



Laurin WIMMER



Finishing year: 2016

Supervisor: Marko Mihovilovic, TU Wien

Thesis title: Synthesis of bioactive molecules for the investigation of ion channels and transporters.

Current Position and Employer: Principal Investigator and Project Leader in the Process Chemistry Dept. at Novartis, Basel, Switzerland (after a PostDoc in the lab of Phil Baran at The Scripps Research Institute, CA, USA)

MolTag alumni page:
[Laurin Wimmer \(univie.ac.at\)](http://univie.ac.at)

Social network:
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How would you summarize your thesis results in 3 sentences?

For my PhD work I investigated structure-activity relationships across subtypes of GABA_A receptors identifying elusive subtype selective compounds. In a second project we were interested in the metabolic fate of metcathinones, a common class of recreational drugs, and their interaction with transporters. In both projects we were able to deepen the understanding of compound-receptor interactions

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

It gave me a **sense of appreciation for other disciplines in the drug discovery and development arena**. In industry, teams are very divers and working together well is one of the most important things. Having gained a basic understanding of disciplines outside of my core area of expertise helps me today to better understand and collaborate in interdisciplinary teams.

Did you keep connections with some former colleagues? I do - with some we became good friends and we keep in touch regularly. For others I follow them on LinkedIn and other platforms and I am always glad to see how well their careers are going.

What did you particularly like about the MolTag program?

The program offered a unique opportunity to work in an interdisciplinary team as PhD student. Besides the opportunity for personal growth this setting also sparked scientific ideas, some of it later turned into research projects.

What is your recommendation for current MolTag PhD students?

Take full advantage of what the program has to offer. Lab rotations and internships abroad were really valuable experiences. Secondly, **start planning for the time after PhD early on**. This can be difficult with all the stress and workload but it is very important since e.g. applying for scholarship can take a long time.

