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# Kekulé-cyclus



Innovating  
*our future*



Information and  
online registration  
[www.kekulecycclus.be](http://www.kekulecycclus.be)



University  
of Antwerp



# Kekulé-cyclus XXI

## I Innovating *our future*

### Foreword

We live at a tipping point between the old business trying to survive and the new business in transition, driven by innovations to shape our future.

Many new developments and innovations are triggered because of the need to find an answer to challenges we are confronted with. Be it on power supply, recycling of materials or reducing the impact on climate, new innovations can bring an answer to these challenges.

New innovations will also shape our future, for example in management and using of big data or by leading mankind to new therapies.

At the same time, politics, the academic world, and the industry need to find a balance to transform problems into challenges and solutions in a sustainable way.

The Kekulé XXI cycle aims to bring insights on these innovations with a closing debate on our future and challenges.

**Ludo Diels & Gunther Van Cauwenberge**

Chairmen Kekulé Cycle



## Main sponsors



# Topics

## 2025

14 | Quid quantum and AI?  
10 | Can AI enhance chemistry  
developments?

04 | Recycling and circularity:  
11 | what is the best solution?

09 | Powering the future  
12 |

## 2026

10 | Doughnut economics, carbon  
02 | realities and sustainability

10 | Improving health by  
03 | monitoring, prevention  
and therapy

31 | Debate: Transforming problems  
03 | into challenges and solutions

Participation fee per evening: standard €15 | KVCV members €12  
Main sponsors €6 | €60 for the full series of lectures

Free participation for students and staff of higher education  
institutions and secondary schools

## Co-sponsors



## General schedule

19.00

Welcome  
Intro by session chair

19.30

Kekulé lectures

21.30

Conclusions  
Networking

## Venue

Aula **Fernand Nédée**

**University of Antwerp** | Campus Drie Eiken, Building Q  
Universiteitsbaan, Parking P4 (P3 and P2 if necessary)  
2610 Antwerp | Wilrijk

## Route

[www.uantwerpen.be/route](http://www.uantwerpen.be/route)

GPS: N51°09'34,3" E04°24'15,6"



Registration  
[www.kekulecyclus.be](http://www.kekulecyclus.be)

## Supported by





# Program 2025

## 14 | Quid quantum and AI? 10 | Can AI enhance chemistry developments?

Chair Prof. Dr. Steven Latré – Openchip – Chief AI Officer, UAntwerp – Dept. of Computer Science

19.30

### OPENING KEKULÉ CYCLE XX:

| Prof. Dr. Herwig Leirs – Rector Universiteit Antwerpen

### Benefits of AI in a chemical industrial context

| Ir. Niels Vandervoort – J&J – Director Digital Transformation Lead

### Quantum Computing

| Dr. Heike Riel – IBM – Executive Director Research Frontiers Institute and Director IoT Technology & Solutions

### The Multiple Facets of Modern Machine Learning: The Good, the Bad, and the In- Between

| Prof. Dr. José Oramas – UAntwerp  
Dept. of Computer Science

21.30

Closing remarks

Networking

► Offered by:  
University  
of Antwerp



# SAMEN MAKEN WE IMPACT

De Universiteit Antwerpen is de thuisbasis van **originele denkers en doeners**. Dankzij de steun van bedrijven transformeren we grensverleggend onderzoek tot innovatieve doorbraken.

Ontdek hoe we samen impact kunnen maken  
| [www.universiteitsfonds.be](http://www.universiteitsfonds.be)



Universiteit  
Antwerpen

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# 2025

## 04 | Recycling and circularity: 11 | what is the best solution?

Chair Dr. Ann Dierckx – essenscia – Director innovation and circular economy

19.30

### Current and innovative waste recycling technologiëst

| Dr. Karen De Boeck – Veolia – Value Chain Manager

### Biodegradation as a bug and a feature of a working circular plastics economy

| Prof. Dr. Pieter Billen – UAntwerp – Dept. of Biochemical and Chemical Engineering

### Challenges in regulating plastics

| Dr. Werner Bosmans – European commission – DG Environment

21.30

### Closing remarks

### Networking

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**WATER-LINK**

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oplossingen op maat:  
[water-link.be/industrie](https://water-link.be/industrie)



