

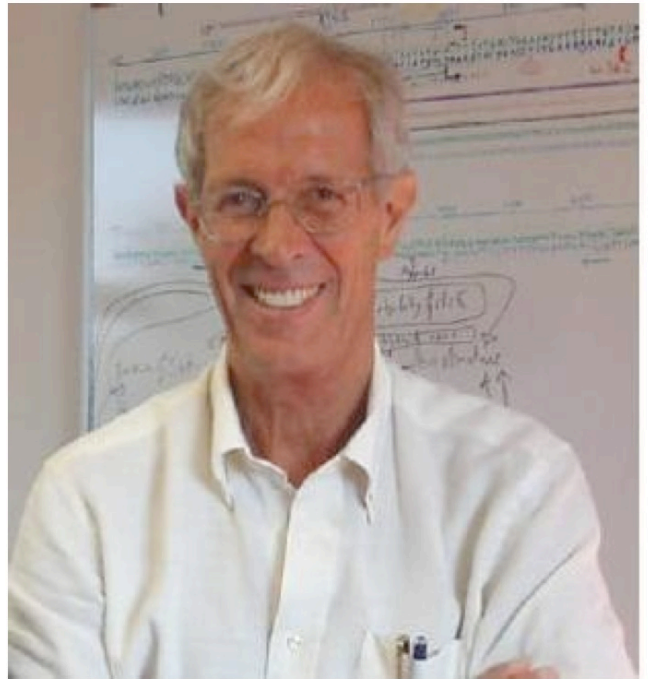
Obituary of Arturo Falaschi

Sandor Pongor

We are greatly saddened to announce that Prof. Arturo Falaschi, member of the Academia Europaea, passed away suddenly on June 1, 2010.

Prof. Falaschi was born in Rome in 1933, graduated in Medicine in 1957 in Milan and undertook post doctoral studies with Nobelists Gobind Khorana (Wisconsin) and Arthur Kornberg (Stanford). From 1966 to 1979 he was Professor of Molecular Biology at the University of Pavia.

Director of the Institute for Biochemical and Evolutionary Genetics of the C.N.R. (the Italian National Research Council) in Pavia from 1970 to 1987, he was also Director of the National Project for Genetic Engineering of the C.N.R. from 1982 to 1989. From 1978 to 1984 he was Director of the Graduate School of Genetics of the University of Pavia, and later as Professor of the Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa. His scientific interests included the isolation and characterisation of DNA replication origins from human cells; the purification and characterisation of several human DNA helicases and the applications of human molecular genetics to medicine. He is the author of over 150 publications in international scientific journals.



Arturo will not only be remembered for his exceptional scientific contributions which he sustained at the highest level for more than four decades but also for his strong commitment to the global scientific endeavour. Since 1996 he served in the Human Frontier Science Program Organization (HFSP), as Chair of the Council of Scientists in 2000-2001, and later became founder and Editor in chief of the HFSP Journal. He also served as Rector for the international Science and High Technology of the United Nations International Development Organization, coordinator of the Graduate School of Molecular Genetics at the International School of Advanced Studies (SISSA) and Executive Director of the Asia-Pacific International Molecular Biology Network.

Arturo will be remembered for his unflinching dedication to spreading the message of new biology to the Developing World. From the early 80's he participated in the foundation of the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB) where he was elected Director General in 1989. Under his leadership from 1989 to 2004, ICGEB grew into an independent international organization with over fifty member states, with two main research institutes, one in Trieste, and another one in New Delhi, and a network of affiliated research institutes all over the world. Arturo was also a member of TWAS, the academy of sciences for the developing world where he chaired the Committee on Biology of the TWAS Research Grants Programme from 1993.

Those of us who had the privilege to work with Arturo will keep him in our memories as an excellent scientist, a generous and knowledgeable colleague, a gracious and unassuming personality who had a broad interest in arts and humanities. He was buried in his beloved Toscana on June 4, 2010.