



Denise KOGLER née Luger

Finishing year: 2015

Supervisor: Steffen Hering,
Faculty of Life Sciences, Univ.
of Vienna

Thesis title: Molecular
determinants of GABA_A
receptor modulation by
valerenic acid.

**Current Position and
Employer:** Hospital
Pharmacist at the Wiener
Gesundheitsverbund (Klinik
Favoriten), Vienna, Austria;
University Lecturer

MolTag alumni page:

[Denise Kogler \(née Luger\)](#)
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How would you summarize your thesis results in 3 sentences?

I combined electrophysiology, animal behavioural testing and computational biology to investigate amino acids necessary for efficient modulation of GABA_A receptors by Valerenic acid (VA). By doing so, I localized the potential binding site of VA on GABA_A receptors and showed that it overlaps with binding sites for known anaesthetics such as etomidate. Based on this findings, we then generated novel GABA_A receptor ligands together with the group of Prof. Mihovilovic with enhanced GABA_A receptor activity and increased anxiolytic and anticonvulsant potential.

What are you doing now?

After a PostDoc at UniVie, I joined AstraZeneca as a Medical Scientific Liaison Manager, responsible for scientific communication and KOL management. In 2017 I moved back to the hospital sector. Since then, I work as a hospital pharmacist. My main tasks are the initiation and management of oncology and Covid-19 clinical trials in the hospital pharmacy, providing medical and scientific information about the effective and safe drug use to doctors as well as the supervision of the sterile compounding of individual drug preparations for cancer patients. Additionally, I lecture courses on drug development, clinical trial management, applied pharmacology and clinical pharmacy at Universities in the Vienna area.

What was the impact of the MolTag program on your further career?

It broadened my horizons by collaborating with various research groups from different universities and countries. I also got insight into drug synthesis and computational biology by joining research groups at TU Wien and MedUni. Further, I had the great opportunity to spend 6 months at UCL London, where I gained experiences on patch-clamp physiology of isolated neurons.

What is your recommendation for current MolTag students?

Take advantage of the MolTag network and build relationships to researchers all over the world!

