

Winter 2025 Newsletter

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear SCCT Members,

It has been a privilege to serve as the SCCT President this year. I am grateful for the engaged and supportive Executive Committee and the volunteers who are helping to expand our membership and programs. I hope that your transition to Fall and Winter has brought renewed energy to finish 2025 strong.

Our Specialty Section was hard at work, ensuring that ample learning opportunities in the field were offered. On November 7th, we co-sponsored our Fall Webinar with the Graduate Student Leadership Committee (GSLC) and Postdoctoral Assembly (PDA) for trainees. The topic was “Safe and Sustainable by Design” and featured panelists from the European Commission, Clariant, and the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment. Read more about it on page #2!

The annual SOT conference is right around the corner! The SCCT Specialty Section has endorsed several sessions for SOT 2026 in San Diego. You can explore the accepted sessions on SOT's website. We're excited about the cutting-edge science that will be presented in March. Additionally, we look forward to reviewing research from our graduate student and postdoctoral members, as we select awardees for the Best Abstract Awards. We're also excited to offer an award for an “Outstanding Early Career Scientist”. Please submit applications and abstracts for consideration in January!

Outside of SOT, we're thrilled to share an overview and session highlights from this year's SETAC Annual Meeting in Portland, Oregon. The sessions covered a broad range of thematic tracks including NAMs and green chemistry. We're also thrilled to provide updates from SETAC's Advancement and Application of Alternative Assessment Interest Group (A4-IG), as well as promote the recent ICCS Best Practice Guidance Document.

And finally, we are thrilled to feature SCCT member, Kaley Beins. As Director of Ingredient Safety at EWG, Kaley shares her professional journey, some experiences at EWG, and some fun facts about herself.

As always, we rely on the support of our community. I encourage you to volunteer for ongoing initiatives or propose new ideas. Your involvement is crucial in advancing safer, sustainable chemical practices. Thank you for your continued commitment to the SCCT Specialty Section. I look forward to seeing you all in San Diego!



Damani Parran, PhD, MBA, DABT
President, SCCT Specialty Section

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SCCT FALL 2025 WEBINAR REPORT-OUT

Safe and Sustainable by Design Framework



By Shoba Iyer, PhD
SCCT Councilor 2025-2027

On November 7, 2025, the Sustainable Chemicals through Contemporary Toxicology (SCCT) Specialty Section co-sponsored our Fall Webinar with the Graduate Student Leadership Committee and the Postdoctoral Assembly. The webinar was about the “[Safe and Sustainable by Design](#)” (SSbD) framework, proposed by the European Union Commission Joint Research Centre as a mechanism to integrate human health and environmental safety assessment across the different steps in the lifecycle of a chemical or material.

As toxicologists, we know of chemical innovation examples that have adversely impacted and continue to affect communities, public health, ecosystems, and the climate throughout their lifecycles. Advancing safer chemistry throughout a product lifecycle requires upstream thinking and implementable guidance for industries, academia, and others in innovation, investments, and policy, while avoiding regrettable chemical substitutions. SCCT was pleased to convene an expert panel who shared an overview on SSbD and case studies of its implementation. This webinar was moderated by Lauren Brown, SCCT Past President, and Milica Pavlović, SCCT Graduate Student Representative.

Irantzu Garmendia Aguirre (European Commission, JRC) kicked off the webinar with an overview on the SSbD framework. She defined SSbD as a pre-market approach to chemicals and materials design that focuses on providing a function or service towards adopting a lifecycle perspective. As such, the principles of this framework include an assessment considering the entire lifecycle of the chemical or material, multidisciplinary stakeholder engagement, transparency, and safety and sustainability aspects throughout innovation in an iterative and tiered approach. Fabian Grimm (Clariant) delivered the next presentation, explaining the application of SSbD principles from an industry perspective. He shared that Clariant is addressing the regulatory complexity of chemicals throughout their lifecycles, and considering newer hazard classes such as endocrine disruption, persistence, and bioaccumulation.

