

# MolTag Faculty Member and MolTag Scientific Advisory Board

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## MolTag FACULTY

- [Johann Danzl](#), IST Austria
- [Gerhard Ecker](#), University of Vienna
- [Margot Ernst](#), Medical University of Vienna
- [Leticia González](#), University of Vienna
- [Steffen Hering](#), University of Vienna
- [Nuno Maulide](#), University of Vienna
- [Marko Mihovilovic](#), TU Wien
- [Gaia Novarino](#), IST Austria
- [Harald Sitte](#), Medical University of Vienna
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## MolTag SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY BOARD

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## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

by the MolTag Speaker, Univ.Prof.Mag.Dr. Gerhard Ecker,  
Faculty of Life Sciences, University of Vienna

Dear MolTag Community and friends,

On March 4<sup>th</sup> 2021, our Doctoral Program MolTag – Molecular Drug Targets, celebrated 10 years of its start. MolTag comprises a research and training platform for PhD projects from the **University of Vienna, the Medical University of Vienna, the Vienna University of Technology, and the Institute of Science and Technology Austria**. The consortium brings together 10 research groups covering a broad area of expertise, such as pharmacology, molecular biology, synthetic chemistry, biophysics, high resolution optical microscopy, and computational methods in Life Sciences.

Our students are exposed to a diverse portfolio of methods including electrophysical techniques, site-directed mutagenesis, animal models, chemical synthesis, quantum chemistry, computational drug design techniques, as well as high-resolution fluorescence microscopy. This provides them with a unique profile for approaching the challenging research questions in the consortium, which focus on **ion channels and transporters**.

MolTag students also benefit from a highly elaborated teaching and training concept, which, beyond the daily interaction between the supervisor, co-supervisor and the PhD students, comprises lab rotations, a journal club, a MolTag seminar, annual scientific retreats and a Science Day with internationally renowned speakers (selected and hosted by students). Assignment of a co-supervisor, development of a personal career plan for students including an international internship, enabling skills seminars and establishment of a scientific advisory board guarantee a high quality of supervision.

The past 10 years showed that the concept of exposing our students to a broad method portfolio and to challenging interdisciplinary research topics provides them with an excellent basis for a further career in science. **From the supervisor's point of view, it is exciting to work with such motivated and talented early career scientists, to see them growing, and to be part of their first big steps into science.** We are all curious and excited following their path, and I am convinced that our MolTag alumni will make great contributions to science.

Gerhard Ecker

### MolTag in Numbers:

**Established: 03.2011**

**Funding Period: 3**

**Funded by: Austrian Science Fund (FWF)**

**Finished PhD theses: 45**

**Ongoing PhD projects (04.21): 22**

**Number of groups (2011-2020): 13**

**Internships abroad: 35**

**Lab Rotations: 58**

**Guest lectures: 78**

**Publications (2011-2020): 192**



## Johann Georg DANZL



**Finishing year PhD:** 2010

**MolTag PI since:** 2019

**Institution:** IST Austria

**Main research area within MolTag:** High-resolution optical imaging

**Number of supervised MolTag students:** 3 ongoing

**MolTag PI page:**

[Johann Danzl \(univie.ac.at\)](http://Johann.Danzl@univie.ac.at)

**Lab Page:**

[DANZL-LAB – High-Resolution Optical Imaging for Biology \(ist.ac.at\)](#)

[Johann Georg Danzl \(0000-0001-8559-3973\) - ORCID | Connecting Research and Researchers](#)

**Social network:**

[Danzl Lab \(@DanzlLab\) / Twitter](#)

### How do you experience the development of the students during their time in MolTag?

MolTag is an excellent platform for academic and personal development. It brings together students of diverse backgrounds and interests under a common denominator and encourages them to take advantage of this stimulating and vibrant environment. **MolTag students are undergoing remarkable trajectories and the program supports this by facilitating broadening horizons in addition to fostering in-depth expertise.**

### What distinguishes students who are members of an interdisciplinary DK like MolTag from other doctoral students?

To MolTag students it is **very natural to seek inspiration across disciplines and appreciate the work that is done in diverse fields** with an open-minded and curious attitude.

### What is your favourite feature of the MolTag program?

I particularly enjoy the fact that MolTag students and PIs have a **very diverse interaction basis across boundaries of disciplines but also across research institutions.** It enriches the research, opens up new avenues of how to think about projects, and makes students experience first hand that the most exciting research avenues may arise from interactions with researchers of diverse fields and backgrounds.

### What is the most important advice you want to give to current PhD students?

Whatever you do in terms of research, **drive it forward with passion, strive to do it well, and learn from your failures.** It will likely open up possibilities that you did not dare to dream of.





## Gerhard ECKER



**Finishing year PhD:** 1991

**MolTag PI since:** 2011

**Institution:** Faculty of Life Sciences, University of Vienna

**Main research area within MolTag:** Pharmacoinformatics

**Number of supervised MolTag students:** 7 finished, 3 ongoing

**Number of co-supervised MolTag students:** 4 finished

**MolTag PI page:**

[Gerhard F. Ecker \(univie.ac.at\)](#)

[Gerhard Ecker \(0000-0003-4209-6883\)](#)

- [ORCID](#) | [Connecting Research and Researchers](#)

**Social networks:**

[Gerhard Ecker](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

[Gerhard Ecker \(@EckerGerhard\)](#) / [Twitter](#)

**How do you experience the development of the students during their time in MolTag?**

MolTag is a fantastic opportunity **to get exposed to other disciplines and to work on joint interdisciplinary projects**. With the lab rotations and the internships abroad they build a strong national and international network which will last for a very long time.

