



On August 28, 2010, Professor Bernd Binder, head of the Center of Physiology and Pharmacology at the Medical University of Vienna, Austria, died after a long illness. Although most of his friends and colleagues knew about Bernd's serious condition the news of his death was shocking and devastating.

Bernd Binder was born on January 7, 1945 in Vienna, Austria. He studied medicine in his hometown and obtained his MD at the Medical School of the University of Vienna in 1969. At the young age of 28 Bernd Binder became Docent for Physiology and only 9 years later, in 1982 he was appointed Professor of Physiology at the University of Vienna. Recognizing that Vascular Biology was a newly emerging discipline in international biomedicine in 1996 he succeeded in establishing the Department of Vascular Biology and Thrombosis Research at the University of Vienna (since 2004: Medical University of Vienna) and was chairman of this Department until his death. In 2004 this department became part of the newly established Center for Physiology and Pharmacology at the Medical University of Vienna, which was also chaired by Bernd Binder. Bernd Binder was also instrumental in establishing a research cluster of "Cardiovascular Medicine" at the Medical University of Vienna.

Bernd Binder's scientific achievements are far too numerous to be accounted for here in detail. He has published nearly 300 papers in peer-reviewed journals and his work has been cited more than 8000 times. Only a few of his major scientific contributions shall be mentioned here. As a visiting scientist in the lab of Frank Austen at Harvard University Bernd Binder purified tissue-type plasminogen activator (t-PA) from cadaver vessel perfusates [1]. This was the starting point of his interest in the then relatively new area of fibrinolysis. Subsequently this field gained more and more importance as it impacted not only on intravascular fibrin degradation but also on numerous other pathophysiological processes such as tumor growth and metastasis, angiogenesis, wound healing and tissue repair. Covering these newly emerging subjects Bernd Binder and his group in Vienna published seminal papers on plasminogen activator inhibitor-1 (PAI-1), urokinase-type plasminogen activator (u-PA) and its receptor u-PAR [2-4]. Among other activities in professional societies Bernd Binder was immensely active and a distinguished member of the International Society of Thrombosis and Haemostasis (ISTH) and was on the board of the International Society of Fibrinolysis and Proteolysis (ISFP), being chairman from 2006 to 2008. In addition he hosted the 8<sup>th</sup> International Congress on Fibrinolysis in 1986 in Vienna and was chairman of the scientific programme committee of the 19<sup>th</sup> International Congress on Fibrinolysis and Proteolysis in 2008, again in Vienna.

Besides being a brilliant scientist Bernd Binder was also a dedicated and enthusiastic teacher who challenged and fostered his students. He was convinced that high quality teaching is a prerequisite for high quality science and vice versa. The success of this attitude was reflected by the large number of former students joined Bernd Binder's research group as a first step in their scientific career.

Bernd Binder also strongly believed in the importance of translational research. In a successful attempt to connect basic research to clinical application, in 1987 he founded Technoclone, a company developing and selling diagnostics and other products mainly to be used in the fields of thrombosis and cardiovascular disease.

Our sympathy goes to Bernd Binder's wife, his four children and their families. The scientific community has lost an excellent scientist and we, Bernd Binder's immediate colleagues, have lost an esteemed colleague and a dear friend.

Johann Wojta (Chairman Elect of the ISFP and former Post Doc in Bernd Binder's lab)

Kees Klufft (Chairman of the ISFP)

Robert L. Medcalf (Past Chairman of the ISFP)

H. Roger Lijnen (Executive Director of the ISFP)

#### References:

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