

Günter Blobel (1936-2018)



Günter Blobel was a German-American cell biologist born in Silesia, which is now part of Poland. After trying out medicine practice for few years in Germany, he moved to USA for PhD followed by postdoctoral training at The Rockefeller University, New York. He was the recipient of many awards, including the 1999 Nobel Prize in Physiology and Medicine for the discovery that proteins have intrinsic signals ‘Zip code-like’ that governs their transport and localization in the cell. Günter spent more than 50 years at The Rockefeller University, New York, where he worked with a mission to understand how the cell coordinates protein trafficking. His work and contributions are elegantly enlisted in some of the best cell biology paper of our times.

During his entire career, he was fearless in adopting different techniques, right from yeast genetics, electrophysiology to structural biology. His work elegantly demonstrated how various approaches, when coupled together, could bring out wholesome answers. Besides being a critical and passionate researcher, he was an inspiring mentor who instilled confidence in his students and postdocs to pursue research with a bold and free mind.

Günter was a very generous person at heart who always supported his colleagues and causes around him. His contribution to Dresden is well renowned, but what I personally witnessed during my stay in his laboratory is that his compassionate heart was always keen to take care of small issues around him with equal eagerness. I will miss him thoroughly.

Radha Chauhan