**What distinguishes students who are members of an interdisciplinary DK like MolTag from other doctoral students?**

With the standardized recruitment process, MolTag students form a **cohort of excellent young scientists**, which stays for the whole training program and beyond. They **regularly receive feedback** from our PIs and SAB members, which prepares them for all the challenges ahead.

**Did you keep in touch with your former MolTag students?**

Of course I follow the further career paths of our students. Its nice to see that **they get good positions in pharmaceutical industry, SMEs, and prestigious institutions** such as the FDA. We meet regularly at theses defenses of current students, and also at conferences.

**What is the most important advice you want to give to current MolTag students?**

Enjoy these **exciting times of being dedicated solely to research!** Leverage all the opportunities MolTag provides you with, and make the best out of it. **Go for the high hanging fruits, build your international network, and stay connected** to the MolTag family.





## Margot ERNST



**Finishing year PhD:** 1992

**MolTag PI since:** 2011

**Institution:** Medical  
University of Vienna

**Main research area within  
MolTag:** Brain Research/  
Neuropharmacology

**Number of supervised  
MolTag students:** 4 finished, 1  
ongoing

**Number of co-supervised  
MolTag students:** 8 finished, 3  
ongoing

**MolTag PI page:**

[Margot Ernst \(univie.ac.at\)](http://MargotErnst.univie.ac.at)

[Margot Ernst \(0000-0002-9809-2649\) - ORCID](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9809-2649) | [Connecting Research and Researchers](#)

**How do you experience the development of the students during their time in MolTag?**

Our students really **learn to exploit an interdisciplinary setting** – most grow from either curiosity or slight intimidation into a mindframe of a broad scientific horizon and genuinely understand that there is no “stupid question” in science.

**What distinguishes students who are members of an interdisciplinary DK like MolTag from other doctoral students?**

In my perception it helps them to inquire outside of their area of specialty, and to grow into other fields at a broad stroke level. **The encounters with the SAB also help their confidence and presentation skills.**

**Did you keep in touch with your former MolTag students?**

Yes, I am in touch with several students whom I either supervised or co-supervised - **some of these contacts might grow into fruitful collaborations!**

**What is the most important advice you want to give to current MolTag students?**

Use the options, join the discussions! Both your core expertise and your interdisciplinary horizon are important assets, **and for each of you the “sweet spot” optimizing both time in your lab and time spent networking and in interdisciplinary discussions is unique.** Try to find it 😊







## Leticia GONZÁLEZ



**Finishing year PhD:** 1998

**MolTag PI since:** 2019

**Institution:** Faculty of Chemistry, University of Vienna

**Main research area within MolTag:** Theoretical Chemistry

**Number of supervised MolTag students:** 1 finished, 2 ongoing

**MolTag PI page:**

[Leticia González \(univie.ac.at\)](https://univie.ac.at)

[Leticia Gonzalez \(0000-0001-5112-794X\)](https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5112-794X) - [ORCID](#) | [Connecting Research and Researchers](#)

**Social networks:**

[Leticia Gonzalez](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

[TheoChem, González group \(@theo\\_chem\)](#) / [Twitter](#)

**How do you experience the development of the students during their time in MolTag?**

The students learn to be independent and **to take their own steps to collaborate with other students of the network**, learn from them and create synergies.

**What distinguishes students who are members of an interdisciplinary DK like MolTag from other doctoral students?**

The students have a very broad knowledge and **are willing to cooperate and discuss with other partners more than those who work outside networks**, such as MolTag. MolTag students have social capabilities that are very much developed and they become excellent communicators to every audience!

**Did you keep in touch with your former MolTag student?**

It is important to know where your former doctoral students are, how they do progress, what they became and which career steps are they doing. I do not distinguish between MolTag or other doctoral students, **all are doctoral children I like to keep in touch with and offer advice and support whenever needed.**

**What is the most important advice you want to give to PhD students?**

A PhD is a long way and it might have many stones on the way. So **pick something you like and you are ready to enjoy spending time on it.** Be ready to fall to rise again. Failing is an important part in your career development, so do not be demotivated if you fail, just try again!





## Steffen HERING



**As the MolTag Speaker in two funding periods: How do you experience the development of the students during their time in MolTag?**

Each of them took advantage of independent collaboration with fellow students within the MolTag consortium. This enabled **competitive projects and high impact publications** which were particularly characterized by excellent scientific contributions from other areas. I just recollect the work of Angela Schöffmann and Juliane Faschang, who made use of smart chemical library from students of TU Vienna and Priyanka Saxena and Denise Kogler, who were able to use MD simulations from colleagues at University of Vienna in their work.

**What distinguishes students who are members of an interdisciplinary DK like MolTag from other doctoral students?**

Better interdisciplinary training and more competitive publications as a start for a scientific career.

