



Curriculum Vitae Professor Dr Rolf M. Zinkernagel



Name: Rolf M. Zinkernagel

Date of birth: 6 January 1944

Research Priorities: Experimental immunology, immune system, virus-infected cells, T-cells, virus antigens, MHC complexes

Rolf Zinkernagel is a Swiss physician and immunologist. He decoded the basic mechanisms of immune defence. For his discovery of how T-cells recognise virus-infected host cells, he was awarded the 1996 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine together with the Australian veterinarian Peter Doherty. In addition, Rolf Zinkernagel carried out a range of traditional studies on the function of the thymus and the simultaneously protective and pathogenic effect of T-cells.

Academic and Professional Career

- since 2008 Professor Emeritus
- 1992 - 2008 Full Professor and Director, Institute of Experimental Immunology, University of Zurich, Zurich, Switzerland
- 1979 -1992 Adjunct Distinguished Professor, University of Zurich, Zurich, Switzerland
- 1976 - 1979 Professor, Scripps Research Institute, La Jolla, USA
- 1975 Doctorate and Habilitation, Australian National University, Canberra, Australia
- 1970 - 1973 Research Assistant, Institute of Biochemistry, University of Lausanne, Lausanne, Switzerland
- 1970 Completed Doctorate to become Dr. med., University of Basel, Basel, Switzerland
- 1962 - 1968 Degree in Medicine, University of Basel, Basel, Switzerland

Functions in Scientific Societies and Committees (selection)

2007 - 2010	Vice President, International Union of Immunological Societies (IUIS)
2005 - 2010	European Research Council
2004 - 2007	President, IUIS
since 2001	Member, Board of Directors, Board of Patrons, SwissBridge Foundation, Switzerland
2000 - 2004	Member, Swiss Science Council, Switzerland
1998 - 2000	Honorary Member, World Innovation Foundation (WIF)
since 1998	Member, Board of Patrons, Stiftung Gen Suisse, Zurich, Switzerland
since 1996	Honorary Member, Swiss Society of Allergy and Immunology (SSAI), Switzerland
since 1996	Honorary Member, Australian Society for Immunology, Australia
1993 - 1994	President, SSAI, Switzerland
since 1993	Honorary Member, American Association of Immunologists, USA
since 1990	Member, ENI European Network of Immunological Institutions
since 1990	Member, International Society for Antiviral Research
since 1990	Member, German Society of Virology, Germany
since 1989	Member, Swiss Society of Cell and Molecular Biology, Switzerland
since 1987	Member, Swiss Association for the Study of the Liver (SASL), Switzerland
since 1981	Member, Swiss Society of Pathology, Switzerland
since 1980	Honorary Member, French Society for Immunology, France
since 1980	Member, Swiss Society of Microbiology, Switzerland
since 1978	Honorary Member, Scandinavian Society of Immunology
since 1977	Member, American Association of Immunologists, USA
since 1977	Member, American Association of Pathologists, USA
1973 - 1975	Member, Australian Society for Immunology, Australia
since 1971	Member, SSAI, Switzerland

Honours and Awarded Memberships (selection)

2011	Honorary Doctorate in Pharmacy and Biochemistry, University of Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires, Argentina
2010	Honorary Doctorate, University Libre de Bruxelles, Brussels, Belgium