**water-link**  
zeker van water

2025

09  
12 | Powering the future

Chair Dr. Ir. Tine Schaerlaekens – Catalisti – Managing Director

19.30

**Sustainability and energy transition at BASF Antwerp**

| Ir. Rombout Keldermans & Ir. Frank Vanwynsberghe – BASF Antwerp

**Electrifying Organic Synthesis**

| Prof. Dr. Siegfried Waldvogel –  
Max Plank Institute for Chemical Energy Conversion

**The possible role of nuclear energy in the future**

| Ir. Denis Dumont – Tractebel – CEO

21.30

**Closing remarks**

**Networking**

► Offered by:  
**BASF**



We are  
more than  
chemistry

**BASF**  
We create chemistry



# 2026

## 10 | Doughnut economics, 02 | carbon realities and sustainability

Chair Prof. Dr. Steven Van Passel – UAntwerp – Vice-rector Valorisation and Development

19.30

### Towards an economy of doughnuts and circles

| Prof. Dr. Tom Kuppens – UHasselt – Dept. Business Economics and Education

### Carbon Capture, Utilization and Storage (CCUS): Bridging the Gap to Net Zero

| Dr. Miet Van Dael and Dr. Metin Bulut – VITO (Flemish Institute for Technological research)

### Acta non verba – transitioning to sustainable production

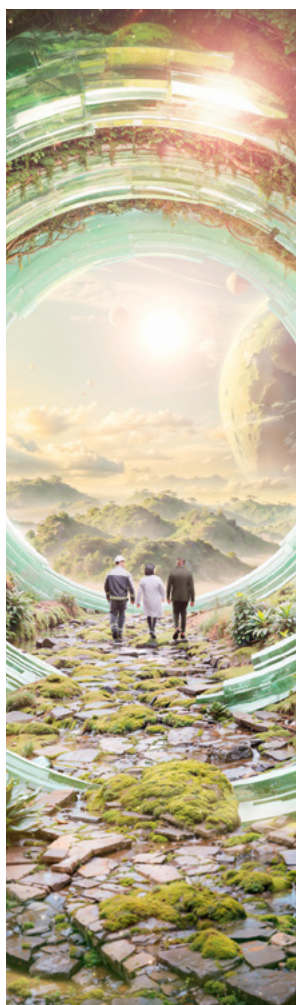
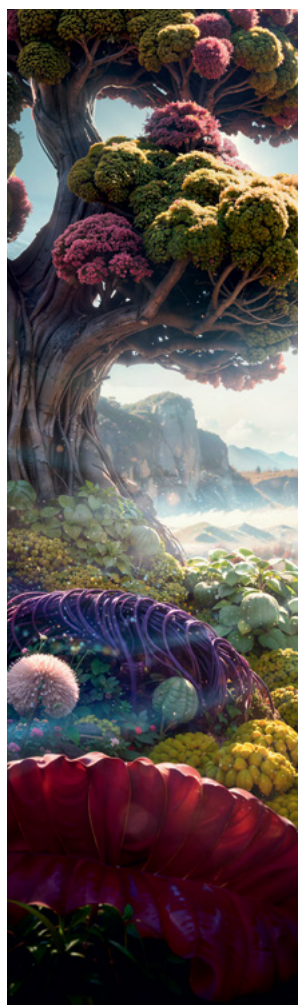
| Dr. Walter Vermeiren – Total Energies – Head of Technology and Scientific Intelligence

21.30

### Closing remarks

### Networking

► Offered by:  
**EVONIK**



## WE GO BEYOND TO ENABLE TRANSFORMATION

At Evonik, we think beyond chemistry to create innovative, sustainable and value-enhancing solutions together with our customers – such as lipids for tomorrow's medicines, biosurfactants for green detergents, additives for plastics recycling or membranes to help drive forward the energy transition. Everything we do has the same goal: to improve life, today and tomorrow. We go beyond to enable transformation. Find out more at [leadingbeyondchemistry.com](https://www.leadingbeyondchemistry.com)