**Did you keep in touch with your former MolTag students?**

Yes, with most alumni pursuing an academic career.

**What is the most important advice you want to give to current MolTag students?**

**Stay independent in your scientific research, use all degrees of freedom, use the opportunities to visit a top international laboratory, latest as PostDoc.**

**Finishing year PhD:** 1983

**MolTag PI since:** 2011

**MolTag Speaker:** 2011-2018

**Institution:** Faculty of Life Sciences, University of Vienna

**Main research area within**

**MolTag:** Pharmacology

**Number of supervised**

**MolTag students:** 5 finished, 1 ongoing

**Number of co-supervised**

**MolTag students:** 2 finished

**MolTag PI page:**

[Steffen Hering \(univie.ac.at\)](http://univie.ac.at)

[Steffen Hering - Search Results - PubMed \(nih.gov\)](#)





## Nuno MAULIDE



### How do you experience the development of the students during their time in MolTag?

Students gain immensely through exposure to the multidisciplinary and innovative environment of MolTag. The programme really offers them a **chance to grow as scientists and provides a wide range of activities** through which personal skills are also developed.

### What distinguishes students who are members of an interdisciplinary DK like MolTag from other doctoral students?

Quite clearly, our MolTag students are from the beginning made aware of the translational opportunities that their research offers them. **This also leads to a different appreciation of Pharmacology and Biology and the opportunities that lie at the interface of Chemistry**, as an enabling discipline.

### Did you keep in touch with your former MolTag students?

We had in December 2019 our own 10-year celebration – commemorating 10 years of the research group! For that occasion we invited all Alumni back to Vienna and our MolTag students were all there – past and present. **It is always great to see how former students develop** and it is not unusual that a former (MolTag) student writes to ask for career advice.

### What is the most important advice you want to give to current MolTag students?

**Be curious, be open-minded and do not hesitate to jump into and learn about areas with which you might not be 100% familiar.** The consortium offers you wonderful opportunities to do so. A pharmacologist can do a lab rotation in an organic chemistry lab – actually, something like that just happened and the results were truly excellent!

**Finishing year PhD:** 2007

**MolTag PI since:** 2015

**Institution:** Faculty of Chemistry, University of Vienna

**Main research area within MolTag:** Organic Synthesis

**Number of supervised MolTag students:** 2 finished, 2 ongoing

#### MolTag PI page:

[Nuno Maulide \(univie.ac.at\)](http://univie.ac.at)

[Nuno Maulide \(0000-0003-3643-0718\)](https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3643-0718)  
- [ORCID](#) | [Connecting Research and Researchers](#)

#### Social networks:

[Nuno Maulide](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

[MaulideGroup \(@MaulideLab\)](#) / [Twitter](#)







## Marko D. MIHOVILOVIC

### How do you experience the development of the students during their time in MolTag?

MolTag is a phantastic opportunity to actively participate in trans-disciplinary research. It provides **unique skills to interconnect scientists from various areas**, a highly important aspect in modern research and development. Our students are encouraged to think out of the box and implement their ideas.

### What distinguishes students who are members of an interdisciplinary DK like MolTag from other doctoral students?

**According to feedback received from industry, our students are highly competitive at international level** based on their hands-on experiences in all areas covered by the program. They are capable to communicate with biologists, chemists and theoreticians, making them exceptional “connectors” in trans-disciplinary projects.

### Did you keep in touch with your former MolTag students?

It is great to experience the group of alumni to venture out into both academia and industry and to excel in their future challenges. We are still connected via modern communication channels and there are even collaborations ongoing – MolTag indeed represents a larger family in medical life-sciences!

### What is the most important advice you want to give to current MolTag students?

**Think big – the larger the challenge, the bigger the prospective reward!** You have all the important things available within the program, use them and make something extraordinary out of it! You are forming the foundation of your fure career!

**Finishing year PhD:** 1996

**MolTag PI since:** 2011

**Institution:** TU Wien

**Main research area within MolTag:** Bio-organic Chemistry

**Number of supervised MolTag students:** 6 finished, 5 ongoing

**Number of co-supervised MolTag students:** 3 finished

**MolTag PI page:**

[Marko Mihovilovic \(univie.ac.at\)](http://univie.ac.at)

[Marko D. Mihovilovic \(0000-0002-5438-8368\) - ORCID | Connecting Research and Researchers](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5438-8368)

**Lab page:**

[Home \(tuwien.ac.at\)](http://tuwien.ac.at)





## Gaia NOVARINO



**Finishing year PhD:** 2006

**MolTag PI since:** 2015

**Institution:** IST Austria

**Main research area within MolTag:** Epilepsy and Cognitive Disorders

**Number of supervised MolTag students:** 2 finished, 2 ongoing

**Number of co-supervised MolTag students:** 2 finished

**MolTag PI page:**  
[Gaia Novarino \(univie.ac.at\)](https://univie.ac.at)

[Gaia Novarino \(0000-0002-7673-7178\)](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7673-7178)  
[- ORCID | Connecting Research and Researchers](#)

**Social networks:**

[Gaia Novarino | LinkedIn](#)

[Gaia Novarino \(@gaianovarino\) / Twitter](#)

**How do you experience the development of the students during their time in MolTag?**

I feel that **students usually flourish in the cross- and interdisciplinary research community that MolTag offers**. The program allows them to reach their full potential by constantly asking them to move out of their comfort zone and explore new fields and working methods. By doing this, they not only grow on a personal and professional level, but **also might discover a career path that they would have not considered before enrolling the program**.

