Meet Prof. Weiming Yuan, Thieme Chemistry Journals Awardee 2025!


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Prof. Weiming Yuan *obtained his PhD in organic chemistry from East China Normal University (P. R. China) in 2014. After postdoctoral appointments at Stockholm University (Sweden, 2014–2016) and Technische Universität Berlin (Germany, 2016–2018), he returned to P. R. China to join Huazhong University of Science and Technology (HUST) as professor in 2018.*

Thieme: Which field of organic chemistry are you interested in the most and why?

Prof. Yuan: My primary research interest lies in transition-metal-catalyzed organic synthesis, owing to their unparalleled bond-forming efficiency and exquisite control over reaction selectivity.

Thieme: Following that, what is the focus of your current research activity?

Prof. Yuan: Our group is dedicated to developing novel and efficient transition-metal-catalyzed radical cross-coupling reactions that enable selective activation of inert bonds under mild conditions, allowing facile access to high-value-added molecules from simple and readily available starting materials for organic synthesis.

Thieme: What do you think about the modern role and prospects of organic chemistry?

Prof. Yuan: Organic chemistry remains a cornerstone for materials science, pharmaceutical chemistry, environmental chemistry, and biochemistry, and is thus indispensable for modern life in designing and synthesizing new functional materials, drugs, and so on. The future of organic chemistry lies in sustainability, interdisciplinary collaboration, and technological integration. Organic chemistry will play a pivotal role in addressing the global challenges (disease, energy, climate).

Thieme: Which difficulties are there for young upcoming chemists in your field? Do you have any tips?

Prof. Yuan: The most difficult for young upcoming chemists, in my opinion, is to choose an innovative research direction while maintaining distinctive project characteristics amidst intense competition, thereby avoiding homogenization pitfalls. My suggestion is to focus on the genuinely significant scientific questions, and devote your full effort to solving the real problems.

Thieme: What is your most important scientific achievement to date and why?

Prof. Yuan: The most important scientific achievement in my research to date is the development of ligand-controlled regioselective radical aminoalkylation via dual nickel/photoredox catalysis. This catalytic platform allows for synthesizing diverse and highly valued alkylamine architectures, and provides a solution for addressing challenges of regioselective alkene dicarbofunctionalization and Csp^3–Csp^3 cross-coupling.

Thieme: Could you tell us something about yourself outside the lab, such as your hobbies or extra-work interests?

Prof. Yuan: Outside the laboratory, I enjoy walking, reading, and spending quality time with my family.