



Professor Dragana Nikitovic, PhD, ERT

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Head of Department of Histology-Embryology

Dr. Dragana Nikitovic is a distinguished Professor at the School of Medicine, University of Crete (UOC) in Heraklion, Greece. Her academic journey began with a BSc in Biochemistry & Molecular Biology from the Faculty of Natural Sciences, University of Belgrade, Belgrade, Serbia, in 1992. She then pursued a half-time PhD diploma in the Department of Medical Biochemistry and Biophysics, Karolinska Institute, Stockholm, Sweden, which she completed in 1998. Her thirst for knowledge and dedication to her field led her to earn a Doctor of Medical Sciences degree (PhD) from the Medical School, UOC, in 2008, further solidifying her expertise and commitment to academic excellence. In 2018, she received the diploma of a European Recognized toxicologist (ERT).

Dr. Nikitovic's research contributions are significant. She is a co-author of 130 original publications or reviews and 9 book chapters, which have garnered approximately 6000 citations with an H-index of 41 (Scopus) or 8000 with an H-index of 51 (Google) with an average IF (of 4,72). Her collaborations with outstanding experts at the National and International levels have resulted in a significant number of publications in peer-reviewed international scientific journals. Notable collaborations include the University of Grenoble Alpes, CNRS, CERMAV, Grenoble, France; University of Florida, USA; Otto-von-Guericke University Magdeburg, Germany; "Victor Babes" National Institute of Pathology, Bucharest, Romania; DiSFeB, Università degli Studi di Milano, Italy; Mendelev University of Chemical Technology of Russia, Moscow, Russia etc.

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Dr. Nikitovic's research interests are diverse and impactful. She has expertise in matrix Biology, Tumor Biology and Signal Transduction, Disease Markers, Molecular Targets, Inflammation, Biological Testing, and Cytotoxicity. Her research places a particular emphasis on the signaling of extracellular matrix components, including glycosaminoglycans and proteoglycans, and their implications in tumorigenesis and inflammation. This diverse range of interests opens up numerous opportunities for collaboration and further research.

- Tumor microenvironment and stromal reactions implicated transduction pathways
- Development and validation of novel disease markers
- Identification of matrix-related molecular therapy markers in cancer
- Role of extracellular matrix in cell and tissue differentiation
- Assessment of cytotoxicity and nanoparticle interactions in *in vitro* and *in vivo* models

ORGANIZATION OF WORKSHOPS, MEETINGS/SYMPOSIA

- E.g Member of the Organizing/Scientific Committee of two Hellenic Conferences on matrix Biology/Connective tissue and Medicinal Chemistry as organizer or member for committee (2002, 2006); Member of the organizing committee for the 2nd Matrix Biology Europe (MBE) Conference (being the XXVth FECTS Meeting), Athens (Greece), 11th – 14th June 2016; Organizer of Innogly annual 2022 and final 2023 meeting.

EDITOR

1. Member of the Editorial Board for PlosONE (2014-present)
2. Member of Frontiers in Endocrinology editorial board from 5/2019 to the present.
3. Member of the editorial board of Cancers from 1/2019 to the present.
4. Member of the editorial board of the journal Biomolecules from 1/2020 until today.
5. Member of the editorial board of the journal Biomedicines from 1/2022 until today.
6. Member of the journal Proteoglycan Research editorial board from 1/2022 to the present.
7. Member of the editorial board of Molecular Biology Reports from 5/2022 to present.

8. Guest editor of Special Issue “Proteoglycans/Glycosaminoglycans: From Basic Research to Clinical Practice,” published in BioMed Research International-Pharmacology, 2014
9. Guest editor of Special Issues published in Biomolecules, 2020, 2021 and published in Front. Bioeng. Biotechnol. 2023.

REVIEWER IN JOURNALS, CONFERENCES AND RESEARCH/PROPOSALS

- Invitations for reviewing by the Editors of more than 52 high-ranking scientific journals
- Reviewed research proposals submitted to National Science Centers in Poland, Hungary, the UK, Slovakia, and France

TEACHING EXPERIENCE-TRAINEES

Undergraduate teaching: Lectures in Histology and Embryology to medical students (School of Medicine, University of Crete). Supervisor of 11 undergraduate biology students (Department of Biology, University of Crete) when performing diploma thesis in the area of Matrix biology. Supervisor of 5 Helmsic (Italy, Spain, Slovenia, and Russia) and 7 Erasmus exchange students (trainees), School of Pharmacy, University of Auvergne, France.

Graduate teaching: Courses Master's & PhD: Lectures on Extracellular matrix biology. Trainees: Supervisor for 3 completed 8 PhD studies and 1 under progress. Member of PhD committees for 5 completed and three ongoing PhD theses and two finished master thesis.

GRANTS

Dr. Nikitovic has obtained funding (8) from both National and International funding agencies, e.g. (ELKE, UOC, Greece and Consorzio Milano Ricerche, Italy, COST) and has participated (5) in the General Secretariat for Research and Technology, Research Enhancement Program (PENED and PYTHAGORAS), the Seven Framework Program Cooperation NMP Theme Call identifier: FP-NMP-2011, Ministry of Education for Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs. Operational Program “ΘΑΛΗΣ,” “Education Lifelong Learning ALU for Updating Alumni Knowledge and ERANET programs as a collaborator.”

PRESENTATIONS

Dr Nikitovic was an invited speaker at more than 30 international conferences (e.g., Eurotox, Edinburgh, UK, 2014; Eurotox, Seville, Spain, 2016; Eurotox, Helsinki, Finland, 2019; International Symposium-Connected by Extracellular Matrix, Magdeburg, Germany, 2017; FEBS-MPT, Patras, Greece 2009; FEBS-MPT Spetses, Greece 2011; FEBS-MPT Kos, Greece 2013; FEBS-MPT Rhodes, FEBS-MPT Crete; Greece; MBE Athens, Greece 2016; Bionanotox, Heraklion, Greece 2012; Heraklion, Greece, 2013; World Congress on Advances in Oncology Athens, 2018; Iasi Dermatological Spring Congress, Iasi, 2019,2020,2022, 2023 Innogly, 2019, 2021, 2022,2023; UK-Proteoglycan meeting 2022 and has presented more than 100 poster/oral presentations in international and national conferences.

MONOGRAPHS

Dragana Nikitovic has contributed to 9 international book chapters. She has edited the Greek edition of medical books: 1. Histology Barry S Mitchell, Sandra Peel. (Editors-in-Chief of the book Tzanakakis G. / Nikitovic-Tzanakaki D; 2. Human Embryology-From Conception to Birth-Moore Keith's Clinical Approach. (Partial editing of the book); 3. Lowrie D. Basic Histology. (Partial Editing of the book)

PUBLICATION LISTS

: <https://www.scopus.com/authid/detail.uri?authorId=6505773521>
 : <https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=lnsd9y8AAAAJ&hl=en>
 : <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3882-7399>