**What distinguishes students who are members of an interdisciplinary DK like MolTag from other doctoral students?**

MolTag students seem to be more open minded and curious for other disciplines. **They show good professional and soft skills to be strong, productive and responsible independent researcher** who is able to make a significant contribution to the research community.

**Did you keep in touch with your former MolTag students?**

To today most students are still working with me at my Institute but I am certainly looking forward to keep in contact and support Alumni students when making important career decisions. **A good network within the research community is nowadays just as important as excellent research work**.

**What is the most important advice you want to give to current MolTag students?**

**Passion and dedication are keys** to reach your goals in every area of life, including in science. **Use this program as an opportunity to break boundaries and explore new fields** while working along experts to find your own personal niche for your future. Last but not least, built a good network and use it.





## Harald SITTE



### How do you experience the development of the students during their time in MolTag?

MolTag offers the students a great possibility to **develop in a research-friendly environment, with the opportunity to visit conferences and laboratories around the globe** – an asset which cannot be esteemed high enough. I can see how this impacts and impacted positively on the development of my MolTag students.

**Finishing year MD:** 1995

**MolTag PI since:** 2011

**Institution:** Medical University of Vienna

**Main research area within MolTag:** Psychopharmacology

**Number of supervised MolTag students:** 6 finished, 2 ongoing

**Number of co-supervised MolTag students:** 7 finished + 1 ongoing

**MolTag PI page:**

[Harald Sitte \(univie.ac.at\)](http://univie.ac.at)

[Harald H. Sitte \(0000-0002-1339-7444\)](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1339-7444) - [ORCID](#) | [Connecting Research and Researchers](#)

### What distinguishes students who are members of an interdisciplinary DK like MolTag from other doctoral students?

The possibility to **interact within a heterogenous network, to learn from students engaged in other disciplines and present in front of a number of PI's thereof is a scientific "incubator"** which is difficult to reach in a typical PhD programme, established in one discipline (only).

### Did you keep in touch with your former MolTag students?

With almost all of them – and I must say that I am **proud of all of their diverse pathways** – and happy for them.

### What is the most important advice you want to give to current MolTag students?

**Openness and curiosity is key to success!**





## Anna WEINZINGER



### How do you experience the development of the students during their time in MolTag?

MolTag is an amazing platform that enables students **first-hand experience in interdisciplinary research**. They learn to collaborate with other students of the network, which not only enriches their research but helps them to grow into mature scientists.

### What distinguishes students who are members of an interdisciplinary DK like MolTag from other doctoral students?

Students benefit from the **large methods and skills portfolio** available in MolTag. They learn to explore new fields and working methods, which helps them become better researchers. **The national and international network they build together with the social skills they acquire is a great asset for their future careers** in academia or industry.

### Did you keep in touch with your former MolTag students?

Yes, with most of them.

### What is the most important advice you want to give to current MolTag students?

Take the possibility to **go abroad and visit other labs - present your work at national and international conferences**, this is a great opportunity to network and get feedback on your early research - maintain a healthy work-life balance -

read <https://phdcomics.com/> 

**Finishing year PhD:** 2007

**MolTag PI since:** 2011

**Institution:** Faculty of Life Sciences, University of Vienna

**Main research area within MolTag:** Bioinformatics

**Number of supervised MolTag students:** 5 finished, 2 ongoing

**Number of co-supervised MolTag students:** 5 finished, 1 ongoing

**MolTag PI page:**

[Anna Weinzinger \(univie.ac.at\)](https://www.univie.ac.at/anna-weinzinger/)

[Stary-Weinzinger \(0000-0002-9202-0484\)](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9202-0484) - [ORCID](#) | [Connecting Research and Researchers](#)

[Molecular modelling of ion channels \(Prof. Weinzinger\) \(univie.ac.at\)](#)







## Scientific Advisory Board

# Christopher AHERN



**Finishing year PhD:** 2002

**MolTag SAB since:** 2019

**Institution:** Carver College of Medicine, University of Iowa Health care, Iowa City, IA, USA

**Main research area:** chemical biology, protein structure and engineering, ligand-receptor binding analysis

**Number of supervised PhD students (at home institution):** 7

**MolTag SAB page:**

[Christopher A. Ahern \(univie.ac.at\)](https://univie.ac.at)

[Christopher Ahern \(0000-0002-7975-2744\) - ORCID](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7975-2744) | [Connecting Research and Researchers](#)

**Social network:**

[Chris Ahern \(@chrisahern\)](#) / [Twitter](#)

**How do you experience the development of the students during their time in MolTag?**

The MolTag students are some of the best scientists in training that I have met with in any graduate program worldwide. Their curiosity and drive are a great source of inspiration. **I have been especially impressed seeing some of the new students become more confident as they make their way through the program.**

**How important is the interdisciplinary training approach for the further career path?**

**Interdisciplinary training is the path of the future.** I think that all PhD training programs will be adopting many of the approaches that have been developed and honed by MolTag trainees and supervisors.