- 2010 Endowed Professor, University of Düsseldorf, Düsseldorf, Germany
- 2007 Honorary Doctorate, Chengdu Medical College of Third Military Medical University, Chengdu, China
- 2006 Lifetime Award in Virology, World AIDS Day, China
- 2005 Honorary Doctorate, Cuban Society for Immunology, Cuba
- 2004 Behring Kitasato Award, Philipps-Universität Marburg, Marburg, Germany
- since 2003 Foreign Member, Russian Academy of Sciences, Russia
- 2003 Honorary Doctorate, La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia
- 2002 Maharshi Sushruta Award, Institute of Kidney Diseases and Research Center and Institute of Transplantation Sciences, Ahmedabad, India
- 2001 Thomas E. Starzl Prize, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, USA
- 2001 Honorary Doctorate, Moscow State University, Moscow, Russia
- since 2001 Member, The Harvey Society, New York City, USA
- since 2001 Foreign Fellow, American Philosophical Society, USA
- 2000 Honorary Doctorate, Université de Montréal, Montréal, Canada
- 2000 Honorary Doctorate, University of Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 2000 Honorary Doctorate, Medical University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland
- 2000 Honorary Doctorate, Odessa National Medical University, Odessa, Ukraine
- 1999 Honorary Companion, General Division, The Order of Australia, Australia
- 1999 Member, Order Pour le Mérite for Sciences and Arts, Germany
- 1999 Honorary Doctorate, University of Basel, Basel, Switzerland
- since 1998 Foreign Fellow, American Academy of Arts and Sciences, USA
- since 1998 Foreign Fellow, Royal Society, UK
- since 1998 Foreign Fellow, Académie Royale de Médecine de Belgique, Belgium
- since 1998 Associate Member, Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Berlin, Germany
- since 1998 Honorary Member, German Society for Immunology, Germany
- 1998 Honorary Doctorate, University of Latvia, Riga, Latvia
- 1998 Honorary Doctorate, University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland
- 1997 Honorary Doctorate, University of Oslo, Oslo, Norway
- 1997 Honorary Doctorate, University of Québec, Québec, Canada

- 1997 Novartis-Drew Award for Biomedical Research, Novartis International AG, Switzerland and Drew University, Madison, USA
- 1997 Reichstein Medal, Swiss Academy of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Switzerland
- 1997 Honorary Doctorate, University of Genoa, Genoa, Italy
- since 1996 Fellow, American Academy of Microbiology, USA
- since 1996 Foreign Fellow, National Academy of Sciences, USA
- since 1996 Foreign Fellow, Australian Academy of Sciences, Australia
- 1996 Honorary Doctorate, University of Liège, Liège, Belgium
- 1996 Honorary Doctorate, Australian National University, Canberra, Australia
- 1996 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine (jointly with Peter Doherty), Nobel Foundation, Stockholm, Sweden
- 1995 Albert Lasker Award for Basic Medical Research, Lasker Foundation, New York City, USA
- since 1994 Member, Swiss Academy of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Switzerland
- since 1994 Member, German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina, Germany
- 1992 - 2002 Member, The Delphinium Society, UK
- 1992 Cristoforo Colombo Award, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, USA
- since 1991 Member, German Society for Immunology
- since 1989 Member, Academia Europea
- 1988 Louis-Jeantet Prize, Louis-Jeantet Foundation, Geneva, Switzerland
- 1988 Otto Naegeli Prize, Otto Naegeli Foundation, Zurich, Switzerland
- 1987 William B. Coley Award, Cancer Research Institute, New York City, USA
- 1987 Member, Scientific Advisory Board, Cancer Research Institute, New York City, USA
- 1986 Canada Gairdner International Award, Gairdner Foundation, Toronto, Canada
- 1985 Mack-Forster Prize, European Society of Clinical Investigation
- since 1984 Member, European Molecular Biology Organization (EMBO)
- 1983 Paul Ehrlich and Ludwig Darmstaedter Prize, Paul Ehrlich Foundation, Frankfurt am Main, Germany
- 1982 Ernst Jung Prize for Medicine, Jung Foundation for Science and Research, Hamburg, Germany
- 1981 Cloëtta Prize, Professor Dr Max Cloëtta Foundation, Zurich, Switzerland

Research priorities

Rolf Zinkernagel is a Swiss physician and immunologist. He decoded the basic mechanisms of immune defence. For his discovery of how T-cells recognise virus-infected host cells, he was awarded the 1996 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine together with the Australian veterinarian Peter Doherty. In addition, Rolf Zinkernagel carried out a range of traditional studies on the function of the thymus and the simultaneously protective and pathogenic effect of T-cells.

Together with Peter Doherty, Rolf Zinknagel investigated the question as to which mechanisms lead to organ rejection after a transplant. In experiments on mice infected with the meningitis virus they were able to show that when an organ is rejected after transplant the immune system mobilises as it would in the event of a viral infection. Specific antigens, known as major histocompatibility antigens, play a key role in both processes. They are present on the cell surface and tell the immune system that the transplanted organ is a foreign part that has to be fought against. Both researchers were awarded the Nobel Prize for this discovery.

Zinkernagel's work was committed to both research policy and experimental research. On the European and Swiss Scientific Councils, for example, he was involved with grants for outstanding scientists.