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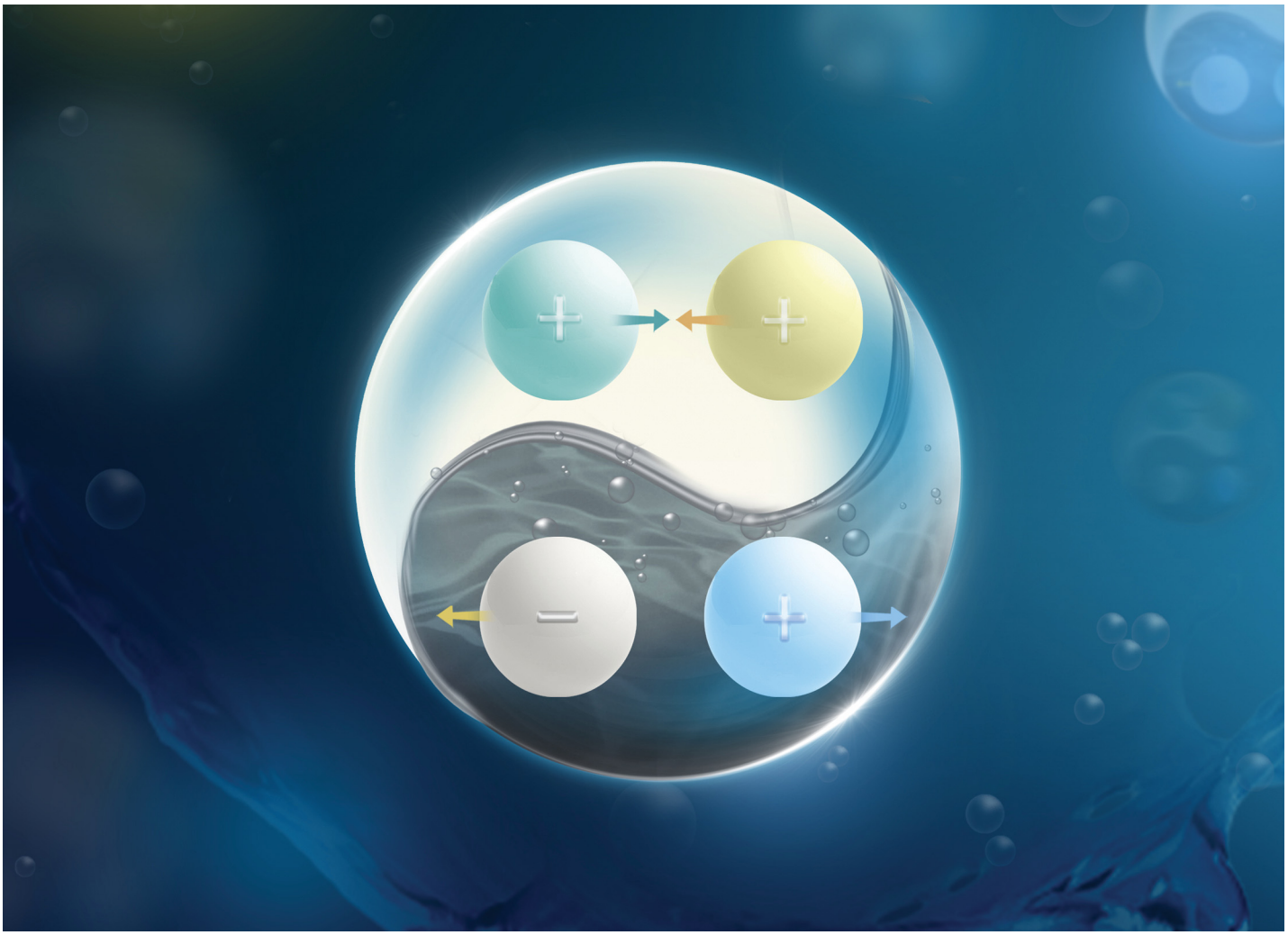

Showcasing collaborative research on electrostatics theory by Dr Zecheng Gan *et al.* from the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (Guangzhou) and Dr Ho-Kei Chan from the Harbin Institute of Technology (Shenzhen).

Mechanisms of electrostatic interactions between two charged dielectric spheres inside a polarizable medium: an effective-dipole analysis

Like charges repel and opposite charges attract? Not always! Due to polarization effects, two like-charged spheres that are more polarizable than their surrounding medium might attract each other, and two oppositely-charged spheres that are less polarizable than their surrounding medium might repel each other.

Image reproduced by permission of Ho-Kei Chan from *Soft Matter*, 2025, **21**, 1860.

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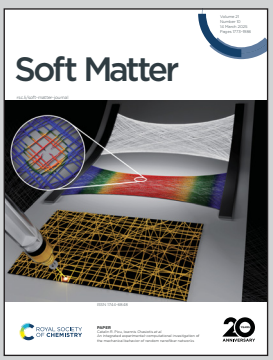

See Zecheng Gan, Ho-Kei Chan *et al.*, *Soft Matter*, 2025, **21**, 1860.

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