PANELISTS



Irantzu Garmendia Aguirre
Project Officer – SSbD
European Commission,
Directorate General Joint Research
Centre



Fabian Grimm, PhD, ERT
Head of Toxicology & Ecotoxicology
Clariant



Lya Soeteman-Hernández, PhD
Subject Matter Expert – Safe and
Sustainable Innovations
National Institute for Public Health
and the Environment (RIVM)

Clariant has had a voluntary pre-market screening program since 2012, intended to develop and use chemicals while reducing harmful impact on human and environmental health throughout the chemical lifecycle. They use computational toxicology, predictive modeling, and other alternatives to traditional toxicity testing in their evaluations. Lya Soeteman-Hernández (RIVM) gave the final presentation, sharing the work she and her team have been doing related to the Safe, Sustainable, and Recyclable by Design (SSRbD) framework. Her presentation drew from her and her team’s recent manuscript, published in *Sustainability & Circularity NOW* ([Soeteman-Hernández et al., 2025](#)). She shared the example of a bio-sourced polyurethane that is recyclable by design to replace polyvinyl chloride plastic, as well as their efforts to optimize reprocessing technologies used in buildings, transportation, and packaging. Her team’s goal is to empower subject matter experts to use the SSRbD framework. Overall, this webinar engaged graduate students and postdocs, toxicologists, regulatory experts, and industry professionals on exploring how SSbD can improve decision-making, enhance safety and sustainability assessments, support regulatory guidance, and guide innovation toward safer products and a circular economy.

If you were not able to attend our Fall Webinar, or if you would like an SSbD refresher, check out [the recording!](#)

Note: Recording is only accessible with SOT member login.

SETAC NORTH AMERICA ANNUAL MEETING 2025 REPORT-OUT

Meeting Overview and Session Highlight



*By Sara Farahmand, PhD, DABT
SCCT Vice President 2025-2026*

The Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC) North America 46th Annual Meeting brought together many scientists in Portland, Oregon, from November 16-20, 2025, for a program spanning environmental chemistry, toxicology, ecological risk assessment, sustainability science, and policy translation. The sessions covered a broad range of thematic tracks including ecotoxicology, environmental chemistry, fate and transport, new approach methodologies (NAMs), risk assessment and modeling, green chemistry and alternatives assessment, microplastics and emerging contaminants, regulatory science, biodiversity and ecosystems, and sustainability/circularity. Within these tracks, platform and poster sessions featured advancing methodologies for PFAS assessment, enhanced bioavailability modeling, mixture toxicity work, exposure-pathway reconstruction, climate-linked ecological impacts, sediment/soil remediation science, upstream safer chemistry design, and the use of AI-enabled analytics in predictive toxicology.

FEATURED SESSION NARRATIVE: How Hazard Assessments Are Re-Shaping the Future of Safer Chemistry

At the SETAC 2025 meeting, one session stood out as a microcosm of where toxicology, sustainability, and product innovation are heading: Use of Chemical Hazard Assessments to Drive Informed Substitution in Alternatives Assessment, guided by session chairs Chris Bartlett and Gabrielle Rigutto of ChemFORWARD and Meg Whittaker of ToxServices. I presented in this session and am sharing my summary here.

The conversation began with a forward-looking vision from the International Collaboration on Cosmetics Safety, where speakers painted a picture of safety assessment firmly rooted in modern science—algorithms, computational toxicology, and mechanistic NAMs steadily replacing traditional animal models.

My own contribution, presented along with my colleague, Junyeol Kim, was about how hazard information is increasingly becoming a strategic tool in product development—not just a compliance requirement, but a decision-making engine. In our case, using structured Chemical Hazard Assessment (CHA) frameworks to guide preservative selection helped us avoid regrettable substitutions while balancing efficacy, sustainability, and regulatory expectations. It is the kind of upstream, proactive work that companies should be relying on more than ever to design safer, smarter formulations.