 **EVONIK**  
Leading Beyond Chemistry



2026

10  
03

## Improving health by monitoring, prevention and therapy

Chair Prof. Dr. Greet Schoeters – UAntwerp – Dept. of Biomedical Sciences

19.30

### Radionuclide production for cancer treatment

| Dr. Sven Van den Berghe – PanTera – CEO

### Boosting Plant Immunity to reduce Pesticide Reliance

| Dr. Géraldine van Aubel – Fytofend – Research manager

### Assessing the human exposure to chemicals using human-biomonitoring

| Prof. Dr. Adrian Covaci – UAntwerp – Dept. of Pharmaceutical Sciences

21.30

### Closing remarks

### Networking

► Offered by:  
**COVESTRO**  
& Kekulé

YOU CAN'T  
BELIEVE  
SMART CHEMISTRY  
IS ALWAYS  
WITHIN ARM'S REACH.  
WHY NOT?



#SmartChemistry #PushingBoundaries

# 2026

31  
03

## Debate: Transforming problems into challenges and solutions

Chair Ms. Indra Dewitte – Editor-in-Chief Mediahuis

19.30

### Panel members:

- | **Dr. Ilham Kadri** (subject to change) – CEO Syensqo
- | **Dr. Jan Remeysen** – Chair Essenscia – CEO BASF Antwerp
- | **Mr. Kurt van den Berghe** – European Commission – Director General DG Climate
- | **Dr. Leen Govaerts** – VITO NV – Director Water and Energy Transition
- | **Prof. Dr. Maarten Weyn** – UAntwerp – Vice-Rector Research and Impact
- | **Ms. Eline Brugman** – Deloitte – Sustainability and Climate Lead

21.30

### Closing remarks

Alderman Ken Casier,  
City of Antwerp

### Networking

- **Offered by:**  
our main sponsors

# AGFA



## De wereld van morgen daar werken wij aan

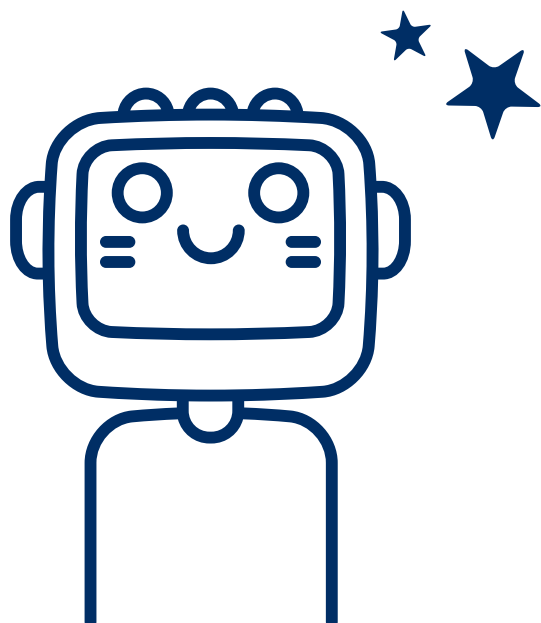
[www.agfa.com](http://www.agfa.com)



2026

## Jeugdaanbod

Online: reeks van korte YouTube video's  
[www.uantwerpen.be/nl/evenementen/kekule/jeugd/](http://www.uantwerpen.be/nl/evenementen/kekule/jeugd/)



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Em. prof. Dr. Roger Dommisie – UAntwerp  
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Dr. Kathleen Vercauteren – UAntwerp

## Program Support

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Mr. J. Venneman – Agfa  
Ir. S. Verbert – BASF  
Dr. M. Vliegen – Janssen Pharmaceutica  
Prof. Dr. S. Verbruggen – UAntwerpen  
Mrs. A. Wurman – essenscia

## Who are we?



We're a global professional services company headquartered in Australia, with expertise in energy, chemicals, and resources. As we support the shift to sustainable energy, we continue helping customers meet today's essential needs—driven by our purpose of **delivering sustainable change**.

