

Prof. Kay Severin
École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL)
ISIC, Batochime (BCH)
Av. Forel, 1015 Lausanne, Switzerland
Tel.: +41 21 6939302
Email: kay.severin@epfl.ch
Web: <http://lcs.epfl.ch>



Lausanne, March 25, 2025

Letter of Support for Tak Hin Wong

With this letter, I would like to give my strongest support for Tak Hin ('Dicky') Wong, who wants to join the *Hong Kong Laureate Forum* in November this year.

Dicky is employed as a PhD student in my group at the EPFL since the summer of 2022. He is working in the area of synthetic chemistry, with a special focus on the chemistry of N-heterocyclic diazoolefins.

Our laboratory has recently reported that stable diazoolefins can be obtained by combining N-heterocyclic olefins with nitrous oxide ([Nature Chemistry 2021, 13, 1055](#)). The main objective of Dicky's PhD work is to further explore the chemistry of this interesting new compound class. Since he joined my group, Dicky has already made important contributions by showing that N-heterocyclic diazoolefins can undergo a dimerization reaction to give quinoidal tetrazines. These results were published in the journal [Angewandte Chemie \(2023, e202303375\)](#). More recently, Dicky was able to show that diazoolefins can be used for the synthesis of iridium complexes with unusual N-heterocyclic vinylidene ligands. A summary of these investigations was submitted for publication to a high-impact journal (work under review).

Overall, the PhD work has been a great success. Dicky has a strong knowledge in synthetic chemistry, both from an experimental as well as theoretical point of view. He is also very smart and hardworking, and I am sure he has a great career ahead of him. Overall, Dicky is one of the most promising PhD students that I have mentored so far. I think he would be a worthy candidate for the *Hong Kong Laureate Forum*, and I am happy to give his application my strongest support.

In case you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'K. Severin', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

(Prof. K. Severin)