

Prof. Adi Kimchi – Department of Molecular Genetics, Weizmann Institute of Science

November 2015

Born in Tel Aviv, Prof. Adi Kimchi earned MSc and PhD degrees with distinction in microbiology from the University of Tel Aviv. She continued her studies at the Weizmann Institute of Science, where she performed postdoctoral research. She then joined the Department of Molecular Genetics which she headed between 2001 and 2006. She was the Chair of the Council of Professors at the Weizmann Institute, the President's Advisor for Advancing Women in Science, and was also a member of the Council for Higher Education in Israel for six years. Prof. Kimchi is the incumbent of the Helena Rubinstein Professorial Chair in Cancer Research.

Prof. Adi Kimchi is internationally recognized as a pioneer and a leader in the field of programmed cell death, a fundamental process in cell biology. She discovered key factors (DAP genes) that control a cell's decision to live or die and through them she identified novel signaling pathways which drive different forms of cell death. The discovery of these genes was made possible thanks to a pioneering technology that she developed, which was based on functional-genetic screens by targeting the RNA. In parallel, she developed systems level views on the entire network of cell death proteins. It led to the establishment of several new principles including the discovery of bi-directional links between apoptosis and autophagy and of back-up mechanisms which are utilized to maintain the robustness of cell death responses. Her research may have important implications for the development of novel therapies for cancer and other human diseases.

Prof. Kimchi published 160 papers in leading journals and 22 book chapters. Her work is highly cited and she is frequently invited to present her achievements in international meetings. Among the prizes and honors she has received are the EMET Prize in Physiology (2012), the ICDS Lifetime Achievement Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Field of Cell Death (2012), the Teva Award (2007), the Sergio Lombroso Award in Cancer Research (2006), the Seroussi Award for Cancer Research (2002), the Landau Award for Excellency in Biology and Biotechnology (1999), and the Milstein Award for Excellence in Cytokine Research (1999). She was elected to EMBO in 2000, to the Academia Europaea in 2008, to the European Academy of Cancer Sciences in 2011, and to the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities in 2015.