Julie Hamackova Award in a category a) recognises outstanding achievements

of UCT Prague female employee in the field of scientific research and innovation or pedagogical activities, or in other activities significant for university development.

CENA
Julie Hamáčkové

Nomination of a female candidate for 2025

Candidate name:	**Stella de Almeida Gonsales**
Department:	**VŠCHT Praha, Department of Polymers**
Year of birth:	1987
Address of stay:	https://thegonsaleslab.com
Number of children:	1

Where the candidate studied, field:

Stella completed her Bc. and M.Sc. degrees in Chemistry at the University of Campinas, Brazil. She obtained her Ph.D. in Chemistry at the University of Florida under the supervision of Prof. A. S. Veige, focusing on the synthesis of cyclic polymers. Between 2017 and 2023, she worked as a postdoctoral fellow at Boston College, the University of Strasbourg/CNRS, and the University of Bordeaux/CNRS, where she contributed to establishing a new branch of the Hoveyda group. Since 2023, Stella has been working as an assistant professor at UCT Prague, leading her independent research group.

What activities she does at UCT Prague:

Stella leads the newly established joint laboratory of UCT and IOCB—one of the pilot projects of close institutional cooperation. Stella was chosen as the first leader of the laboratory named after Otto Wichterle. The Laboratory of Sustainable Polymers focuses on developing efficient methods and catalysts for the depolymerization of commodity polymers as well as on the synthesis of degradable polymers. In addition to research, Stella is actively involved in teaching. She teaches Selected Chapters in Macromolecular Chemistry and Macromolecular Chemistry. She supervises several bachelor's, master's, and Ph.D. students, as well as a postdoctoral fellow. At present, her group consists of seven members.

What are her achievements:

Stella's research addresses one of the most pressing environmental challenges: the chemical recycling and upcycling of polymers that form the majority of plastic waste. Her laboratory develops catalysts capable of breaking polymers into smaller units and explores sustainable synthetic approaches to create degradable polymers. Her work has led to numerous high-impact publications, including articles in Nature Chemistry, JACS, and Angewandte Chemie.

The significance of her research has been clearly recognized this year: Stella received both the Junior Star Grant from the Czech Science Foundation and the Dagmar Procházková Grant from UCT Prague. Being awarded these two excellent projects at the same time is obviously a huge achievement that will help Stella to further strengthen and widen her research focus and to increase her visibility both within UCT and IOCB, and internationally.

I would like to nominate Stella not only of her impressive scientific achievements, but also as a role model for young researcher at UCT. During her studies and early career steps, she was awarded multiple prizes and awards which clearly shows her capabilities and creativity as a researcher (for instance W. M. Jones Award for Originality and Creativity, Procter & Gamble Awards for Excellence in Graduate Research or Marie Skłodowska-Curie Seal of Excellence). However, at a certain point she had to take a career break to care of her son; and the care was complicated by an illness. However,

Stella clearly did not lose her esteem and was able to return to science and win a prestigious position as the leader of the newly established laboratory. I can imagine that for many researchers at UCT she represents a mostly welcome optimistic spirit and freshness in leadership. At least for me she does.

That is why I nominate her as a candidate for the Julie Hamáčková Award in a category a) in 2025.

Attachments: *not obligatory*

Submitted by

Name: Eva Muchova

Department, working position: Department of Physical Chemistry, Assistant Professor

Date In Prague on 21. 11. 2025 Signature: