

THE AWARDS 2021

Research Project of the Year: STEM

Institution name	De Montfort University, in collaboration with Anglia Ruskin University
Submission title or project name	The safer use of emollients and its national impact
Nominee/key personnel	Sarah Hall, Senior Lecturer Analytical Forensic Chemistry at DMU (sarah.hall@dmu.ac.uk)
URL	https://www.dmu.ac.uk/about-dmu/news/2020/july/experts-warn-of-link-between-skin-creams-and-fatal-burns.aspx
Submission	<p>More than 50 deaths in the UK have been linked to the use of emollients. When they dry and build up on clothing, dressings, or bedding they can accelerate the flammability of the material. Little prior awareness led to unsuitable safety advice and links with fatal fires were underreported.</p> <p>Studies at Anglia Ruskin University and now at De Montfort University have revealed large reductions in time-to-ignition with fabrics impregnated with dried-on paraffin-base emollients and paraffin-free products, suggesting the chance to react quickly enough if clothing or bedding catches fire is reduced.</p> <p>The findings have contributed to new safety advice from national health and fire safety bodies, and have been published in international journals. They have also underpinned updates on government safety advice and requirements for manufacturers to include flammability warnings on products. It has also contributed to the government's communication strategies, a regional safety campaign and FRSs training packages.</p>