

MolTag-OPENING of the Second Funding Period (2015 – 2019): Symposium on December 9th, 2015 at the IST-Austria

The successful FWF-funded Doctoral Program “Ion channels and transporters as molecular drug targets” (“MolTag”) was extended for another four years. During the previous founding period MolTag was established as an internationally recognized centre for doctoral training in pharmaceutical and molecular research. The program offers research training and education in medicinal chemistry, pharmacology, pharmacoinformatics and molecular and cell biology.

The newly appointed international doctoral students celebrated the start of the new funding period together with their PIs, members of the scientific advisory board and alumni students during a scientific symposium that was organized by the MolTag program and hosted and co-organized by the IST Austria.



Opening address by Michael Sixt, Vice President of the IST-Austria, and Steffen Hering, Speaker of the Program

On December 9th 2015 we welcomed our guests and speakers from academic and industrial research in the beautiful Raiffeisen Lecture Hall at the IST Campus in Klosterneuburg.

The program included scientific lectures given by Dirk Trauner, TU Munich, Annette Dolphin, UCL, London and Terrance Snutch, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Greg Kaczorowski (Kanal Consulting, see full program see here: <http://moltag.univie.ac.at/docs/MolTagOpening2015.pdf>)



Dirk Trauner gave an introduction into the rapidly developing field of optopharmacology.

A graduate of the first MolTag program, Denise Luger, University of Vienna, shared her experiences with the new generation of MolTag students and the newly appointed student, Daniela Cintulova, TU Vienna, talked about her expectations towards the program.



Daniela Cintulova



Denise Luger

During a vibrant panel discussion: **“Drug development in academia: Fiction or reality?”** (led by Julia Kirchebner) our students discussed the Pros and Cons of drug development in academia with chief executives of universities, funding agencies, consulting organizations and industry.



Participants of the discussion from left to right: [Maria Garcia](#), Vice President Kanalis Consulting; [Peter Nussbaumer](#), CEO Lead Discovery Center; [Gregory Kaczorowski](#), Kanalis Consulting; [Gerhard Ecker](#), Vice Dean Faculty of Life Sciences, Univ. Vienna; [Joachim Seipelt](#), CEOF, Austria Wirtschaftsservice; [Oliver Szolar](#), CEO Wings4innovation; [Christine Mannhalter](#), President of the FWF for Life Sciences; Julia Kirchebner, Moderation, Univ.of Vienna; [Markus Wanko](#), Head Technology Transfer Office – TTO, IST; [Brigitte Robien](#), Head of Dept., Bridge Program, FFG; [Terrance Snutch](#), Michael Smith Lab., UBC; [Steffen Hering](#), MolTag Speaker; [Irene Fialka](#), CEO Innovation into Business; [Otto Doblhoff-Dier](#), Vice Rector for Research, VetMedUni Vienna.

The debate was stimulated by key note contributions of Maria Garcia/Kanalis Consulting LLC and Peter Nussbaumer, Lead Discovery, Dortmund.

In conclusion, the “MolTag” Doctoral program cordially welcomed its newly appointed 22 students from 11 countries.

	Applications	Invited	PhD Positions	Assoc. Positions	Together
Austria	27 (9%)	16	3	7	10
Europe¹⁾	62 (21%)	15	5	3	8
Asia²⁾	159 (55%)	7	1	1	2
Afrika	34 (12%)	1	0	0	0
America (N&S)³⁾	8 (3%)	4	0	2	2
Total Number	290 (100%)	43	9	13	22

1) = Estonia, Germany, Greece, Italy, Slovakia, Romania; 2) = China, India; 3) = USA; Mexico



From left to right: Stefanie Kickinger, Eva Hellsberg, Felix Mayer, Marco Niello, Konstantina Bampali, Sankalp Jain, Tina Hofmaier, Yong Chen, Harald Bernsteiner, Marco Stadler, Maria Teresa Iorio, Stanislav Andranovits, David Siebert, Daniela Cintulova, Dominik Dreier, Jasmin Morandell, Dora Tarlunganu, Ximena Contreras, Eva Maria Plessl-Zangerl, Martin Berger, Catherine McKenzie, Eva Reichhart.

1st MolTag-Retreat, December 10th, UZA 2

At the next day the newly appointed Moltag students presented a first outline of their projects to the MolTag Faculty and the MolTag Scientific Advisory Board (Maria Garcia, Gregory Kaczorowski, Hugo

Kubinyi, Peter Nussbaumer, Chris Oostenbrink, Terrance Snutch). MolTag students got profound input from the SAB and PIs during their oral and poster presentations.

A prize for the “Best MolTag Poster Presentation” was awarded to Felix Mayer, PhD at the Medical University of Vienna.

The Program Speaker, Steffen Hering, concluded the Symposium and MolTag retreat which will certainly not be the last productive meeting with our SAB.

The next MolTag retreat takes place in September 2016, 27./28. Kamptal/Wachau.