



Egon and Ann Diczfalusy Foundation
for
supporting research in reproductive health



Empathy, Science, Hope

Medicina anchora salutis

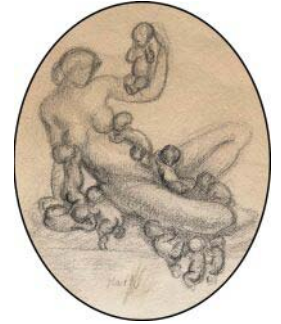
Opening Meeting **of the** **Egon & Ann Diczfalusy Foundation**



18-19 September 2007, Szeged, Hungary



Egon and Ann Diczfalussy Foundation
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supporting research in reproductive health



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GREETINGS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE FOUNDATION

Dear Friends, Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a particular honour and a great pleasure for me to extend a most cordial welcome to all of you to the Opening Meeting of the Egon and Ann Foundation for the support of Research on Reproductive Health at the University of Szeged.

Khalil Gibran says in the Prophet that „vague and nebulous is the beginning of all things, but not their end”. The idea of this Foundation emerged gradually in the course of a series of discussions; however it was uncertain to the very last moment, whether or not we will succeed in establishing the Foundation in time for the Opening Meeting, because the complex legal procedures, financial problems and shortness of time.

We have learned from history that all times were difficult times, but also that some of them were more difficult than others, the present one probably more difficult and complex than all times since the dawn of history. Such times are considered with caution, since it is generally believed that they are not suitable for new departures.

There is an interesting monument of Léon Gambetta in Paris with an inscription on the Base of the monument by the American poet, Walt Whitman: „No one can forbid us the future.” and we felt, that – whatever happens – there will always be a future for humankind, because that future is **created in the minds of the future** generations of young **scientists**. We were influenced in our decision by **Publius Syrus**, who almost 100 years ago emphasized that „nobody knows what he can do, unless he **tries**” and even more, by the statement of the famous polar explorer and humanist, **Fridtjof Nansen**: „The difficult is what takes a little time; the impossible is what takes a little longer.”

And we decided to try, trusting in our good friends’ help and assistance in every corner of the world. And – together with you – we are greatly looking forward to this Opening Meeting, promising already now, that more to come!

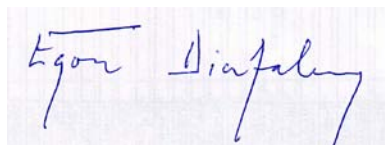
There is an old **fable about the two devoted friends**, the little piggy and the hen, who – on a Sunday-promenade – became very hungry, and the hen suggested to visit the neighbouring small restaurant and have ham and eggs. No, never! The piggy said, because for you it is a **contribution**, but for me it is a **commitment**. For us on the Board of Directors the future development of this **foundation** is a lifetime **commitment**; however, to be able to do so, we will need your and others contribution. Please help us, in order to be able to help others, **who need help!**

I wish you all a successful scientific meeting of high quality and a most pleasant sejour in Szeged!



Professor Attila Pál
President
of the

Egon and Ann Diczfalusy Foundation



Professor Egon Diczfalusy
Founder
of the

Egon and Ann Diczfalusy Foundation

**Opening Meeting of the Egon & Ann Diczfalusy Foundation
18-19 September 2007, Szeged, Hungary**

Venue: Hotel Tisza, Wesselényi utca 6, Szeged, Hungary
Mobile phone of the registration desk: +36-30-985-4191

18th September 2007 (Tuesday)

15:30 – 16:15 **Introduction of the Presidium. Short allocutions.** Narrator: Elisabeth Sillo

H.E. Mr. Piamsak Milintachinda, Royal Thai Ambassador to Hungary

Dr. László Botka, Mayor of Szeged

Prof. Gábor Szabó, Rector, University of Szeged

Prof. György Benedek, Dean, Faculty of Medicine, University of Szeged

Prof. Britt-Marie Landgren, Karolinska Institute, Stockholm

Prof. Giovanni Scambia, Representative of the Faculty of Medicine, Catholic
University of the Sacred Heart, Rome

Prof. Egon Diczfalusy, Founder

Prof. Attila Pál, President of the Foundation, Szeged

Prof. Giuseppe Benagiano, Vice-president of the Foundation, Geneva

Prof. György Bártfai, Vice-president of the Foundation, Szeged

Opening Session

Chairs: Prof. Giovanni Scambia, Rome, Italy – Prof. György Benedek, Szeged, Hungary

16:15 – 16:30 Mission impossible: The background history of the Egon & Ann Diczfalusy Foundation
Prof. Attila Pál, President of the Foundation, Szeged, Hungary

16:30 – 16:40 Short presentation of the Diczfalusy medal
Prof. György Bártfai, Vice-president of the Foundation, Szeged, Hungary

16:40 – 16:55 Laudatio of the Awardee of the Foundation
Prof. Giuseppe Benagiano, Vice-president of the Foundation, Geneva, Switzerland

16:55 – 17:25 Honorary Lecture delivered by the Awardee
The developmental biology of a scientist and of a friendship in Stockholm
Prof. Salvatore Mancuso, Rome, Italy

17:25 – 17:30 Handing over the Diczfalusy Medal
Prof. Egon Diczfalusy, Rönninge, Sweden

17:30 – 17:35 Short presentation of the Diczfalusy Prize
Prof. György Bártfai, Vice-president of the Foundation, Szeged, Hungary

**Opening Meeting of the Egon & Ann Diczfalusy Foundation
18-19 September 2007, Szeged, Hungary**

- 17:35 – 17:45 Laudatio of the first Prize–winner
Prof. Márta Katona, Board Member of the Foundation, Szeged, Hungary
- 17:45 – 18:00 Short presentation of the work of the Prize-winner
Gender differences in estrogen receptor patterns of small arteries
María-Natalia Cruz, MD,PhD, Stockholm, Sweden
- 18:00 – 18:05 Handing over the Diczfalusy Prize
Prof. Egon Diczfalusy, Rönninge, Sweden
- 18:05 – 18:30 Intermission

First Session

Chairs: Prof. Britt-Marie Landgren, Stockholm, Sweden – Prof. Paul Van Look, Geneva, Switzerland

- 18:30 – 18:40 Presentation of the keynote–lecturer
Prof. Paul Van Look, Geneva, Switzerland
- 18:40 – 19:20 Keynote address: **Stem cells: New approach to an old story**
Prof. Günter Stock, Berlin, Germany
- 19:20 – 19:25 Closing remarks by the chair
- 19:30 – 20:30 Gala Concert given by Italian and Hungarian Opera Singers to celebrate the establishment of the Foundation and the first Award and Prize winners
- 20:30 – 22:30 Get together party

19th September 2007 (Wednesday)

Second Session

Chairs: Prof. Henry Gabelnick, Washington, USA - Prof. László Kovács, Szeged, Hungary

- 08:30 – 09:10 **Egon Diczfalusy: the man, the scientist, the humanitarian**
Prof. Giuseppe Benagiano, Vice-president of the Foundation, Geneva, Switzerland
- 09:10 – 09:50 **Mechanism of action of emergency contraception**
Prof. Kristina Gemzell-Danielsson, Stockholm, Sweden
- 10:10 – 10:30 Coffee-break

**Opening Meeting of the Egon & Ann Diczfalusy Foundation
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Third Session

Chairs: Prof. Ursula Habenicht, Berlin, Germany – Prof. David F. Archer, Norfolk, USA

10:30 – 11:00 **Cancer stem cells from solid tumours: New prognostic and diagnostic tools**

Dr. Ruggero de Maria, Rome, Italy

11:00 – 11:30 **Estetrol: Vita nova for a fetal steroid**

Prof. Herjan J.T. Coelingh Bennink, Zeist, The Netherlands

Fourth Session

Chair: Prof. Egon Diczfalusy, Rönninge, Sweden

11:50 – 12:30. Valedictory lecture: **Reproduction through the eyes of an inquisitive scientist**

Prof. Robert G. Edwards, Cambridge, UK

12:30 – 12:40 Closing remarks: **What is past is prologue**

Prof. Attila Pál, President of the Foundation, Szeged, Hungary

12:40 – 14:00 Luncheon buffet / Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Diczfalusy Foundation

17:00 – 18:00 Acceptance of the Diczfalusy Donations – **Medals and Honours** – by the Dept. of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, University of Szeged (*by invitation*)

18:00 – 21:00 Acceptance of the Diczfalusy Donations – **Pre-Columbian Art Collection and Distinctions** – by the Medical Faculty of the University of Szeged (*by invitation*)



THE DICZFALUSY MEDAL



THE DICZFALUSY PRIZE



Lecture of the Prize-winner



Gender differences in estrogen receptor patterns of small arteries

María Natalia Cruz

Institution for Clinical Science, Intervention and Technology (CLINTEC), Dept. of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Karolinska University Hospital, Huddinge, Stockholm, Sweden

Vascular effects of estrogens have been shown to be mediated by estrogen receptor (ER) α . The discovery of ER β , brought about a re-evaluation of the role of the ER subtypes (ERs) in the vasculature. The resistance arteries play a key part in the control of peripheral resistance, and endothelial dysfunction is a hallmark of cardiovascular disease (CVD) in both genders.

Aim: (1) to evaluate acute vascular effects of selective estrogenic compounds as phytoestrogens genistein and resveratrol (high affinity for ER β), ER α selective agonist PPT (propyl-pyrazole-triol), ER β agonist DPN (diarylpropionitrile) in resistance arteries from women and men with and without CVD and from ER β knockout (β ERKO) mice; (2) to compare the characteristics of small arteries between β ERKO and wild-type (WT) mice, and their response to 17 β -E₂.

Methodology: Small arteries from patients of both genders with previous myocardial infarction and matched healthy controls and from β ERKO male and female mice and their WT littermates were evaluated using a multi-myograph, pressure-myograph, immunohistochemistry, histological methods and scanning electron microscopy.

Results and conclusions: (1) Estrogens, through the action of ER β may increase distensibility in the female mouse vasculature, and in the male mouse it modulates the estrogen-enhanced flow mediated dilation, whereas in the females, ER α is important for this response. In the male animals, deletion of ER β alters the content of elastin and collagen within the vascular wall.

(2) Acute dilatatory responses induced by different estrogenic compounds were similar in WT and β ERKO mice of both genders, but differed mechanistically. ER β apparently inhibited ER α -mediated NO contribution suggesting an interaction between ERs.

(3) Phytoestrogens evoked *ex vivo* acute dilatation in small arteries from men and women with CVD and control subjects at concentrations attainable *in vivo* with consumption of soy-derived products/moderate red wine intake. The contribution of NO to acute dilation was evident in arteries from healthy men, whereas other NO-independent mechanism(s) were involved in arteries from CVD patients of both genders and control women. Pharmaceutical and/or diet supplementation by estrogenic compounds with higher selectivity for ER β may provide cardiovascular benefit for women with CVD, while compounds selective for ER α seemed to be of importance for healthy women.

Significance: By using several approaches for the evaluation of resistance artery function, we have demonstrated the relative importance of each ER for the vascular health. Estrogenic compounds that selective bind to specific ERs might be an important therapeutic option for prevention and treatment of CVD.

Honorary Lecture of the Awardee



The Developmental Biology of a Scientist and of a Friendship in Stockholm

Salvatore Mancuso

*Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology,
Catholic University School of Medicine,
Rome, Italy*

During the sixties a series of investigations on the foeto-placental unit were conducted by an international group of Scientists guided by Professor Diczfalusy demonstrated that the placenta is an important, although transient, steroidogenic organ. The increasing production and excretion of steroids during pregnancy, a production reaching peak values at different times of gestation depending on the steroid, is caused by the placental metabolism of steroid precursor originating from the maternal and the foetal compartments.

Over the last 40 years, this theory has been confirmed and consolidated through a large body of observations by different groups of scientists. In addition, all placental enzymes involved in placental steroidogenesis have been identified and isolated.

According to the most recent vision of prenatal relationships between the mother and her foetus, a vast array of enzymes, steroids, proteins, cytokines and even stem cells function as instruments of communication between the foetal and maternal compartment.

The Stockholm experience enriched and matured the entire group of dozens of scientists who worked with Professor Diczfalusy over almost three decades; in a few instances this relationship grew into a solid friendship not limited to joint scientific work that continued for some 4 decades being strengthened through all kind of positive interactions that showed the extent of affinity and familial linkage.

Both these accomplishments in science and humanity represent the most gratifying success in our life.

Egon and Ann Diczfalusy Foundation

The Founder

EGON DICZFALUSY

MD, PhD, Dr.h.c.(mult.), FRCOG, FACOG (Hon.)

Professor emeritus

Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm



**Ann & Egon Diczfalusy
(1994)**



**Professor
Egon Diczfalusy**



**Ann & Egon Diczfalusy
(2000)**

Egon Diczfalusy is the scientist who discovered and characterised the Foeto-placental unit, demonstrating for the first time that steroidogenesis in pregnancy is the consequence of a close interactions between the maternal and foetal organisms, via the placenta.

Egon Diczfalusy, is also a dedicated humanitarian idealist and spent the last 35 years helping scientists and scientific institutions in the developing world. As Senior Consultant of the oldest and best known research programme of the World Health Organisation, the Special Programme of Research in Human Reproduction for some 25 years, he helped establishing international networks of researchers devoted to the development of new fertility-regulating agents and to the fight against infertility in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and South America.

Egon and Ann Diczfalusy Foundation

Purpose of the Foundation

Supporting scientific work conducted in the field of improving reproductive health, recognising scientific results achieved so far. Launching new research programs, supporting the exchange of junior scientists, promoting and supporting lectures and publications on the subject of reproductive health, organising scientific events. Granting yearly the Diczfalusy Medal, to acknowledge the scientific work carried out by a basic or a clinical scientist and her/his life-time scientific achievements. Presenting, also on a yearly basis the Diczfalusy Award to a researcher under the age of 40, working in the above-mentioned field.

In order to achieve its purposes the Foundation will:

- support the further training of physicians, other professionals and health care workers, as well as assist them to attend conferences in Hungary or abroad;
- launch new research programs in the subject of improving reproductive health;
- support the exchange of scientists and young clinicians;
- organise scientific conferences and congresses;
- promote and support informative lectures and publications;
- organise annually the Diczfalusy Scientific Meeting;
- present the Diczfalusy Medal and the Diczfalusy Award.

Contact details

Organisation name:

in English

Diczfalusy Foundation

in Hungarian

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18478262-1-06

EU VAT ID:

HU18478262

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Beneficiary:

Diczfalusy Foundation, Szeged, Hungary

Bank:

MKB Bank Nyrt. (Hungarian Foreign Trade Bank Ltd.)

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Account No. (IBAN):

HU90 1030 0002 1034 0000 4902 0014

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