

# Kako sem postal prejemnik ERC StG in PoC



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# Moja ERC StG zgodba...

- Potreboval sem **tujino**, da sem spoznal kako se dela vrhunska znanstvena kariera (2010...)
- Potem sem začel **objavljati članke** in uspešno pridobil **Marie Curie** (sedaj je vmes še Skłodowska) - Max-Planck inštitutu v Düsseldorfu (2014-2016)
- ERC ideja se je začela porajati že takrat, ker sem **spremljal uspešnega vodjo** (prof. Mayrhofer), ki si je gradil kariero (super vzor za mlade!)
- Tam sem šel na prvo **ERC delavnico** v Bohnu in videl zgodbo kako zelo se je nekdo potrudil za ERC prijavo – delavnice so super!
- Po vrnitvi sem prijavil **ARIS shemo** za obisk pri nosilcih projektov ERC in v drugo dobil ERC...
- Poleg **dobre ideje in člankov** je ključno, da dojamemo **kaj ERC hoče/išče** – zato so pomembne ERC delavnice in izkušnje ERC vodji



Image created by ChatGPT with DALL·E (OpenAI, 2025)

# Naša ERC PoC zgodba...

- Že pred ERC sva šla z doktorskim študentom **Matijo Gatalo** na **EIT delavnico** za podjetništvo (RIS Climate-KIC Accelerator 2016 - mag. Marjana Majerič) – spoznal da to ni zame
- Ko je prišla **ERC PoC shema**, sva se lotila te prijave in jo dobila - 2021
- Po pridobljeni prijavi, je ustanovil podjetje **ReCatalyst**, ki je nato dobilo licence za proizvodnjo katalizatorja
- Do leta 2023 so sami izkoristili sheme/financiranje EIT in EIC
- Menim, da je ključno, da so pot nadaljevali **brez mene**
- Kar nam manjka kot skupnosti je razumevanje in s tem podpora tega izredno občutljivega procesa

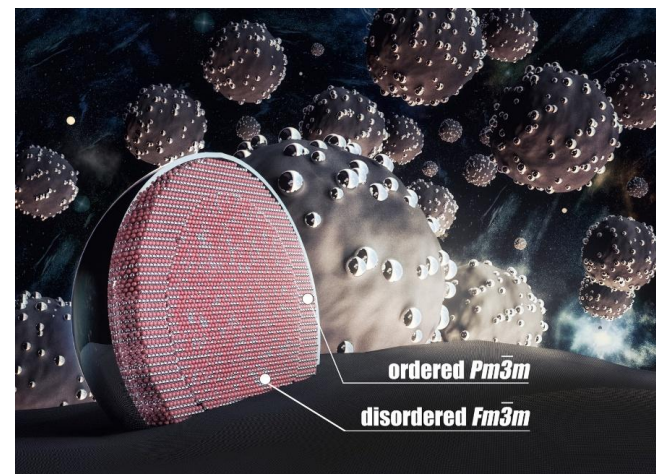


[www.recatalyst-si](http://www.recatalyst-si)

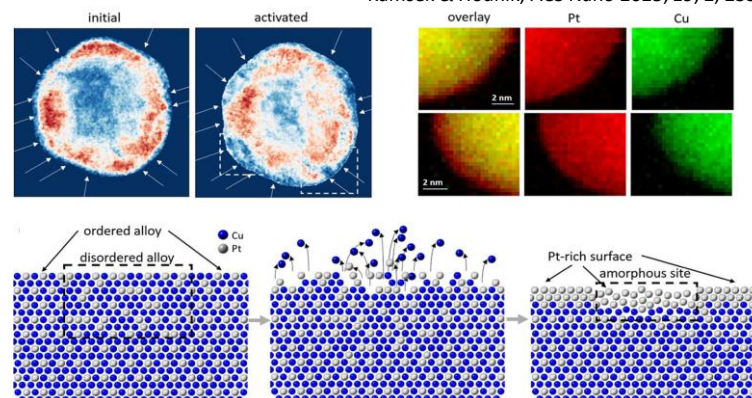
# Par nasvetov...

- **Tematika** je definirana s tvojim doktoratom in „poddoktoratom“
- Imej **čimveč publikacij** kjer si ti glavni oziroma vodilni **avtor**!
- Čimveč člankov, če se da z visokim IF, in seveda citatov - pač čimboljši CV!
- Poznaj svoje področje in kaj so **vroč** **tematike** – kje vodilni raziskovalci na področju (recenzenti) pričakujejo preboje
- Ne ponudi jim nečesa **preveč „norega“** ali v nasprotju z obstoječimi prepričanji – poišči **ravnotežje med priljubljenim in prebojnim**. Ponudi jim kar želijo, da boš lahko nato uresničil svoje „nore,, zamisli – to je dinamika znanosti!
- Izredno koristi, da si v kontaktu z ljudmi, ki so **uspešnejši od tebe** in ki so kakšen korak pred teboj v karieri – **uči se igre**!