**Did you keep in touch with former MolTag students?**

It has been great to see so many of the MolTag trainees find success after graduating from the program.

**What is the most important advice you want to give to current MolTag students?**

2020 and 2021 have been especially difficult years for the practicing scientist. **But what we've seen happening in science with rapid vaccine development should give hope to all scientists everywhere.** My advice to the current group of MolTag students is **to stay hopeful and excited for the future as you will be the next thought leaders in the scientific and biotech communities.**



## Scientific Advisory Board



## Delia BELELLI

**Finishing year PhD:** 1987

**MolTag SAB since:** 2020

**Institution:** University of  
Dundee, School of Medicine, UK

**Main research area:**

Neurotransmission, psychiatric  
& neurological disorders, stress,  
GABA<sub>A</sub> receptors,  
neuromodulation,  
neurosteroids

**Number of (in general)  
supervised PhD students:** 20

**MolTag SAB page:**

[Delia Belelli \(univie.ac.at\)](https://univie.ac.at)

[Delia Belelli \(0000-0001-7912-8637\) -  
ORCID | Connecting Research and  
Researchers](https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7912-8637)

**Social network:**

[Delia Belelli | LinkedIn](#)



**What distinguishes students who are members of an international/interdisciplinary PhD program like MolTag from other doctoral students?**

Students have **the unique opportunity to be exposed to and gain a broad, wide-angle perspective about science in its many disciplines** and the cultural environments that shape science teaching, practices and developments in different countries.

In an increasingly interconnected world, such formative experience is vital to develop a broad scientific and cultural mindset, necessary to confront the global challenges of modern societies and broaden career opportunities.

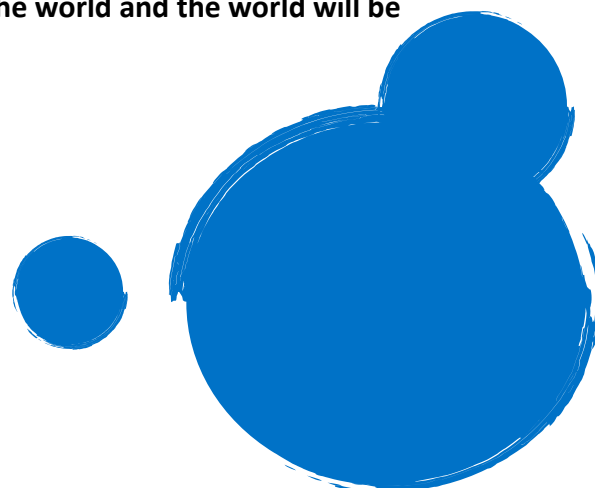
**How important is the interdisciplinary training approach for the further career path?**

An interdisciplinary approach grants a **highly valuable training fostering the ability to recognize bias, incorporate ambiguity originating from different perspectives, develop unique critical thinking tools and, therefore, lateral thinking and, lastly but not least, recognise ethical issues**. All the above represent unique aptitudes, prized not only in academia but in any modern earnest working organization.

**What is the most important advice you want to give to current MolTag students?**

To be true to themselves and their core values while being open to and embracing a diversity of opportunities, even those outside one's comfort zone.

**Be genuinely curious about the world and the world will be positively curious about you.**





## Scientific Advisory Board



### Thierry LANGER

**How do you experience the development of the students during their time in MolTag?**

It has been **very interesting to experience the positive development of all the students who participated** in the MolTag program. I believe that most of them, at the end, excelled the expectations of the faculty.

**How important is the interdisciplinary training approach for the further career path?**

A successful PhD from a renowned program is a good starting point for a career. However, you need to be open to take turns that sometimes do not seem to be attractive at the first sight. **The more you know about interdisciplinary aspects, the better you will be prepared to take right decisions.**

**Did you keep in touch with former MolTag students?**

There are several of them with who I am still in contact.

**What is the most important advice you want to give to current MolTag students?**

Make to most out of this amazing opportunity that you got. **Enjoy the faculty expertise and the comradeship with your PhD fellows.** Start building your networks.

**Finishing year PhD:** 1991

**MolTag SAB since:** 2013

**Institution:** Dept. of  
Pharmaceutical Chemistry,  
Faculty of Life Sciences,  
University of Vienna, Vienna,  
Austria

**Main research area:** Computer  
Aided Molecular Design

**Number of (in general)  
supervised PhD students:** 25+

**MolTag SAB page:**

[Thierry Langer \(univie.ac.at\)](http://univie.ac.at)

[Thierry Langer \(0000-0002-5242-1240\)](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5242-1240)  
- [ORCID](#) | [Connecting Research and  
Researchers](#)

**Social network:**

[Thierry Langer](#) | [LinkedIn](#)



## Scientific Advisory Board



## Peter NUSSBAUMER

### How do you experience the development of the students during their time in MolTag?

The established admission process using a broad expert panel selects already for motivated, excellent young scientists. The MolTag environment, i. e. the mixed faculty and the interaction among the multinational MolTag peers, enables them **insights in other projects, disciplines, problem solvings, and, thus, fast and efficient further development in their scientific competence but also other important skill sets.**

### How important is the interdisciplinary training approach for the further career path?

It certainly depends on the individual career goal but almost all scientific advances and breakthroughs in life sciences are based on interdisciplinary work. I see it as an extraordinary opportunity and advantage to learn hands-on how other disciplines think and work and what they can contribute. **This prepares for successful collaborations, critical thinking, and looking beyond one's own nose.**

### Did you keep in touch with former MolTag students?

Occasionally, but not as much as I would have liked. All students are very welcome to contact me for advice.