The regulatory lens came into focus next. The California Department of Toxic Substances Control described how their Safer Consumer Products Program is pushing boundaries by weaving NAMs and functional-use analysis into their evaluations. Their talk highlighted both the promise and the complexity of bringing innovation into state-level decision-making, especially when dealing with botanicals, polymers, and other challenging substance classes.

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A very different—but equally compelling—real-world example followed from the Washington State Departments of Ecology and Health, who described their program to help hair salons transition to safer products. Here, CHAs were not abstract tools; they were vehicles for public health, community engagement, and small-business empowerment. It was a reminder that safer chemistry touches lives far beyond laboratories and regulatory offices.

The session came full circle and closed where it began: at the intersection of data quality, transparency, and collaboration. ChemFORWARD demonstrated how a centralized global repository of CHAs can change the landscape entirely, enabling harmonized decision-making, reducing duplicated work, and accelerating safer-alternative identification across industries and certification bodies.

Across all talks, one message resonated: hazard assessments are no longer just a snapshot of risk; they are becoming the roadmap for designing the next generation of safer materials. Whether applied through NAMs, shared repositories, regulatory programs, or product-development frameworks, CHAs are emerging as one of the most practical, powerful tools in the transition toward informed substitution.

Takeaway for SOT Members

For toxicologists engaged in regulatory strategy, risk communication, product stewardship, and safer-chemical innovation, SETAC 2025 underscored a clear theme: hazard-based frameworks, NAM-integrated assessments, and informed substitution are becoming central to environmental and human-health decision-making. My fellow session speakers and I demonstrated how toxicology expertise is shaping the next generation of alternatives assessment and sustainable materials design.

UPDATES FROM SETAC A4-IG

Dear SCCT Friends,

We're excited to share what's ahead for the SETAC Advancement and Application of Alternatives Assessment Interest Group (A4-IG)! Beginning next year, I will be honored to serve as Chair, with Meg Whittaker as Vice Chair. Together, we'll continue advancing alternatives assessment and fostering collaboration across our community.

This year we launched "What's in Your Bag?" (WYB), a virtual series designed for lively, informal discussions on safer alternatives, alternatives assessment, and informed substitution. Each session features a short presentation followed by interactive dialogue, giving members a chance to share experiences and explore solutions together.

Have an idea for a future WYB session? Please reach out to me at colleen.mcloughlin@enhesa.com—we would love to feature your insights!

We invite you to learn more about [SETAC Interest Groups](#) and consider joining! Now is the perfect time for more voices, more perspectives, and more opportunities to connect.

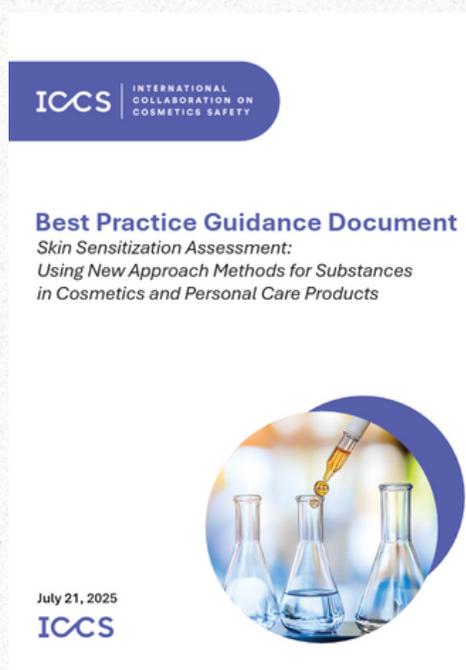
Let's keep the conversation going—join us, participate, and help shape what's next for A4-IG!

Warm regards,



Colleen McLoughlin, PhD, DABT, ERT
SCCT Secretary/Treasurer 2024-2026
A4-IG Program Committee Co-Chair

ICCS BEST PRACTICE GUIDANCE DOCUMENT



ICYMI- The International Collaboration on Cosmetics Safety (ICCS) recently published a [Best Practice Guidance Document](#) on using NAMs for substances in cosmetics and personal care products to evaluate skin sensitization. Major props to SCCT Past President, Lauren Brown, for her hard work on this document!