Hodnik et al. Phys. Chem. Chem. Phys., 2014, 16, 13610–13615



Kamšek & Hodnik, ACS Nano 2025, 19, 2, 2334–2344



## Metrics overview

65

Documents by author

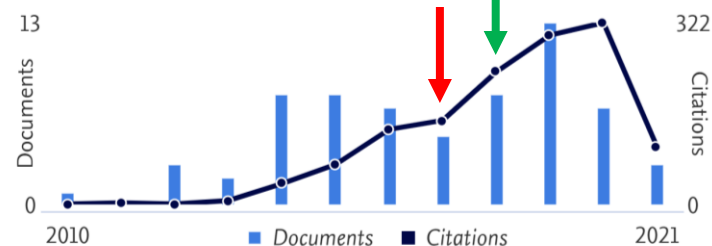
1361

Citations by **801** documents

22

*h*-index:

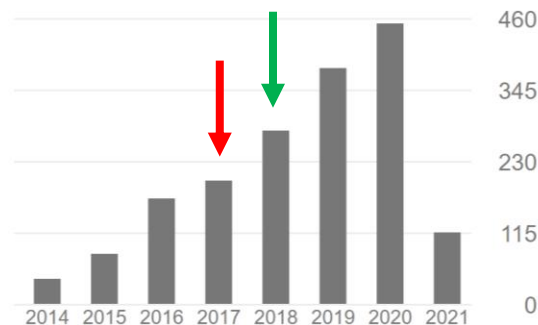
## Document & citation trends



**Publikacije (statistika): 35** recenziranih znanstvenih člankov (plus 3 v recenzijem postopku), 2 naslovnici revij, 1 patent (ZDA), 1 prijava patenta (EU); Podrobnosti: 12 kot prvi avtor, **21** kot korespondenčni avtor (plus 4 oddani), **359** citatov in *h*-indeks **12** (po Scopusu na dan 16.10.2017), le 8 člankov s PhD mentorjem dr. Stankom Hočevanjem.

**Publikacije (statistika): 41** recenziranih znanstvenih člankov (plus 3 v recenzijem postopku), 2 naslovnici revij, 1 patent (ZDA), 2 mednarodni patentni prijavi; Podrobnosti: 12 kot prvi avtor, **28** kot korespondenčni avtor, **571** citatov in *h*-indeks **15** (po Scopusu na dan 16.10.2018), le 8 člankov s PhD mentorjem dr. Stankom Hočevanjem.

|            |      |      |
|------------|------|------|
| Navedbe    | 1767 | 1612 |
| indeks h   | 24   | 23   |
| indeks i10 | 42   | 39   |



# Kaj upoštevati / v razmislek / za debato

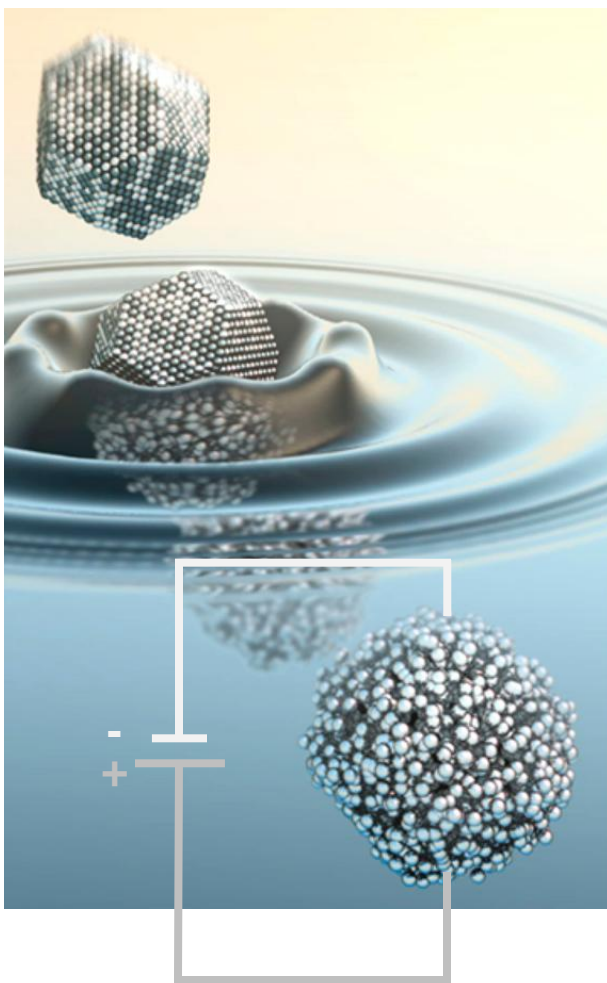
- Na koncu je to tvoj projekt – in **ti moraš verjeti vanj**.
- Vloženega časa ne boš izgubil, saj ga lahko uporabiš pri drugih projektih. Še pomembneje pa je, ker si šel skozi ta proces imaš zdaj res dober **pregled nad svojo raziskovalno temo** in nad tem, kam lahko gre tvoja kariera.
- **20/80** ze ERC ne deluje – izgubljaš čas. Samo **120/50!** **Faktor sreče!**
- Ampak kaj boš pa delal v akademiji, če ne ukvarjal z nemogočimi problemi!?
- Če hočeš denar in varnost, pojdi v industrijo ali podobno!
- *Je pa res, da v Slo manjka neka sistematika za generiranje „ERC-jevcev“*



