions on FemChem's future structure, overall concept and possible activities were made.

Summing up briefly, **FemChem's new structure** consists of **4 different working groups**, each with its own duties. Every active member can assign herself to one of the groups and will then take part in their meetings, where new ideas, activities and initiatives are discussed, planned and prepared. Fundamental strategic decisions are made within the **FemChem Board**, consisting of 3 women of each working group plus one chairwoman.

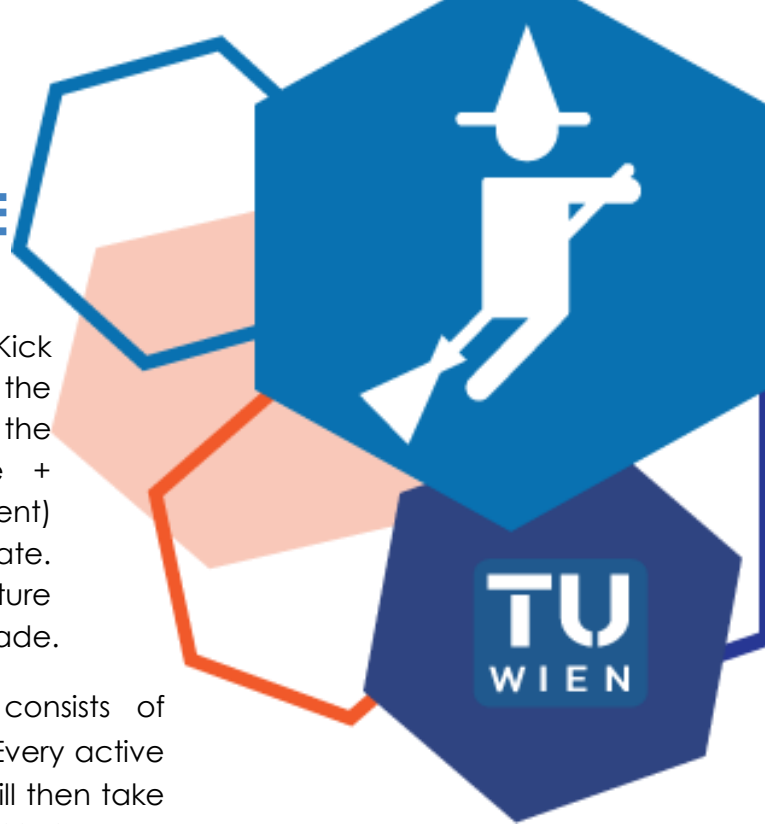
The duties and responsibilities of the **working groups** were also defined in the Kick Off Meeting:

Starting from simple questions (e.g. Is your working situation at TCH different, just because you are a woman? Do you experience this as advantageous or disadvantageous?), the **Identity & Diversity** working group aims to increase awareness of our own behavior and the environment we work in. This will be accomplished by discussions, experience exchange and self-monitoring, as well as establishing links to similar activities and organizations.

FemChem's **Competence Enhancement** team wants to enable female researchers at the TU Wien by offering free education to enhance their skill-set. They organize free custom-built seminars with highly qualified lecturers for female researchers at TU Wien. The complete planned program consists of courses focusing on hard skills (so far: software training), as well as soft skills (rhetorical skills, conflict management, strategic thinking, business english, ect.) and the transition from university to industry (job application training for chemists).

The **Networking** team primarily seeks to provide networking opportunities for women within the faculty. They induce interaction in different levels and areas (scientific, social and structural) by organizing various events e. g. scientific workshops, interviews ("Von Frau zu Frau") or get-togethers in a casual atmosphere. Furthermore, they strongly encourage interaction between female colleagues to yield joint project proposals, workshops and provide an open dialog on current issues and hot topics of our faculty.

The **Communication & Information** team of FemChem is concerned with spreading news and information about our activities to both all the women being an active part of FemChem as well as the general public. One of our main duties is setting up the FemChem webpage and keeping it up to date, as well as taking care of the E-Mail correspondence. We also support the work of the other FemChem groups by sharing their news and activities on the webpage.