As described by ICCS, this is the first guidance of its kind developed by subject matter experts from across their membership, designed specifically to help safety assessors and regulators integrate NAMs for skin sensitization in full safety assessments to replace animal testing.

The key highlights of what make this document unique are:

- A step-by-step workflow to guide assessors through skin sensitization hazard and safety assessments without new animal tests,
- Integration of *in silico*, *in chemico*, and *in vitro* methods, including those aligned with OECD Test Guidelines, and
- A design for regulatory use, especially for assessors transitioning from animal to non-animal approaches.

MEMBER FEATURE

Kaley Beins, MPH Director of Ingredient Safety at EWG

This is our second R.E.P.O.R.T.S.-style format for SCCT member features in our biannual newsletters! This format is meant to be a fun, conversational way to feature our wonderful SCCT members.

We are thrilled to feature SCCT member, Kaley Beins! Kaley is the Director of Ingredient Safety at the Washington, DC-based nonprofit Environmental Working Group (EWG). She conducts hazard and risk assessments for consumer products with a focus on the personal care sector. One of the projects Kaley leads is EWG's new Reviewed for Ingredients program—a partnership to prioritize the use of safer chemicals by encouraging supply chain transparency and quality. Currently, she is working on defining minimum datasets and an alternatives assessment-based approach to expanding the Reviewed for Ingredients program.

Although she started out in ecology, Kaley transitioned to public health and toxicology during her Fulbright Fellowship in Panama when herbicide contamination in a regional water supply demonstrated how toxicity data and chemical management policy have very real implications for people's health. Prior to joining EWG, Kaley worked in various public health roles including at the National Academies, as a federal contractor, and with a local health department. Kaley has an MPH in environmental health sciences from the University of Maryland and a bachelor's in environmental biology from Georgetown University. In addition to her memberships in SOT's SCCT and WIT Component Groups, she is active in the Washington, DC, chapter of the Sigma Xi Scientific Research Honor Society as Vice President.

Read on for more about Kaley!

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REPORTER: Kaley Beins

[LinkedIn](#)

HOMETOWN: Rockville, MD

READING: I like dystopian futuristic novels. I just finished the trilogy I was reading and am looking for my next book, so reach out if you have recommendations!

EATING: An Uyghur restaurant just opened near me, and I love their noodle dishes.

PLAYING: I recently joined a chorus after a decade-long singing hiatus, so you can catch me listening to YouTube videos on Alto I harmonies.

OBSESSING OVER: The DC theater scene! I write reviews on various shows for an online publication and love everything that the amazing theaters here put on.

RECOMMENDING: Turn off Gemini in your Google Drive and Gmail.

TREATING (Myself To): If you've never had a Vietnamese coffee, grab one and enjoy that caffeine jolt. I have two kids, and I always joke that there's not enough caffeine in the world for parenting, but Vietnamese coffee comes close.

SHOUTING OUT: I just got back from SETAC's North America meeting, and I wanted to shout out the great work by their new Specialty Section, Advancement and Application of Alternatives Assessment Interest Group (formerly A4). Hopefully we can facilitate some SCCT collaborations with them in the future!

If you'd like to be featured in an upcoming newsletter, reach out to SCCT Councilor Shoba Iyer at shoba.iyer@sfgov.org!



NATIONAL POSTDOC APPRECIATION WEEK 2025

To celebrate National Postdoc Appreciation Week 2025, we'd like to give a shoutout to our postdoctoral representative, [Opeyemi Ogunsuyi, PhD](#)! Opeyemi started serving in this role in May, 2025. He helped SCCT connect with SOT's Postdoctoral Assembly, which established our ability to co-sponsor our Fall Webinar together and expand promotion of this event to postdocs. Opeyemi's contributions to SCCT are much appreciated. Thank you, Opeyemi!