Image created by ChatGPT with DALL-E (OpenAI, 2025)

# Nekaj utrinkov iz mojega ERC intervjuja:

## Towards Nanostructured Electrocatalysts with Superior Stability



*Dr. Nejc Hodnik, Assoc. Prof.*

*Electrocatalysis Group Leader  
(2 PhD students, 3 postdocs)*



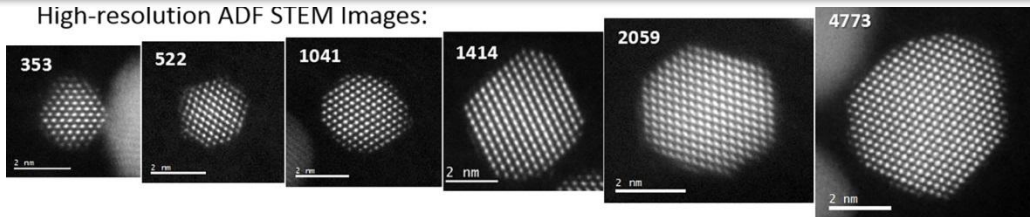
*@ National Institute of Chemistry, Ljubljana, Slovenia*



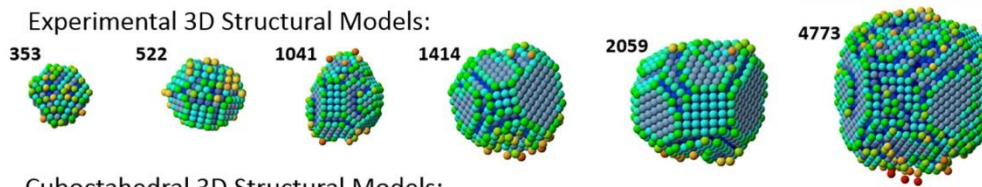
**What happens to the nanoparticle on the atomic level?**

# The reality of nanoparticles

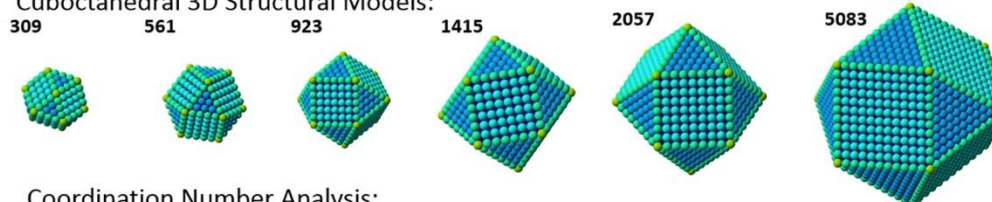
High-resolution ADF STEM Images:



Experimental 3D Structural Models:

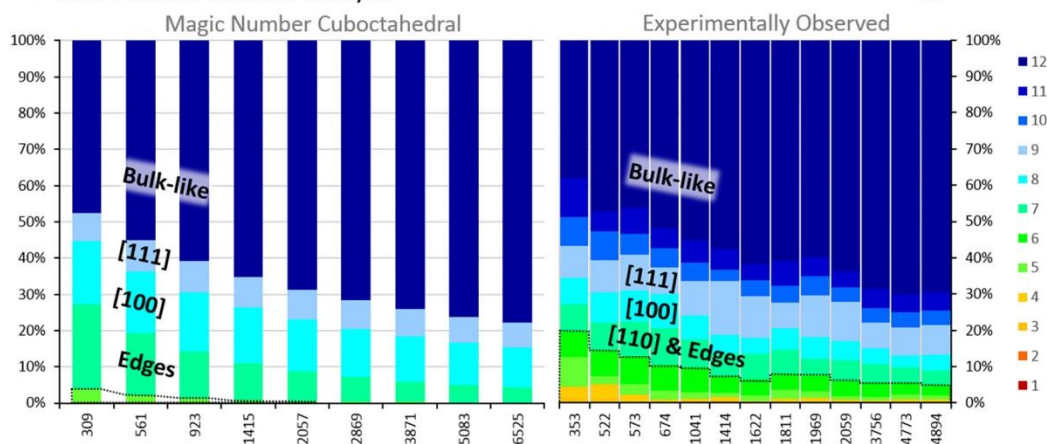


Cuboctahedral 3D Structural Models:



**No two particles are alike!**

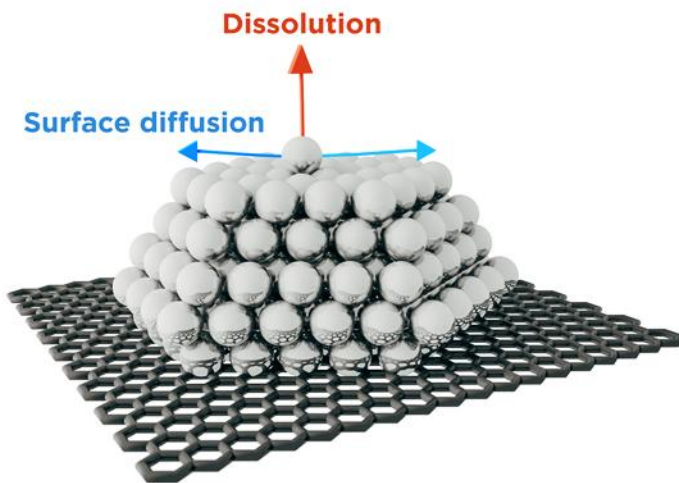
Coordination Number Analysis:



Jones\*, Nellist, et al, *Nano Lett.*, 2017, 17, 4003

# The reality of nanoparticles

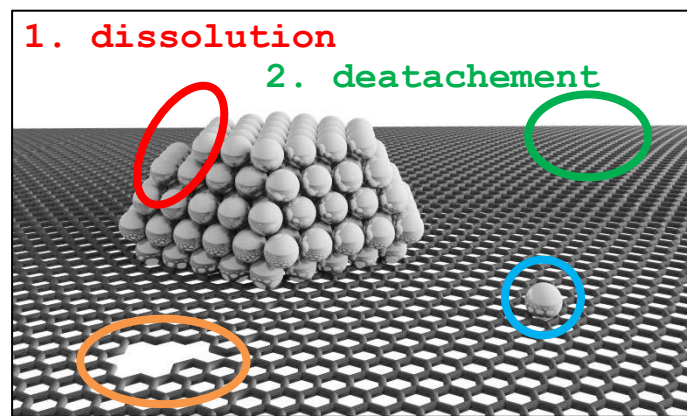
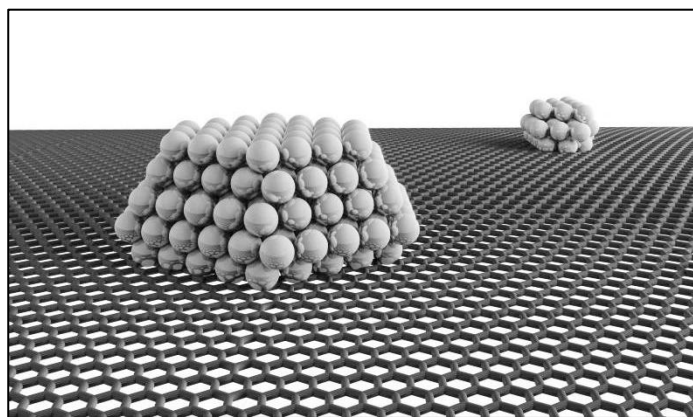
**Structure-activity** relationship on atomic level is a **state-of-the-art** in electrocatalysis



**Structure-stability** relationship at the atomic level is much less explored

# Spot the difference at the atomic level

Find the four differences in the two electrocatalysts images before and after aging - and then mark in the second one.



