Mercouri Kanatzidis

2026 William H. Nichols Medalist

Professor Mercouri Kanatzidis was born in 1957. He earned his Ph.D. in inorganic chemistry from the University of Iowa in 1984, following a Bachelor's degree in applied chemistry from Aristotle University in Thessaloniki, Greece. He conducted postdoctoral research at the University of Michigan and Northwestern University from 1985 to 1987.

From 1987 to 2006, Dr. Kanatzidis held professorships at Michigan State University before joining Northwestern University in 2006 as a professor and senior scientist at Argonne National Laboratory.

Renowned for his groundbreaking work in halide perovskite materials, Dr. Kanatzidis pioneered the development of all-solid-state solar cells, significantly advancing photovoltaics. His research on coherent nanostructuring has revolutionized the understanding of energy conversion in materials, particularly in thermoelectric materials that convert heat into electricity.

Dr. Kanatzidis has received numerous prestigious awards and honors throughout his career, including the National Academy of Sciences in 2024, the Royal Society of Chemistry Centenary Prize and election to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2023, the Global Energy Prize in 2022, and the Clarivate Highly Cited Researcher designation since 2015 in three disciplines: chemistry, physics, and materials science. Additionally, he was honored with the DOE Ten at Ten Scientific Ideas Award in 2019 for his groundbreaking work on all-solid-state solar cells and received the American Institute of Chemistry Chemical Pioneer Award in 2018. He is the winner of the 2025 Albert Einstein World Award of Science.

Dr. Kanatzidis has mentored over 200 postgraduate and postdoctoral students, shaping the future of renewable energy science. In addition to his scientific contributions, he is dedicated to education and service, inspiring young scientists to excel in research.