SCCT AWARD OPPORTUNITIES

Apply by **January 9, 2026**, through our [webpage!](#)



- Best Abstract Graduate Student Award
- Best Abstract Postdoctoral Scholar Award
- Outstanding Early Career Scientist Award



Applications for SCCT's **Best Abstract Awards for Graduate Students and Postdoctoral Scholars** are now being accepted for the SOT 2026 Annual Meeting! Apply by **January 9, 2026**. First place awardees will receive a CASH award and certificate! Relevant research topics are those related to the mission of SCCT, including: alternatives assessment, circular economy, eco certifications or endorsements, green toxicology, hazard reduction, informed substitution, regrettable substitution, safer design, sustainability, sustainable development, or sustainable packaging. Application packages will be evaluated on the basis of scientific rigor, unique approach(es) to assessing the toxicity of a chemical or material, and direct relevance to the above sustainability-related topics. Applications may be submitted prior to receiving abstract acceptance confirmation from SOT.

The inaugural **Outstanding Early Career Scientist in Sustainable Chemistry and Contemporary Toxicology Award** is also open for applications until **January 9, 2026**. The recipient will be selected on the basis of scientific merit and outstanding demonstration of leadership, service, and mentorship to the toxicology and sustainable chemistry community. Early career scientists actively engaged in the field of toxicology and sustainable chemistry or related areas must be within 10 years of completion of their PhD, 12 years of completion of their Master's, or 14 years of completion of their Bachelor's at the application deadline for this award (with some exceptions). Applicants must be SCCT members. Peer and self-nominations are both welcomed. Demonstrated innovation in sustainable chemistry is a plus but not required.

For additional details and to apply, visit SCCT's [Awards webpage](#).

Contact Jennifer Tanir, SCCT Vice President-Elect, at jentanir@gmail.com with questions related to SCCT Awards.

PREPARING FOR SOT 2026

We look forward to seeing you at the Annual Meeting in San Diego, CA!

Please join us at the SCCT Specialty Section Reception on Monday, March 23.

SCCT is sponsoring a session titled "Human and Ecological Risk Assessment: Has the Time Come for Greater Integration of Approaches?," scheduled for Monday, March 23rd.

Planning to attend the conference, but still need lodging? You can reserve your room through SOT's [Connections Housing website](#). The reservation deadline is February 6, 2026.

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Events/sessions to help graduate students and postdocs maximize their SOT experiences

- Before the SOT Annual Meeting
 - **February 9th:** Graduate Student Leadership Committee's webinar on mastering conference etiquette! Find details and the registration link [here](#).
- At the SOT Annual Meeting
 - **March 22nd:** Student/Postdoctoral Scholar Mixer
 - **March 23rd:** *In Vitro* Toxicology Lecture and Luncheon for Students
 - **March 24th:**
 - Undergrad Gab with a Grad Over Grub
 - Career Exploration Through Speed Informational Interviews
 - Navigating Your Scientific Career: The Power of Transforming Networking into Mentoring
- [Chat with an Expert](#) (various days and times throughout conference)
- Poster Tours for Trainees (various days and times throughout conference)

MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

Call for Volunteers & Feedback

We would love to increase membership involvement in SCCT efforts. And volunteering is a great way to build your CV, gain leadership experience, and network! To be added to our volunteer list, please fill out [this survey](#).

The number of SCCT members has remained steady over the last year. We are looking forward to seeing SCCT grow! If you have feedback on what the SCCT Executive Committee can do to increase the value of SCCT membership, please let us know in this anonymous and brief three-question [survey](#).

2025-2026 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



Lauren Brown, MS,
DABT
Past President



Damani Parran,
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Our sponsors' generous donations support our efforts to promote research in sustainable chemistry and green toxicology.

To learn more about donating to SCCT, please visit [our website!](#)

STAY CONNECTED

Follow SCCT on LinkedIn!

Did you know that SCCT has an active LinkedIn page? SCCT leadership posts timely updates relevant to sustainable chemistry and toxicology, as well as community updates such as reminders for abstracts, awards, and webinars or updates on Executive Committee initiatives. Click [here](#) to follow us!