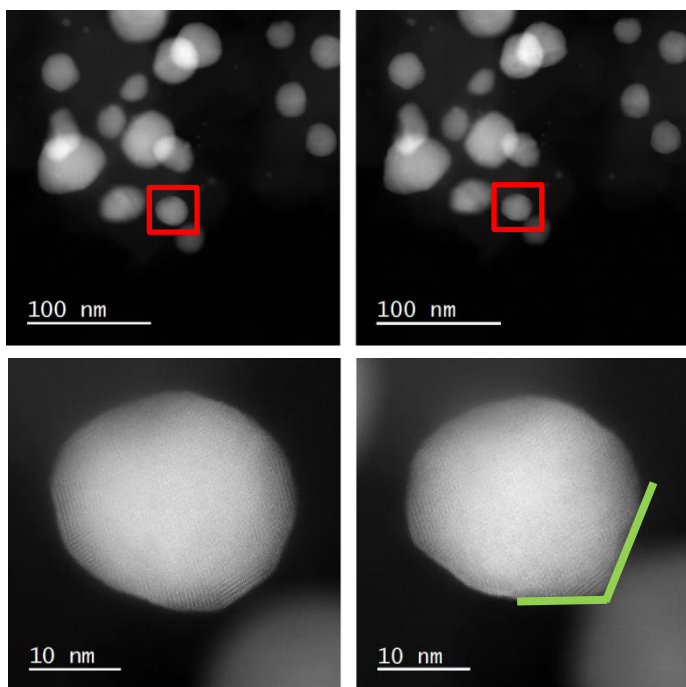
3. carbon corrosion

4. redeposition

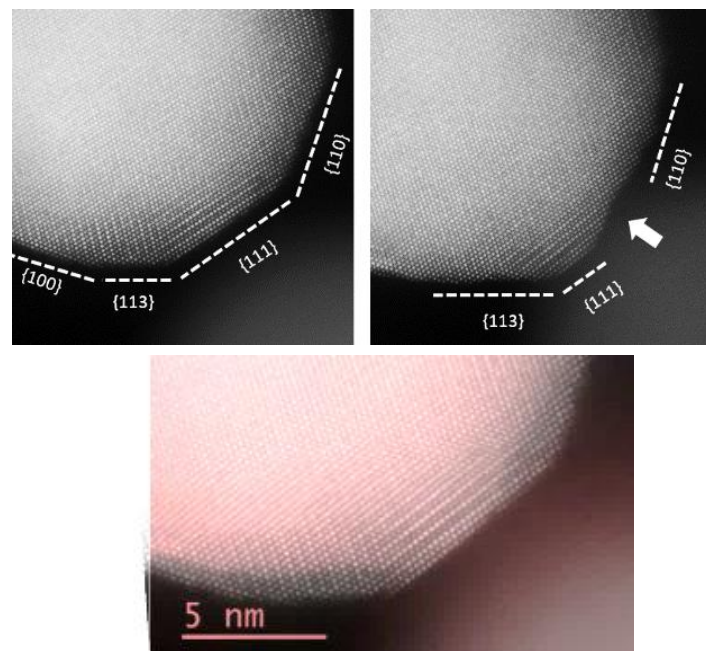
Hodnik\* and Cherevko\*, *Curr. Opin. Electrochem.*, 2019, 15, 73

Because the history of the location's physical characteristics is known, reliable conclusions on very complex atomic scale events such as degradation mechanisms can be drawn.

# Identical Location Transmission Electron Microscopy



0.1 M  $\text{HClO}_4$ , 200 cyc 0.05 – 1.2 V vs. RHE, 300 mV/s, Ar

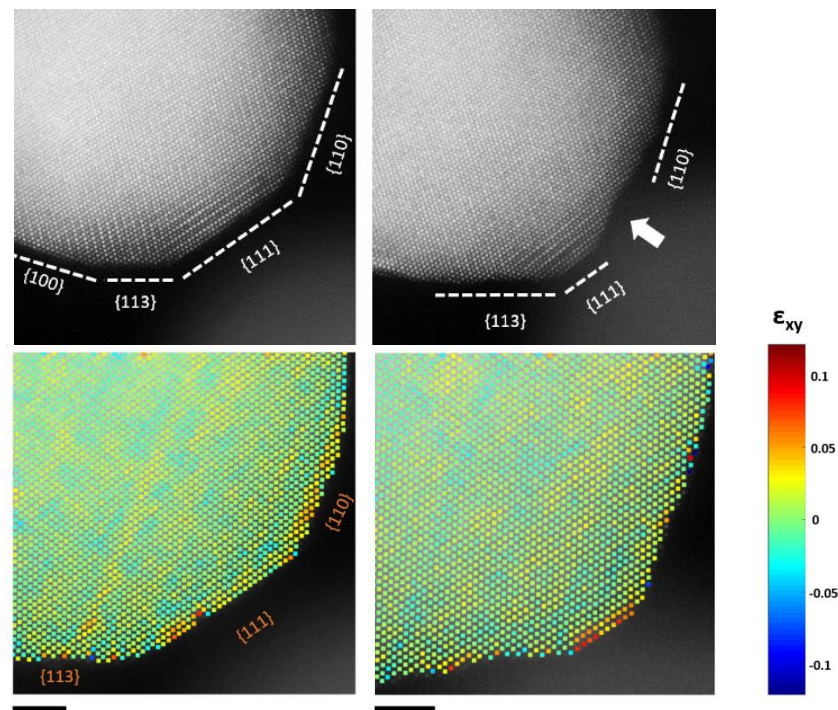
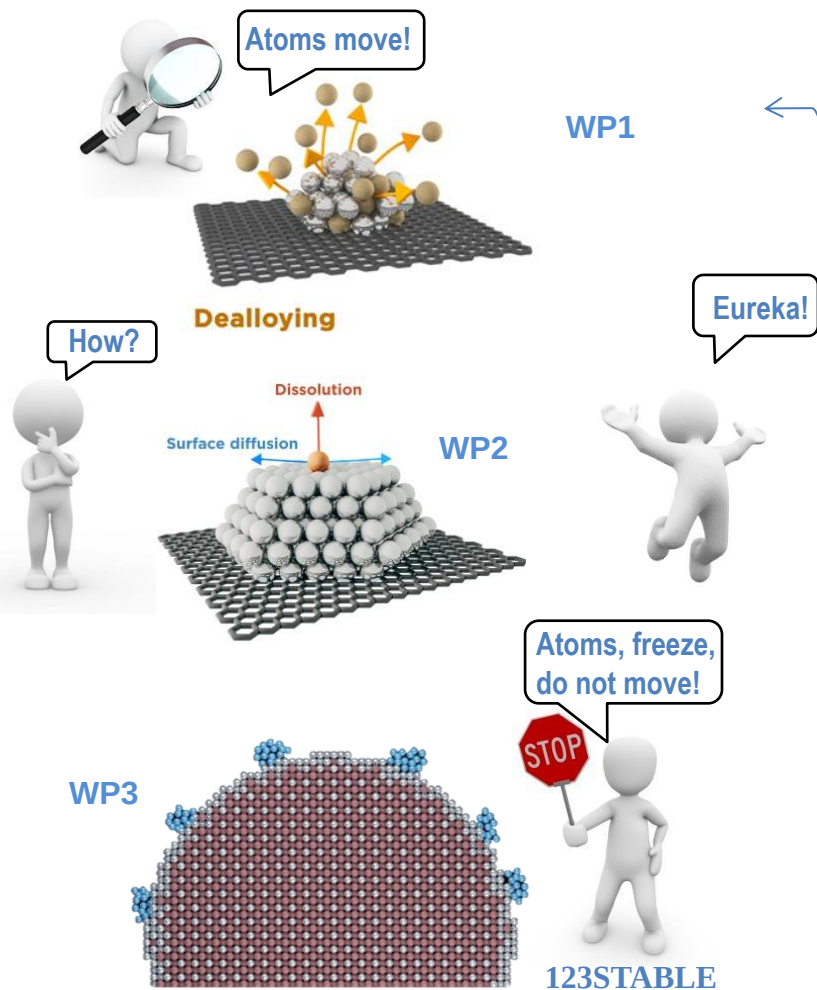


Ruiz-Zepeda & Hodnik\*, et al. *Nano Letters*, 2019 , just accepted

Challenge is to track changes on the atomic level on the same nanoparticle!

# Identical Location Transmission Electron Microscopy

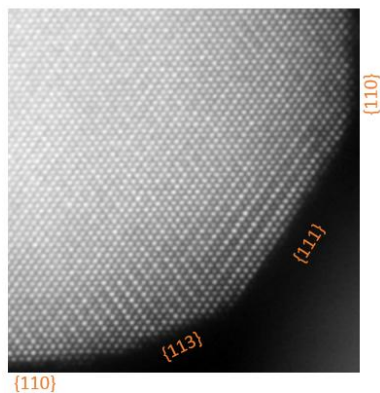
## My Research Objectives:



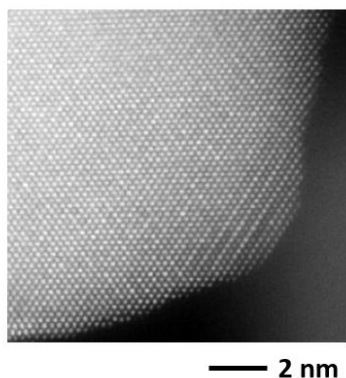
Ruiz-Zepeda & Hodnik\*, et al. *Nano Letters*, 2019 , just accepted

## WP2: Computer Simulations - KMC and 3D representations

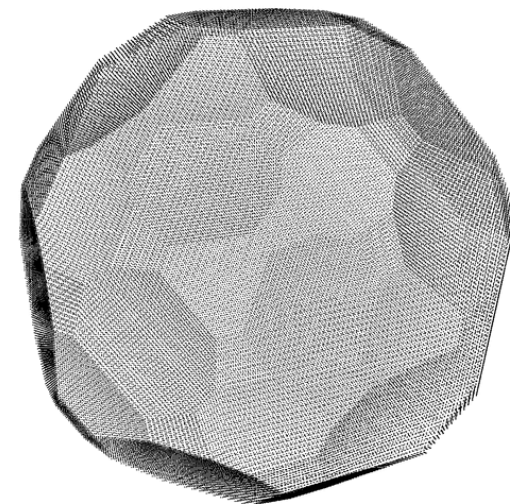
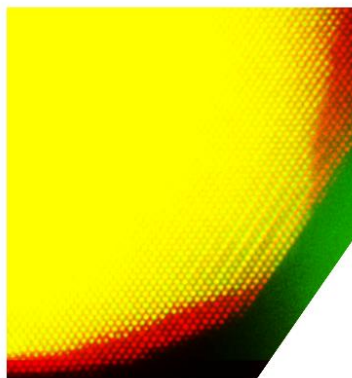
STEM before