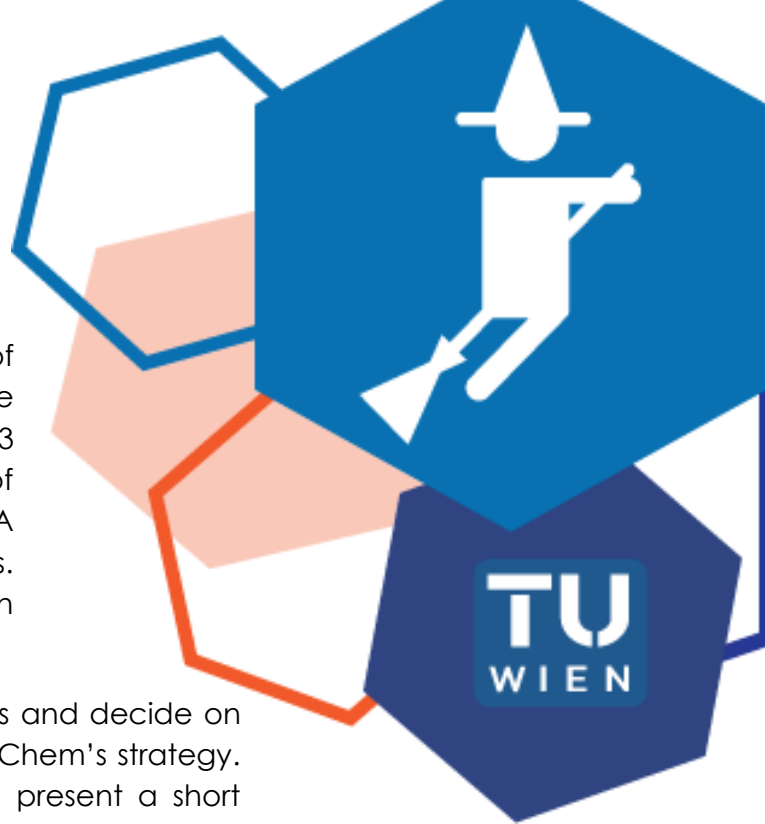


# WE PROUDLY PRESENT OUR FIRST FEMCHEM BOARD!

Board Elections // November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018

THE FIRST FEMCHEM BOARD was elected at the end of November for a duration of two years. The active members of each FemChem working group nominated 3 women to be their representatives in the Board, one of those becoming the speaker of the working group. A chair was then elected from among the Board members. Therefore, the Board consists of 13 women (3 for each working group plus one chair).

The FemChem Board is now meeting monthly to discuss and decide on further events and activities, as well as to develop FemChem's strategy. Moreover, the representatives of each working group present a short overview of the work that has been done in their group lately, keeping the other groups up to date. Two of the first actions of the Board were to install a jury for the decisions on the travel grants as well as a working group to develop FemChem's internal rules of procedure.



## The results of the first Board elections in detail:

**Chair:** Bettina Mihalyi

### Identity & Diversity

Anne Kasper-Giebl (Speaker)  
Silvia Larisegger  
Erna Zukic

### Competence Enhancement

Elise Zerobin (Speaker)  
Bettina Baumgartner  
Yazgan Mete

### Networking

Karin Wieland (Speaker)  
Clara García Yago  
Vanessa Nürnberger

### Communication & Information

Noelia Barrabés Rabanal (Speaker)  
Angela Miltner  
Vera Truttmann

**Representative of the Committee on Equal Treatment:** Annette Foelske-Schmitz

**Representative of the Senate:** Simone Knaus

## Further Active FemChem Members:

### Identity & Diversity

Raquel De Oro Calderon  
Annette Foelske-Schmitz  
Susanne Strobl

### Competence Enhancement

Katharina Ehrmann  
Simone Knaus  
Ayse Nur Koyun  
Teresa Seifried  
Sophia Steinbacher

### Networking

Viktoria Dorrer  
Gulnara Eshmatova  
Karin Föttinger  
Heidi Halbwirth  
Golta Khatibi  
Astrid Mach-Aigner  
Martina Marchetti-Deschmann

### Communication & Information

Stefanie Taibl  
Sabine Kubicek

# 1<sup>ST</sup> FEMCHEM SCIENTIFIC WORKSHOP

June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018

WITHIN THE SCOPE of the FemChem initiative, the 1. Scientific Workshop for women at the faculty of Technical Chemistry took place on the 25<sup>th</sup> of June 2018. With more than 45 participants, 30 scientific talks and numerous posters, the event can be considered a great success.



