László Kürti, Ph.D.
Professor of Chemistry, Rice University
2025 Ross M. Brown Investigator

László Kürti is an internationally recognized organic chemist whose pioneering work is reshaping the landscape of synthetic chemistry. Born and raised in Hungary, he earned his Ph.D. at the University of Pennsylvania under the mentorship of Professor Amos B. Smith III, followed by postdoctoral training with Nobel Laureate Professor E.J. Corey at Harvard University.

Now a Full Professor at Rice University, Dr. Kürti leads a highly productive research group devoted to the development of powerful new reagents and strategies for building complex molecules. His lab has introduced numerous metal-free and catalytic methods for forging carbon–nitrogen and carbon–carbon bonds with unprecedented efficiency and selectivity. These innovations have enabled streamlined access to medicinally relevant amines, biaryls, and nitrogen-rich heterocycles—core structures in pharmaceuticals, agrochemicals, and materials science.

A passionate educator and prolific author, Dr. Kürti has co-authored three influential textbooks, including the widely used *Strategic Applications of Named Reactions in Organic Synthesis*. His dedication to mentorship is evident in the more than 40 undergraduate, graduate, and postdoctoral researchers he has trained so far—many of whom have gone on to distinguished careers in academia and industry.

Outside the lab, Dr. Kürti is a committed advocate for scientific outreach and community building. He is the faculty sponsor of the *Fun with Chemistry* program, which reaches over 10,000 underserved K–12 students each year with hands-on science demonstrations. He also founded the *Winter In-Person Organic Symposium (WIPOS)*, an annual international event that highlights both established leaders and emerging voices in synthetic chemistry.

Since launching his independent career in 2010, Dr. Kürti has delivered more than 230 invited lectures around the world at leading conferences, symposia, universities, biotech and pharmaceutical companies. His more than 60 peer-reviewed publications include high-impact articles in *Science*, *Nature Chemistry*, *JACS*, and *Angewandte Chemie*. Among his many honors are the NSF CAREER Award, the Amgen Young Investigators' Award, the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) Fellowship, and now the prestigious 2025 Ross M. Brown Investigator Award—recognizing his creativity, leadership, and enduring contributions to chemical science.

Besides being engaged in research, teaching, and writing, Dr. Kürti enjoys traveling the world with his wife and son and learning about different cultures and communities. To date, he has visited over 40 countries across five continents and 42 states in the U.S.