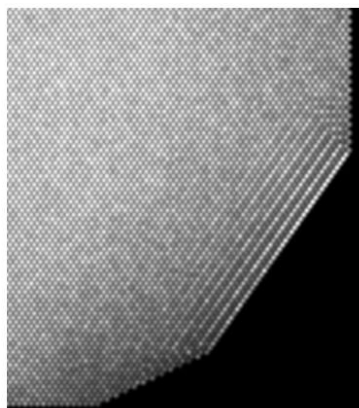
STEM after



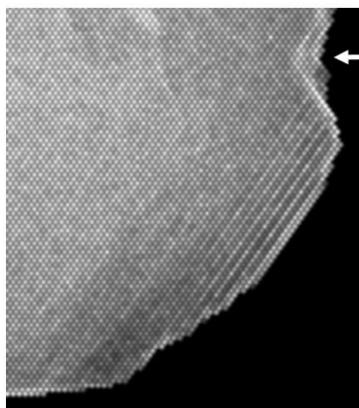
overlay



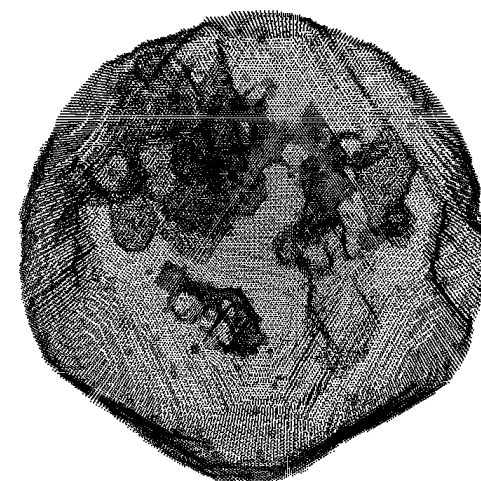
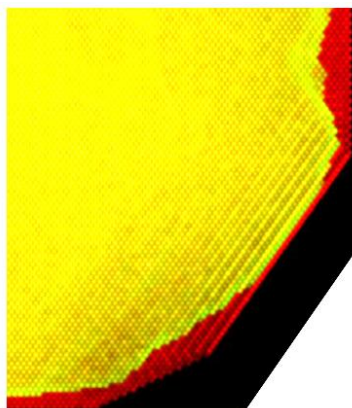
Simulation before



Simulation after



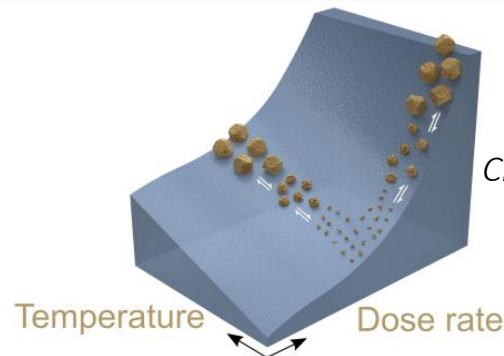
overlay



Ruiz-Zepeda & Hodnik\*, et al. *Nano Letters*, 2019 , just accepted

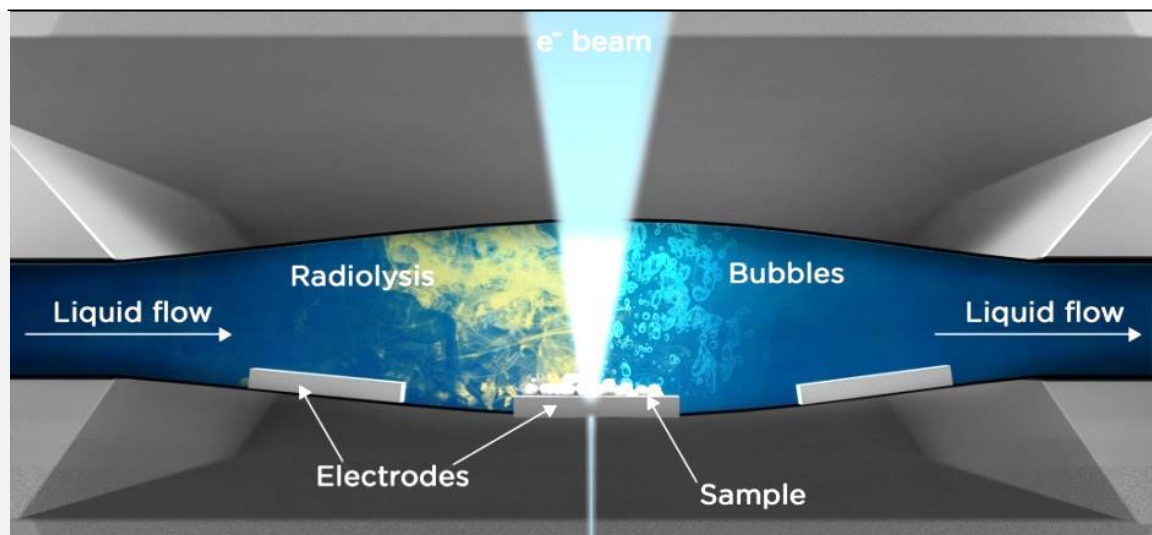
# Electrochemical *in-situ* liquid TEM

Grand challenge is to first understand and then to **control** the effect of electron beam - radiolysis induced artifacts!



Hodnik, Šturm\* et al.,  
*Chem. Sci.* 2019, revision

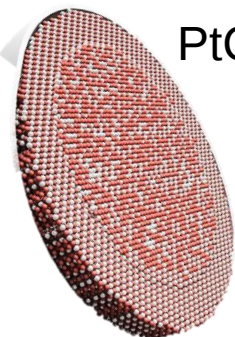
My unique IL-TEM expertise along with electrochemical *in-situ* liquid TEM experience is crucial!