In the very nice surroundings of the TUtheSky, the workshop brought together female researchers from almost all scientific areas of our faculty. We were happy that Rector Sabine Seidler, Vice Rector Anna Steiger and Dean Herbert Danninger could attend the event, giving them the opportunity to see highly motivated and dedicated female researcher presenting their work.

Although having been an intense day, the meeting gave the attending women the opportunity to get a good overview on the scientific activities of their colleagues, as well as the chance to get to know each other better and to establish new contacts. Following the oral contributions, the pleasant atmosphere of the event lead to lively scientific discussions and the exchange of personal work experience. The day was concluded with finger food and drinks enjoying the beautiful view from the terrace.



# IDENTITY & DIVERSITY WORKSHOP

by Brigitte Ratzer // October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2018

ON OCTOBER 18<sup>TH</sup>, 2018, the first FemChem workshop on the topic "Identity & Diversity" was held by Brigitte Ratzer, the head of the office for gender competence. According to previous observations, about 40% of the Technical Chemistry students are women, but hardly any of them pursues a career at TU Wien. Furthermore, to appoint even a single woman to a professorship in chemistry, a special professorship for which only women could apply had to be announced.

Only from their daily routine (study/work/science), it cannot be determined how things are any different for women. Nobody (openly) states that they are not welcome here. Nobody (openly) doubts their abilities and potential. And yet, still, something is not working out.

This workshop was directed to the participants reflecting their own approaches towards this topic, also taking into account the real statistics, facts and results of previous studies. Those studies dealt with questions like "What difference/disadvantages do I have to deal with as a woman? Do I experience my working conditions differently because I am a woman? Does this provide opportunities for me or rather result in drawbacks? What is the cause for these differences? Within 2019, the looking for answers to these questions will be pursued.

## TRAVEL GRANTS FOR FEMALE STUDENTS

2018: 8 Travel Grants approved

IN 2018, 8 TRAVEL GRANTS were awarded to female Master and PhD students of the faculty of Technical Chemistry. This initiative was started by FemChem and Dean Herbert Danningner in 2016 and aims to support the career of female researchers already at an early stage by enabling them to present their work at conferences or workshops.