**Our values:** We Value Life | We Rise to the Challenge | We are Stronger Together | We Unlock Brilliance

**Our ambition:** is to be recognized globally as a leader in sustainability solutions

**Our promise:** is to be the straight-talking partner the industry needs to make sustainable transformation a reality



**47K+**  
PEOPLE

**45**  
COUNTRIES



## Our competitive advantage



Leading position in our markets as a trusted partner



Global scale with a track record of innovation



Expertise in sustainable technologies with track record delivering complex projects



## Contact and information

### | Chairman

Ludo Diels & Gunther Van Cauwenberge

### | Program

Prof. Dr. V. Meynen – UAntwerpen

Dr. L. Scheers – KVCV

### | Sponsoring

Dr. K. Possemiers – BASF

### | Finances

Dr. R. Vanheertum – KVCV

### | Contact university colleges

Ing. H. Sels – Karel de Grote Hogeschool

### | Contact at the UAntwerp

Prof. Dr. C. Vande Velde – UAntwerpen

### | Contact media relations

Mevr. E. Grieten – UAntwerpen

### | Website

Dr. J. Van Dijck – Carbyon B.V.

### | Presentations and logistics

Prof. Dr. C. Vande Velde – UAntwerpen

### | Secretariat – Registration

Ing. H. Sels – Karel de Grote Hogeschool

mail – [kekule@kvcv.be](mailto:kekule@kvcv.be)

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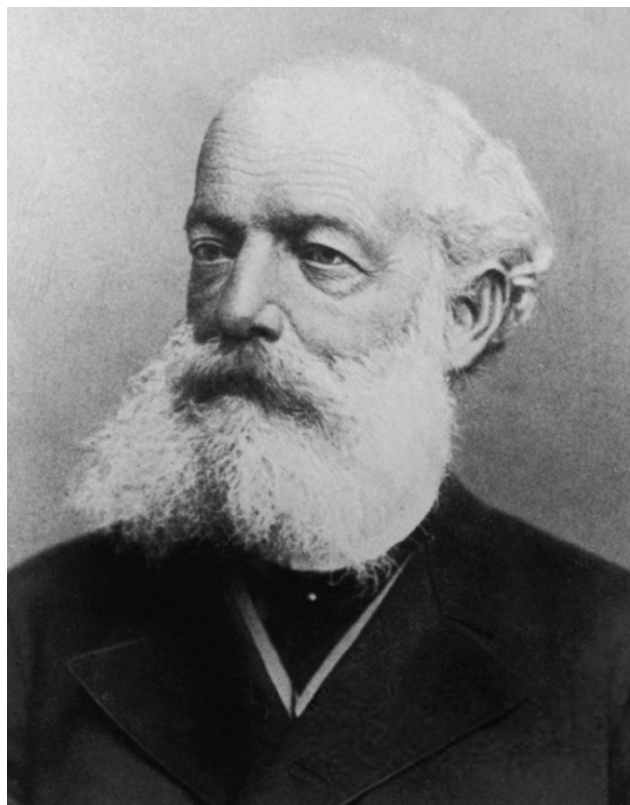
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## Kekulé

**Friedrich August Kekulé** was born in Darmstadt, Germany on September 7, 1829. In 1856 he started his career as private teacher in Heidelberg, Germany. In 1858 he was nominated professor at Ghent University, Belgium. He is considered as one of the founders of modern organic chemistry. He discovered the ring structure of benzene.

V.U.: Ludo Diels & Gunther Van Cauwenberge



### Membership

You will receive our members' magazine **C2W | Mens & Molecule**

You can take part in **KVCV activities at a reduced rate**

You have unlimited access to **scielink.net**

You are automatically a member of **EuChemS** (European Chemical Society)

#### Rates

**Student** | €15/year

**Young professional** (< 30 years) | €30/year

**Standard membership with direct debit** | €55/year

**Standard membership** | €60/year

**Become a member** ▶ [kvcv.be/membership](http://kvcv.be/membership)

### Supporting Organisation

As a supporting organisation, you will have the opportunity to showcase your profile to KVCV members and supporters, especially among students in chemically oriented fields. Additionally, by doing so, you contribute to the efforts made by KVCV for the benefit of chemists and the chemistry and life sciences sector.

**Support KVCV** ▶ [kvcv.be/support](http://kvcv.be/support)



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## More information

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[academy@sckcen.be](mailto:academy@sckcen.be)

## Contributing to a sustainable future

Across the globe, new opportunities and environmental challenges arise in the use of energy and resources, and in securing food, water and health for a growing population.

**Chemistry, Materials and Life Sciences** are at the heart of the solution. Through innovative research, we develop new processes, products and applications that drive sustainability and improve quality of life worldwide.

Our industry is essential for a more sustainable future.