Hodnik\* et al., *Acc. Chem. Res.* 2016, 49, 2015

# Approaches to improve stability

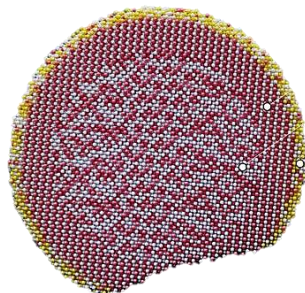
Model system



PtCu<sub>3</sub> ordering

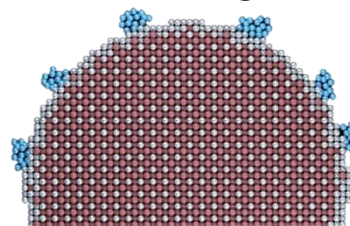
Hodnik\* et al., *PCCP*, 2014, 16, 13610

Doping with Au



Gatalo, Hodnik\* et al., *ACS Catalysis*, 2016, 6, 1630

Decorating with Ru

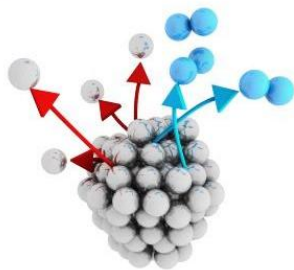


Jovanovic, Hodnik et al., *ACS Appl. Energy Mater.*, 2018, 1, 3190

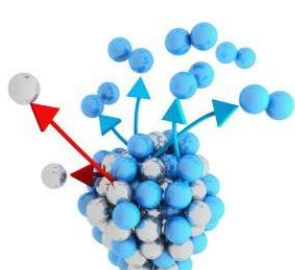
Doping with Ir, Rh etc.

"Unknown" system

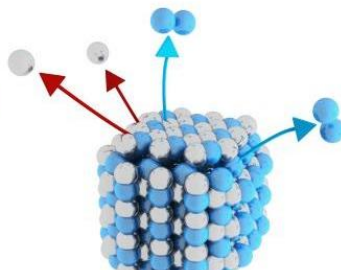
● - Ir      ● - O



Metallic Ir



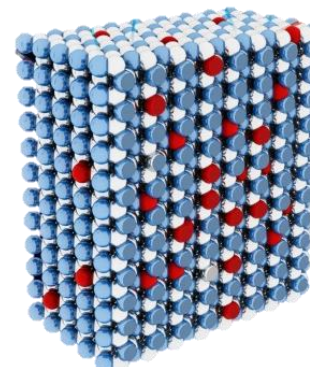
El. Amorphous Ir-Oxide



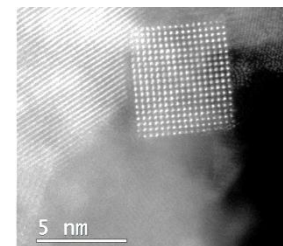
Ordered Rutile Ir-Oxide

Jovanovic, Hodnik\* et al., *JACS*, 2017, 139, 12867

● - Ru



Hodnik, Arico\* et al., *Nano energy*, 2017, 40, 218



Doping with Pt, Ti, etc.  
also RuO<sub>2</sub> Pt doping

## Impact

- Introduce new methodological approach for the fields of (electro)catalysis, corrosion, sensors, batteries, etc.
- Establish Pt- and Ir-based nanoparticles structure-stability relationships
- Develop new Pt- and Ir-based electrocatalysts with prolonged performances

Thank you for your attention!

## My TEAM

### 4 postdocs (2x2 + 2x3 years):

1. synthesis
2. TEM
3. Online analytics (ICP-MS & OLEMS)
4. computer simulation

### 3 PhD-students (2x4 + 1x3.5 years) :

1. Pt-based system
2. Ir-based system
3. el. liquid TEM

### 4 part-time experts (no cost):

1. synthesis
2. *in-situ* TEM
3. synchrotron
4. computer simulation

+technician

# Hvala za pozornost!

Brez poguma, vztrajnost, iznajdljivosti, podpore in sreče tudi dobra ideja ne dovolj!

## **Pogum**

Začeti nekaj velikega in tvegati neuspeh.

## **Vztrajnost**

Prijava na ERC je maraton, ne šprint. Popravki, kritike in nove verzije so del poti.

## **Iznajdljivost**

Premisli, kako svojo idejo predstaviti na inovativen in prepričljiv način.

## **Podpora**

Usklajenost z inštitucijo, kolegi, mentorji in pisarnami za podporo raziskovalcem.

## **Sreča**

Tudi najboljše prijave potrebujejo pravi trenutek in prave ocenjevalce.



Na KI vsak potem dobi majhno ERC zastavico v veliki predavalnici in ERC torto!!!

Ko dobite ERC StG (ali CoG) se zgodba nadaljuje... ERC vodje smo na razpolago za nasvete!

[nejc.hodnik@ki.si](mailto:nejc.hodnik@ki.si)