### What is the most important advice you want to give to current MolTag students?

Try to make a difference and see the advantage of collaborations and alliances. **Grab opportunities, be open for serendipity, don't compromise on quality.** There is a life outside work and make sure that you don't miss it.  
Best wishes and good luck!

Finishing year PhD: 1985

MolTag SAB since: 2012

#### Institutions:

Lead Discovery Center,  
Dortmund, Germany;  
wings4innovation, Austria

#### Main research area:

Medicinal Chemistry,  
Drug Discovery,  
Translational Research

#### MolTag SAB page:

[Peter Nussbaumer \(univie.ac.at\)](#)

[Peter Nussbaumer \(0000-0002-2761-629X\) - ORCID | Connecting Research and Researchers](#)

#### Social network:

[Peter Nussbaumer | LinkedIn](#)





## Scientific Advisory Board



# Chris OOSTENBRINK



Finishing year PhD: 2004

MolTag SAB since: 2013

**Institution:** University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU), Vienna, Austria

**Main research area:** Molecular simulations to study the structure and dynamics of biomolecules. Thermodynamic characterization of molecular interactions

**Number of (in general) supervised PhD students:** 16 graduated + 8 ongoing

**MolTag SAB page:**

[Chris Oostenbrink \(univie.ac.at\)](https://www.univie.ac.at)

[Chris Oostenbrink \(0000-0002-4232-2556\)](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4232-2556) - [ORCID](#) | [Connecting Research and Researchers](#)

**Social networks:**

[Chris Oostenbrink](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

[Chris Oostenbrink \(@mms\\_boku\)](#) / [Twitter](#)

**How do you experience the development of the students during their time in MolTag?**

The MolTag students form a very diverse community. It is already great to see their own individual scientific development. More importantly, **over the years, one can see how they learn from each other, do joint research projects that go over the boundaries of their research groups and their institutions**, and develop an amazing breadth in their scientific education.

**How important is the interdisciplinary training approach for the further career path?**

The interdisciplinary training of the MolTag students will certainly be a great asset for their future careers. Through MolTag, **they will already have established a small network of interdisciplinary colleagues**, that will likely remain with them throughout their careers.

**Did you keep in touch with former MolTag students?**

One always continues to meet people at meetings or events. We have one active collaboration that continues during the post-doc time of a former MolTag student.

**What is the most important advice you want to give to current MolTag students?**

Use the amazing opportunities that MolTag offers. Even if it sometimes feels as if these activities take too much time from your direct PhD project, **what you can learn through MolTag will prove more relevant than the additional experiment you can do on your own. Take the possibility to go abroad and visit other labs**; these are experiences that you won't easily make after finishing the PhD. Enjoy this time!



## Scientific Advisory Board

# Marcel VAN DER HEYDEN



**Finishing year PhD:** 1995

**MolTag SAB since:** 2019

**Institution:** University Medical Center Utrecht, Utrecht, Netherlands

**Main research area:** Cardiac physiology, Potassium ion channels, Cardiac arrhythmia, Ion channel trafficking, Scientific integrity

**Number of (in general) supervised PhD students:** 12

**MolTag SAB page:**

[Marcel AG van der Heyden \(univie.ac.at\)](#)

[Marcel van der Heyden \(0000-0002-4225-7942\) - ORCID | Connecting Research and Researchers](#)

**Social network:**

[Marcel Van Der Heyden | LinkedIn](#)



### How do you experience the development of the students during their time in MolTag?

Students in general are developing very fast. This certainly applies to all the MolTag students I had the pleasure to meet during my long term stays in Vienna, but also from the MolTag students that performed their international traineeship in my lab. **They mature, not only in their practical skills, but also in their knowledge on the academic system and its connection to society.** I am happy to see that when finalizing and defending their PhD thesis, these MolTag students have become mature scientist.

### How important is the interdisciplinary training approach for the further career path?

The big breakthroughs in science nowadays rely strongly on interdisciplinary approaches. The different fields in research use such sophisticated and detailed approaches, that we cannot expect that a single scientist manages all techniques. However, the **MolTag students need to be aware of the tools and techniques in other fields**, so that they can make use of these for their particular research questions. It is beyond doubt, that such training approaches and personal contacts made therein lay the foundations for a future career in academia or beyond.

### Did you keep in touch with former MolTag students?

Some of the MolTag students performed internships in my lab and became good friends that I still regular visit when in Vienna, or when they are around in the Netherlands.

### What is the most important advice you want to give to current MolTag students?

Science is an international endeavour, try to go abroad and widen your horizons. My final advice, **collaborate as much as possible, and most above all enjoy this wonderful time** of research and performance of experiments.