We very much want to congratulate the **recipients of the 2018 travel grants:**

Elisabeth Fitz

Edita Rados

Ariana Giesriegl

Barbara Lucia Roth

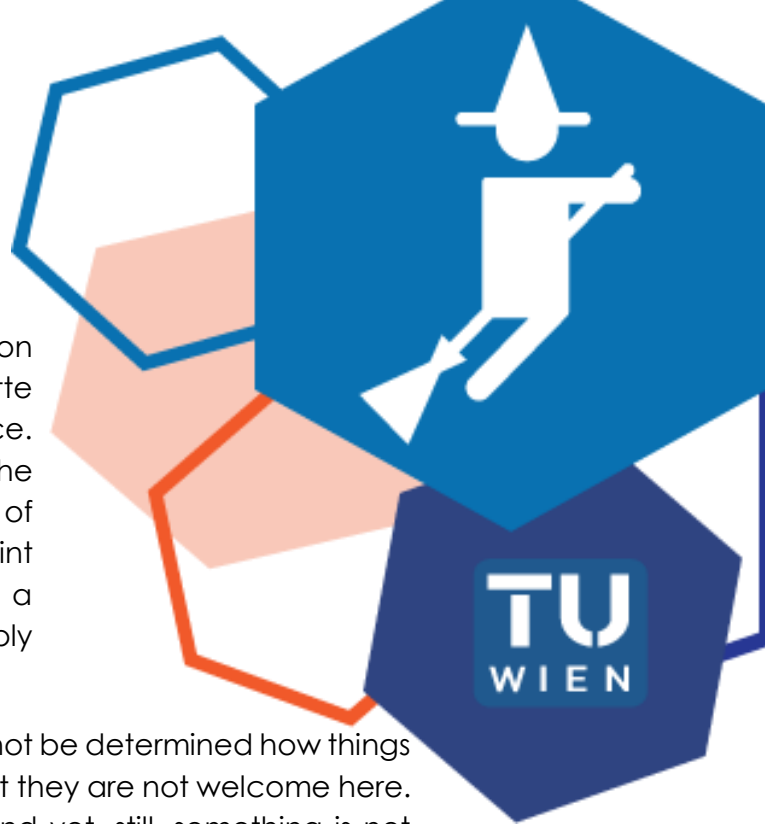
Nicole Houszka

Karin Wieland

Anna Magdalena Mauerhofer

Erna Zukic

FemChem also wants to thank the dean's office for providing the financial means. All information about the criteria and the application forms can be found at <http://www.femchem.chemie.tuwien.ac.at/>.



# ANNUAL MEETING

November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018

2018'S ANNUAL FEMCHEM MEETING took place in the Kontaktraum Gußhausstraße. Besides lots of active FemChem members and other interested women of our faculty, we were also very happy to welcome Dean Herbert Danninger and Helga Gartner.

After some opening words and a presentation on women's advancement inside the faculty of Technical Chemistry by the Dean Herbert Danninger, Bettina Mihalyi explained the origins and the previous journey of FemChem: Starting in October 2016 with a first meeting with the Dean, a start-up group consisting of 2 representatives from each institute and a representative from the Committee on Equal Treatment installed a kind of women's representation called "FemChem", which first actions were to draw up guidelines for the travel scholarships and to design the logo\*. FemChem then continuously extended over the next 2 years to a group of nearly 30 women and the first milestones were reached:

- first FemChem seminar in August 2017 – content alignment of FemChem and first base extension
- FemChem Kick Off in April 2018 – implementation of a structure for FemChem towards realization
- 1<sup>st</sup> Scientific Workshop in June 2018 – for internal networking and further broadening of the base

Additionally, representatives of the four FemChem working groups (Identity & Diversity, Competence Enhancement, Networking, Communication & Information) talked about their respective previous and current projects. The presentation session was then concluded by Helga Gartner, who gave us a first insight in the program of 2019's 100 years anniversary of female students at TU Wien (see also the "Outlook" part of our newsletter for details). Finally, we had a small get-together next to some finger food and drinks provided by the Dean's office, which allowed for further questions and discussions.

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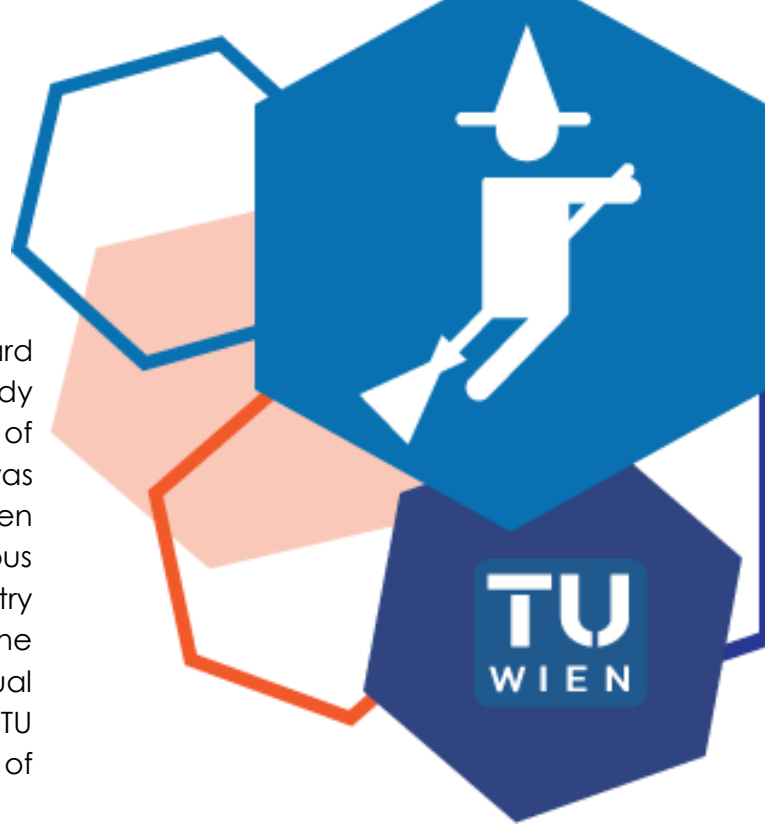
## Why is the FemChem logo showing a witch?

