

Meet Dr. Franz-Lucas Haut, Thieme Chemistry Journals Awardee 2026!



Dr. Franz-Lucas Haut obtained his PhD at the University of Innsbruck (Austria) in 2021 and carried out postdoctoral studies at ICIQ, Tarragona (Spain) until 2023. From 2024 to 2026, he was a Junior Group Leader (Liebig fellow of FCI) at Freie Universität Berlin (Germany) prior to taking up his current position there as a DFG Emmy Noether Group Leader.

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

Dr. Haut: I am particularly fascinated by the organic chemistry of sulfur. Its tunable oxidation states enable a remarkable range of transformations, making it a powerful tool for building complex molecular architectures through C–C and C–heteroatom bond formation. Intriguingly, organosulfur compounds often crystallize readily, making it straightforward to obtain X-ray crystal structures and unambiguously confirm their stereochemistry.

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

Dr. Haut: My research group focuses on developing new synthetic methodologies for the efficient construction of complex carbocyclic and heterocyclic structures, which are highly relevant to modern drug discovery. We combine transition-metal catalysis and photochemical approaches, while also gaining deep mechanistic insight through both experimental and theoretical studies. Ultimately, we aim to apply these methods to the synthesis of natural products and pharmacologically relevant targets.

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

Dr. Haut: Considering the ongoing transformation of the chemical industry toward sustainability, organic chemistry plays a crucial role. We need new processes, innovative transformations, advanced catalytic systems, as well as access to new chemical space to create functional materials, medicines, and agrochemicals that address pressing global challenges. I am confident that organic chemistry will remain a central and driving discipline in enabling these innovations and shaping a more sustainable future.

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

Dr. Haut: Organic chemistry is becoming increasingly interdisciplinary, which is both exciting and challenging. Keeping up with the growing number of journals and publications can be overwhelming. As a junior group leader, I found it invaluable to build a strong network with peers and to seek guidance from experienced researchers – not only on developing as a scientist, but also on leadership skills, including teaching and mentoring the next generation of organic chemists. I am extremely grateful for the support and advice I received during my early career.

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

Dr. Haut: My most important scientific achievement to date is being selected as an Emmy Noether Fellow by the German Research Foundation (DFG). It is a tremendous honor to receive this recognition and funding, which allows me to establish my own research program and mentor students in exploring new directions in organosulfur chemistry.

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

Dr. Haut: Outside the lab, I really enjoy cultivating plants both in my office and at home as it makes the space feel more vibrant and inspiring. I also like exploring Berlin's diverse food scene and staying active through running, cycling and hiking. Traveling is another passion that allows me to reconnect with colleagues and friends around the world while exploring new places and cultures.
