

Press release

For immediate release

**Eminent HKU chemist Professor Hongzhe SUN receives
the Royal Society of Chemistry's 2023 Dalton Horizon Prize**

June 14, 2023



Image 1: A team led by Professor Hongzhe SUN, Norman & Cecilia Yip Professor in Bioinorganic Chemistry and Chair Professor of Chemistry at HKU, receives the Royal Society of Chemistry's 2023 Dalton Horizon Prize for his pioneering research on the medicinal chemistry of bismuth applied to the treatment of COVID-19. From the left: PhD student Miss Tiffany Ka-Yan IP, Research Assistant Professor Dr Hongyan LI, Postdoctoral fellow Dr Suyu WANG and Professor Hongzhe SUN.

A team led by Professor Hongzhe SUN, Norman & Cecilia Yip Professor in Bioinorganic Chemistry and Chair Professor of Chemistry at The University of Hong Kong (HKU), has been elected by the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC)'s Dalton Prize Committee to award the 2023 Horizon Prize, for their pioneering research on the medicinal chemistry of bismuth applied to the treatment of COVID-19, and identification of target sites in SARS-CoV-2 enzymes using metallomics methods. The prize is awarded to the collaboration behind this breakthrough.

Professor Sun extends his heartfelt gratitude to RSC and the Selection Committee. 'I am extremely delighted to be recognised by RSC. We are very proud of the results achieved by an interdisciplinary team consisting of chemists, microbiologists, pharmacologists and clinicians. It is also a reward of persistence on our original and cutting-edge research with potential to improve human health,' said Professor Sun.

Dean of HKU Science Professor Qiang ZHOU congratulated Professor Sun on his achievements. 'My warmest congratulations go to Professor Hongzhe Sun, for his receiving of this prestigious award for his groundbreaking research in medicinal chemistry. His team has not only advanced our understanding of the mechanisms behind drug development but has also paved the way for new treatments and therapies. His unwavering dedication to improving human health through scientific discovery is truly inspiring. This recognition is well-deserved and a testament to his outstanding contributions to the field. We are honoured to have Professor Sun as a member of our community

and look forward to their continued success in the future,' remarked Professor Zhou.

About RSC Dalton Horizon Prize

Celebrating discoveries and innovations that push the boundaries of science, RSC's Horizon Prizes highlight the most exciting, contemporary chemical science at the cutting edge of research and innovation. These prizes are for teams or collaborations who are opening up new directions and possibilities in their field, through groundbreaking scientific developments. The Dalton Horizon Prizes recognise significant recent novel discoveries or advances made in the field of inorganic chemistry. For more information on the award, please visit: <https://www.rsc.org/prizes-funding/prizes/>

Biography of Professor Hongzhe Sun

Professor Hongzhe SUN is the Norman & Cecilia Yip Professor in Bioinorganic Chemistry and also Chair Professor of Chemistry at The University of Hong Kong. As a leading expert in the field of biological inorganic chemistry and metallomics, his research interests lie in the frontier of metalloproteomics and metallomics, discovery of antimicrobial and antiviral agents, and inorganic chemical biology. His team's recent efforts on 'bismuth-based cocktail therapy for coronavirus co-developed with members in Lee Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine of HKU earned them a Gold Medal at the 48th International Exhibition of Inventions of Geneva.

Professor Sun joined the Department of Chemistry at HKU as an Assistant Professor in 1998 and was promoted to Professor in 2007. He was appointed to his endowed professorship in 2019.

Professor Sun has received many accolades over the years. He was selected as the RGC Senior Research Fellow (2021). His other accolades include Asian Biological Inorganic Chemistry 'Outstanding Achievement Award' (2022), Chinese Association for Instrumental Analysis Award (Grand Prize) (2021), the UC Berkeley Muetterties Lectureship (2018), WuXi AppTech Life Science & Chemistry Research Award (2016), the Croucher Senior Research Fellowship (2010-11) and the National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC) Outstanding Young Scholar Award (2005).

Link to Professor Sun's lab: <https://www.bioinorg-chem.hku.hk>

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Image download and caption: <https://www.scifac.hku.hk/press>

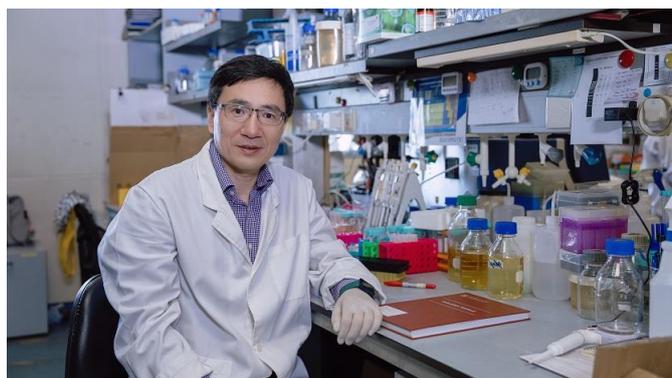


Image 2: Professor Hongzhe SUN is the Norman & Cecilia Yip Professor in Bioinorganic Chemistry and also Chair Professor of Chemistry at The University of Hong Kong. He is a leading expert in the field of biological inorganic chemistry and metallomics.