From history, the witch is a symbol for women with magic power and for their persecution. In a modern interpretation, the witch embodies women with special knowledge and an alternative way of life beyond the normed society.

# ZSIGMONDY MEDAL FOR INGRID STEINER

January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2019

NAMED AFTER THE NOBEL PRIZE LAUREATE Richard Zsigmondy, who studied at TU Wien, the Zsigmondy medal honors extraordinary efforts for the faculty of Technical Chemistry at TU Wien. This year, the medal was awarded to Ao.Univ.-Prof.i.R. Ingrid Steiner, who has been working at TU Wien for almost 40 years, fulfilling various functions (professor, head of institute, food chemistry research group leader, works committee). Additionally, she has always been very active in fighting for equal opportunities for women and men, being chairperson of TU Wien's Committee on Equal Treatment and part of FemChem's core team until her retirement in 2017.



# FIRST ITERATION OF “VON FRAU ZU FRAU“

January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019

FOR THE VERY FIRST FEMCHEM „Von Frau zu Frau“ discussion session, we were pleased to welcome our rector Univ.Prof. Sabine Seidler and the first Vice Chairwoman of the Senat Ao.Univ.Prof. Simone Knaus on the podium. As both are not only high-ranking scientists, but also leading representatives of the senior governing bodies of TU Wien next to the university council, the topics of the interview not only focused on their personal background and career history but also on the situation within the TU Wien. Thereby, the attending women (especially the students, whose majority has not been in contact with these university structures so far) were able to get a basic understanding of the specific duties of both rectorate and senate, as well as a rough outlook on TU Wien's development in the nearer future.



We especially want to thank both speakers for their willingness to participate in our „Von Frau zu Frau“ discussion session, and answer our many questions both very honestly and thoroughly. Moreover, we are especially pleased that they offered us to repeat this interview sometime in the future!

Based on the positive feedback by both the speakers and the attendees, FemChem will pursue this format on a regular basis in the future. We encourage you all to attend!

# WHAT'S NEXT?

Join us for our upcoming activities!

## 100 years female students at TU Wien

On April 17<sup>th</sup>, 1919, a decree first allowed women to officially study at TU Wien. Now, 100 years later, TU Wien aims to remember and celebrate its first female footsteps with a tightly packed event schedule throughout the whole year 2019. Within that, on June 14<sup>th</sup>, FemChem will be first presented to a broader audience.

For more information on the anniversary program, please refer to the official website: <http://dietechnik.at/veranstaltungen/>

## FemChem Website // We are online!!

After lots of work and effort by our Communication & Information team, we are pleased to announce that our FemChem website is finally online! You can find detailed information about what we are & what we offer online at <http://www.femchem.chemie.tuwien.ac.at/>!

Questions? Want to join us? You can always contact us at our FemChem mail address: [femchem@tuwien.ac.at](mailto:femchem@tuwien.ac.at). We are looking forward to hearing from you!

## Enhance your skill set // FemChem Seminars

FemChem's Competence Enhancement team has recently sent out a poll to find out how many women want to take part in seminars on "The proper quick response", "Persuasion Skills" and "Origin Software Training". A date for the first workshop will be announced soon.



## TU Austria Mädchenpreis // Deadline Feb. 15<sup>th</sup>

The TU Austria (association of the 3 technical universities in Austria; TU Wien, TU Graz and Montanuniversität Leoben) is looking for entries in their competition "Technikerinnen der Zukunft". Therefore, all girls currently attending an Austrian school in 9<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> grade are encouraged to think about the women in technology inspiring them most. For participating in the competition, they must upload a portray of the chosen role model (the format can be freely chosen: poster with collage, text, video, audio ...) to the website <http://www.tuaustria.ac.at/technikerinnen>. The 10 best entries will be chosen by a jury of university professors and receive prize money in an award ceremony at TU Wien in April.

All further information on the competition can also be found at the given website (in German). The **deadline** has been extended until **Feb. 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019**.



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