

Speaker biography

Toivo Maimets is a member of several international research organizations and advisory groups, including the European Research and Innovation Area Board (ERIAB), the European Molecular Biology Conference (President), Science Europe (Member of Board), and the European and American Associations for Cancer Research and *Academia Europaea*. He is also a member of the European Medicines Agency Committee of Advanced Therapies and has served as a member and vice-president of the UNESCO International Bioethics Committee (2004-2011).

Dr. Maimets is Professor of Cell Biology at the University of Tartu, Estonia. His research involves characterization of intracellular signal transduction pathways responsible for cell cycle regulation, DNA damage control and tumorigenesis. His research group studies the molecular mechanisms governing cell developmental potency and their role in human tumorigenesis. He is also developing methods for screening low-molecular-weight compounds to modulate protein-protein interactions *in vivo* and investigating ways to use this approach to design new anti-tumour drugs.



Dr. Maimets graduated from the University of Tartu as a biologist-geneticist in 1980 and subsequently joined the Laboratory of Molecular Biology in Tartu. He received his *cand.sci. (kandidat nauk)* degree from Moscow State University in 1984 for studies on the molecular mechanisms of bacterial protein synthesis. In 1985-1989 he was a British Council student and research scientist at the Marie Curie Cancer Research Institute in the United Kingdom, where he started to study the genetics of cancer and the role of tumor suppressor genes in cell cycle regulation. In 1991 he received a PhD degree for studies of human oncoprotein p53 from the University of Tartu, Estonia, and became Professor of Cell Biology at the same university in 1992. In 2006-2007 he was a visiting professor at the University of Newcastle in the United Kingdom.

Dr. Maimets has occupied numerous administrative posts with responsibilities in research and education, including Dean of the Faculty (1993-1995), vice-rector of the University of Tartu (1995-1998), director of the Institute of Molecular and Cell Biology (1999-2003 and from 2008), Minister of Education and Research (2003-2005) and a member of Tartu University Governing Board since 2012. In 2009-2012 he was Chairman of the Estonian Science Foundation, and is now a member of the Estonian Research Council Governing Board. In 2001-2007 he was the director of the National Centre of Excellence for Gene and Environmental Technologies.

Dr. Maimets has been a PhD supervisor for several students and also a PhD examiner in Estonia and abroad. His list of publications includes about 60 papers in international research journals as well as many articles in the local press to enhance the public understanding of science. His research has been supported by numerous grants from Estonia and abroad.