## Scientific Advisory Board



## Maria GARCIA

**Finishing year PhD:** 1979

**MolTag SAB:** from 2011 to 2018

**Institution:** until 2009:  
Distinguished Senior  
Investigator at Merck Research  
Laboratories in Rahway, New  
Jersey, USA

**Main research area:** novel  
target identification and  
validation, assay  
implementation, lead discovery  
and optimization, IND  
submission, and clinical  
development.

**MolTag SAB page:**

[Maria Garcia \(univie.ac.at\)](#)

**Social network:**

[Maria Garcia](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

### How did you experience the development of the students during their time in MolTag?

I have mentored many students, at all stages of their careers, during my time at Merck and understand the importance of such an activity. The MolTag program provides **an important opportunity for students to develop their scientific credentials**. We have always enjoyed supporting the MolTag program objectives during our visits to Vienna.

### How important is the interdisciplinary training approach for the further career path?

Interdisciplinary training is a critical element in an individual's scientific development as it increases the breath of thought processes and reserach interests, and leads to a more productive career.

### Did you keep in touch with former MolTag students?

We have corresponded, on occasion, with former MolTag students and have provided advice and guidance, as requested.

### What is the most important advice you want to give to current MolTag students?

Our advice to students is to **be dedicated to your program objectives but, at the same time, enjoy your work**. Scientific research is a challenging pursuit but brings great career satisfaction. And many of the colleagues you meet along the way will be friends for life.



## Scientific Advisory Board



## Gregory KACZOROWSKI

**Finishing year PhD:** 1977

**MolTag SAB:** from 2011 to 2018

**Institution:** until 2009: Senior Director of Ion Channels at the Merck Research Laboratories in Rahway, New Jersey, USA

**Main research area:** Ion channel drug discovery and development, Transporter drug discovery, Ion channel safety issues of drug development candidates

**MolTag SAB page:**

[Gregory J. Kaczorowski \(univie.ac.at\)](http://gregory.j.kaczorowski@univie.ac.at)

**Social network:**

[Greg Kaczorowski](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

### How did you experience the development of the students during their time in MolTag?

I was an advisor for the MolTag program since its inception. As a Whitney Fellow during my own Postdoctoral tenure, **I know how important it is to interact with external scientists, to get their viewpoint, and to try and use this experience to increase the originality and scope of my own research.** I hope to have provided such guidance for MolTag program members through our interaction over the years, as well.

### How important is the interdisciplinary training approach for the further career path?

During my 29 year tenure at Merck, **I mentored over 100 Postdocs, Visiting Scientists, Summer Interns and Fellowship recipients and provided interdisciplinary training;** I am proud of my mentees and their scientific contributions. I brought this same commitment to the MolTag program participants.

### Did you keep in touch with former MolTag students?

Several students have contacted me for advice, even after they have completed the MolTag program.

### What is the most important advice you want to give to current MolTag students?

Use this period in your research career to not only be productive in your directed research effort, but to **think about Science in broader terms, read the literature and start planning your career path seriously** before completing the MolTag program.





## Scientific Advisory Board



## Hugo KUBINYI

**Finishing year PhD:** 1965

**MolTag SAB:** from 2011 to 2018

**Institution:** until 2001: Head of Combinatorial Chemistry and Molecular Modelling (including Protein Crystallography and Drug Design) at BASF, Ludwigshafen, Germany

**Main research area:** QSAR, 3D QSAR, Drug Design, Chemogenomics in Drug Discovery, and Drug Discovery Technologies

**MolTag SAB page:**

[Hugo Kubinyi \(univie.ac.at\)](http://univie.ac.at)

**How did you experience the development of the students during their time in MolTag?**

Their performance – although very good at the start – improved in research and in presentation quality.

**How important is the interdisciplinary training approach for the further career path?**

I consider it to be very important, especially the close interaction with other brilliant researchers

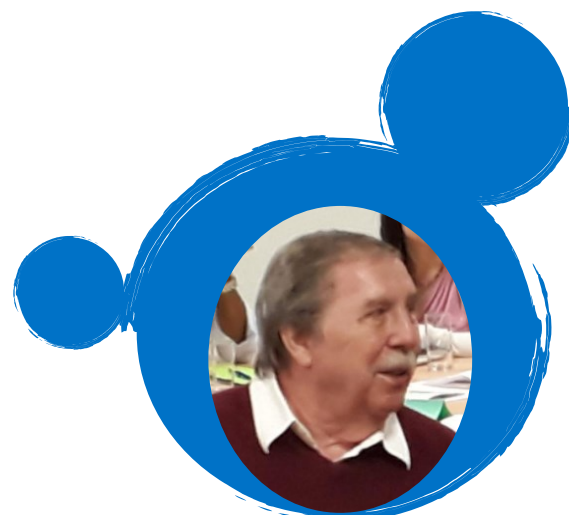
**Did you keep in touch with former MolTag students?**

No, not really.

**What is the most important advice you want to give to current MolTag students?**

When sharing your research, consider and reflect: **what is the main purpose of your experiments / calculations, why is it of general relevance, what would be the expected / best outcome? What can we learn from your results?**

In your presentations focus on the most important aspects of your research, avoid unnecessary details. Don't overload the posters with text or complex diagrams.