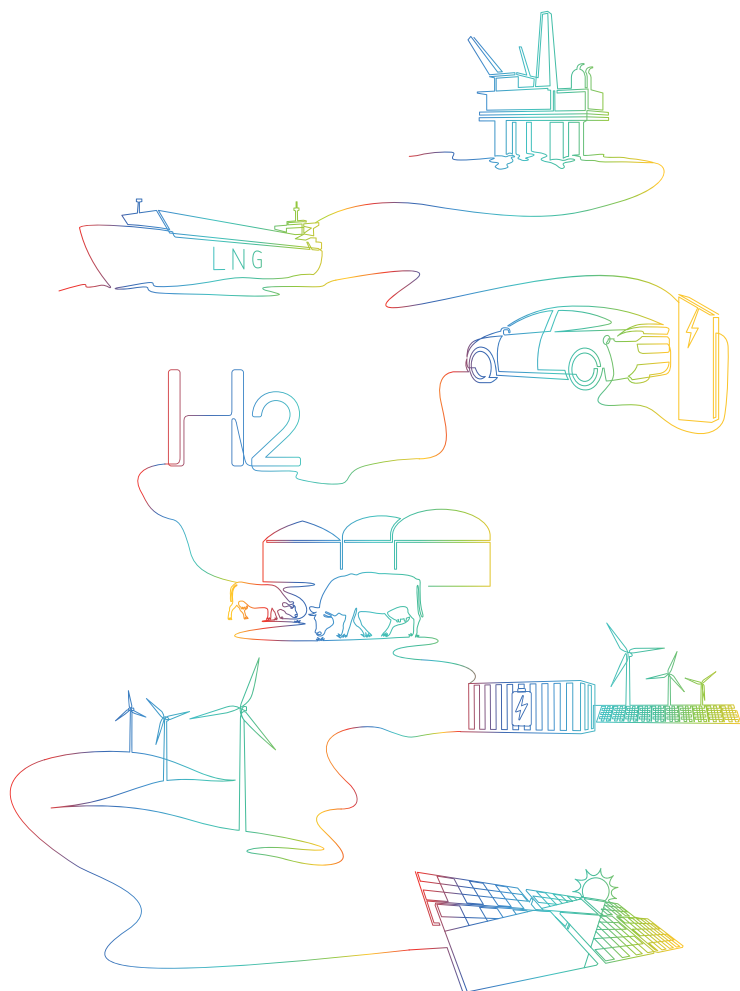


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Chemistry meets life sciences

Belgian federation for the chemical and life sciences industry  
[www.essenscia.be](http://www.essenscia.be)

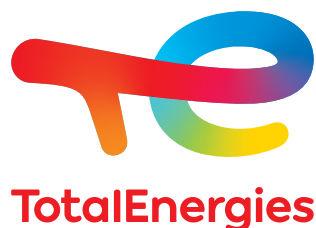
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chemistry



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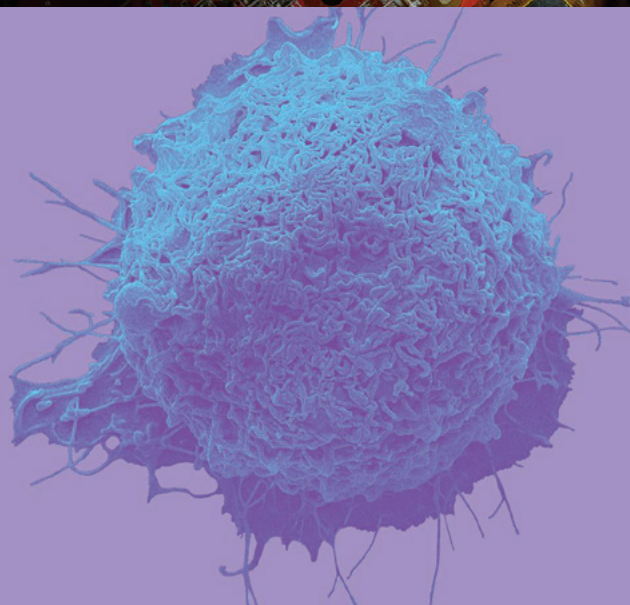
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for a better world



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20  
25

20  
26

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