

Dear fans of inorganic non-metallic materials,

on February 5-6, 2024, the University of Chemistry and Technology, Prague hosted the 30th annual Doctoral Seminar on Inorganic Non-Metallic Materials, traditionally organized by the Department of Glass and Ceramics. This year, the seminar welcomed 20 doctoral students from six different institutions in the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

The program featured three competitions, including the Prof. Rudolf Bárta Foundation Award, organized by the Department of Glass and Ceramics. The winners of this competition were selected by an expert committee consisting of Assoc. Prof. Jaroslav Kloužek (UCT Prague), Dr. Richard Pokorný (UCT Prague), Dr. Jan Hostaša (CNR-ISSMC Italy), and Dr. Anna Prnová (FunGlass).

Winners of the Prof. Rudolf Bárta Foundation Award:

- 1st place: **Ing. Petra Šimonová** (Department of Glass and Ceramics, UCT Prague) – *Energy-Efficient Ceramic Processing: Insights into Microwave Sintering of SnO₂-ZnO-Based Ceramics*.
- 2nd place: **Ing. Marek Rotter** (CEITEC Brno) – *SPS as an Effective Pre-Sintering Technique for Transparent/Translucent HEC*.
- 3rd place: **Ing. Vojtěch Ševčík** (Department of Inorganic Chemistry, UCT Prague) – *Preparation of Carbonate-Free BaCeO₃ Powder for REBCO Superconductors*.

Additional awards were granted by professional societies:

Silicate Society Award: **Ing. Herbert Kindl** (Department of Inorganic Chemistry, UCT Prague) was recognized for his contribution *Development and Characterization of Nanoparticle-Infused Phosphite Glass Rods via the Micro-Pulling-Down Method*. Herbert Kindl will also represent the Czech Republic at the ECerS 2025 conference in Dresden in the international Student Speech Contest.

Glass Society Award: **Ing. Jan Zich** (University of Pardubice) was awarded for his contribution *Anomalous properties of Bi₂O₂Se monocrystals*.

The two-day seminar also included a social evening with a pub quiz, which was met with great enthusiasm. This event provided an excellent opportunity for informal exchanges of experiences and the establishment of new professional connections among participants.

We look forward to the next edition of this traditional gathering and believe it will continue to foster the development of the scientific community in the field of inorganic non-metallic materials.