

Press release

For immediate release

## HKU Chemist Dr HE Jian honoured in the Croucher Innovation Awards 2021

December 8, 2021

Dr HE Jian, Assistant Professor at the Department of Chemistry and State Key Laboratory of Synthetic Chemistry, Faculty of Science of The University of Hong Kong (HKU) was presented with the Innovation Award 2021 by the Croucher Foundation, in recognition of his excellent scientific research achievements.

The objective of the Innovation Award is to identify a small number of exceptionally talented scientists from all countries working at an internationally competitive level and to offer substantial support to these “rising stars” at a formative stage in their careers. The Croucher Innovation Awards are designed to enable recipients to pursue their own scientific, intellectual and professional inclinations, to advance their expertise, to engage in bold new work, and to contribute to the development of education and research in Hong Kong.

### About Dr He's research work and biography

While numerous organic transformations have been achieved in homogeneous catalytic systems over the past decades, the needs for addressing their synthetic limitations, such as high catalyst loadings, poor selectivity, and employment of toxic and expensive reagents, represent challenges and opportunities for the coming generation of chemists. With a wide range of expertise in organic chemistry, inorganic chemistry, and materials science, Dr He and his team have successfully developed several stable and highly reactive heterogeneous copper catalysts for radical coupling reactions. The catalyst loadings are about 100 times lower than those of their homogeneous counterparts, paving the way for large-scale synthetic applications. Supported by the Croucher Foundation, Dr He's research team will design and synthesize a series of novel metal-organic framework and nanocluster-based heterogeneous catalysts to tackle multiple long-standing problems in organic synthesis.

Dr He Jian's biography can be accessed here: <https://bit.ly/3Du5ABt>

### About Croucher Innovation Awards

First presented in 2012, the Croucher Innovation Awards aim to identify a small number of exceptionally talented scientists working at an internationally competitive level and to offer substantial support to these “rising stars” at a formative stage in their careers. The Awards are designed to enable recipients to pursue their own scientific, intellectual and professional inclinations, to advance their expertise, to engage in bold new work, and to contribute to the development of education and research in Hong Kong. Each award carries a value of up to HK\$5 million over 5 years for research expenses of the award winner.

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