## MolTag Now: Places & People



**Barbara Fuezi, Jennifer Hemmerich (until 06.20), Aljosa Smajic; Gerhard Ecker**

**Aleksandra Garifulina; Steffen Hering**

**Michael Bründl, Theres Friesacher; Anna Weinzinger**



**Christian Knittl-Frank, Giovanni Di Mauro; Nuno Maulide**



**Nadja Singer, Maximilian Tiefenbacher (from 04.21), Julia Westermayr (until 09.20); Leticia González**



**Florian Vogel; Margot Ernst**



**Oliver Belleza, Ralph Gradisch; Harald Sitte**



**Eleni Papaplioura, Viktor Savic, Katharina Schlögl, Dominik Schnalzer, Blanca Vega Alanis; Marko Mihovilovic**



**Nathalie Agudelo Duenas, Julia Michalska, Mojtava Tavakoli; Johann Danzl**

**Lisa Knaus, Lena Schwarz; Gaia Novarino**

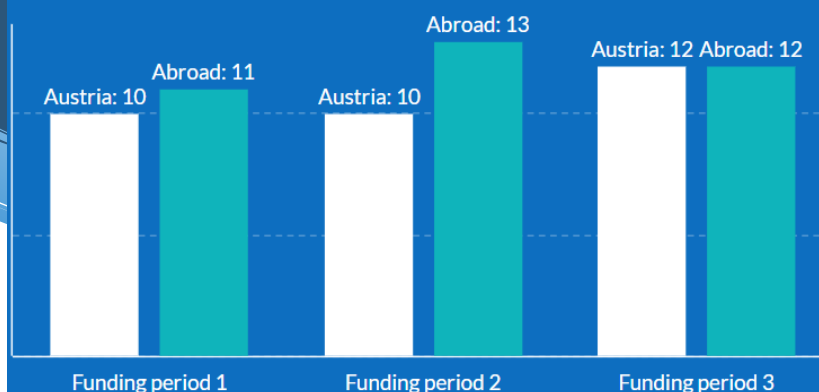
# MolTag in Charts and Numbers

2011 – 2021:



Finished PhD Theses: 45

## MolTag Phd Students 2011-2021



>600

Applications



>130

Hearings



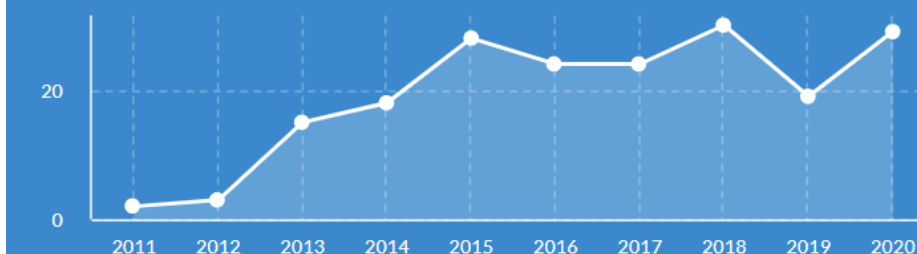
68

MolTag PhD Students

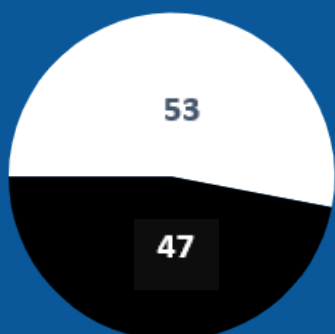
## MolTag FEATURES:

- Internship abroad (3-6 months)
- Lab rotation (min. 2 weeks)
- Interdisciplinary approach
- support by Scientific Advisory Board

## 192 Publications by MolTag students:



## MolTag Students female/male in %



## MolTag Students at Institutions



- UniVie Life (35.38%)
- UniVieChem (9.23%)
- TUW (18.46%)
- MedUni (21.54%)
- IST (15.38%)

## MOLTAG COMMUNICATION

### MolTag Speaker:

Univ.Prof.Mag.Dr. **Gerhard Ecker**

University of Vienna

Division of Pharmaceutical Chemistry

[Pharmacoinformatics Research Group \(univie.ac.at\)](http://univie.ac.at)

### Deputy Speakers:

Ass.Prof.Priv.Do. Dr. Margot Ernst

Medical University of Vienna

Dept. of Neurobiology of the Nervous System

[Margot Ernst \(meduniwien.ac.at\)](http://meduniwien.ac.at)

Assoz.Prof.Mag.Dr. Anna Weinzinger

University of Vienna

Dept. of Pharmacological Toxicology

[Molecular modelling of ion channels \(Prof. Weinzinger\) \(univie.ac.at\)](http://univie.ac.at)

### MolTag Program Management:

Susanne Menschik-Zunzer

University of Vienna

Division of Pharmaceutical Chemistry

**E-Mail:** [office.moltag@univie.ac.at](mailto:office.moltag@univie.ac.at)

**Website:** <https://moltag.univie.ac.at>

[MolTag Doctoral Program](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

[MolTag Doc Program \(@MoltagDK\)](#) / [Twitter](#)

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