

PLEASE JOIN US FOR THE

70TH BIRTHDAY
SCIENTIFIC SYMPOSIUM OF



Professor
Gábor Varga



27 February 2026, 9:30 – 14:30



Árkövy Lecture Hall, Faculty of Dentistry,
Education Centre, Szentkirályi utca 47.
1085 Budapest, Hungary

ORGANIZED BY



Semmelweis University
Centre for Translational Medicine



Semmelweis University
Department of Oral Biology

Professor Gábor Varga

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY

Professor Gábor Varga, born in **1956**, is one of the most respected figures of Hungarian and international biomedical research, whose scientific, educational, and community-building activities have left a lasting impact across several disciplines.

He began his career as a research physiologist at the Institute of Experimental Medicine and, in 2002, was appointed **Professor and Chair of the Department of Oral Biology at Semmelweis University**. His scientific work has consistently focused on understanding biological systems at the molecular level, with particular emphasis on the regulation of epithelial tissue development and function, including the **salivary glands, tooth enamel, and pancreas**, as well as **mesenchymal stem cells derived from human dental tissues**.

Beyond fundamental research, Professor Varga has been a pioneer of **translational medicine**, leading and participating in numerous clinical and translational projects. Notably, his work has contributed to the development of **saliva-based diagnostic approaches**, including applications during the COVID-19 pandemic. Since **2021**, he has served as **Vice-Director, supervisor, and research group leader at the Centre for Translational Medicine**, where he continues to play a key role in bridging basic science and clinical application.

His scientific output is outstanding: he has published extensively in leading international journals such as Gastroenterology, Gut, Journal of Dental Research, and Periodontology 2000. His work is reflected in a **Hirsch index of 42 and more than 7,500 citations**, a testament to both the quality and the international relevance of his research. He has successfully led and contributed to major research projects funded by **OTKA, the European Union, the Wellcome Trust, the Royal Society, and the NIH (NIDCR)**.

Professor Varga is equally distinguished as an **educator and mentor**. He has supervised **25 PhD students to successful defense** and currently mentors several fellows and early-career researchers. Generations of students and colleagues regard him not only as an exceptional scientist, but also as a supportive mentor who sets high standards while remaining deeply human and accessible.

Beyond his professional achievements, Professor Varga's life is marked by remarkable **personal stability and values**. He has been **married to his wife, Kriszta, for 48 years**, and together they have raised **four children**. Today, he is also a proud grandfather of seven **grandchildren**, a role he embraces with the same dedication, joy, and responsibility that characterize all aspects of his life.

In the wider community, Professor Varga is highly respected as a **family man, moral role model, and exemplary member of the Reformed Church**, where his integrity, commitment, and service are widely acknowledged. His life and career demonstrate in a compelling way how **scientific excellence, ethical leadership, strong family values, and community responsibility** can be harmoniously integrated.

Taken together, Professor Varga's **scientific achievements, mentorship, leadership, and human qualities** make his career truly exemplary. It is therefore especially fitting that his **70th birthday** is celebrated with a **high-level international scientific symposium**, bringing together colleagues and friends from **multiple continents** who have been inspired by both his work and his personality.

Program OF THE SYMPOSIUM

9:30 - 9:50 OPENING REMARKS

9:30 **Béla Merkely**, Rector, Semmelweis University
Szilveszter E. Vizi, Former President, Hungarian Academy of Sciences
Gábor Gerber, Dean, Faculty of Dentistry

9:50 - 11:05 Session 1 - Pancreas

Chairs: Péter Hegyi, Martin Steward

9:50 - 10:15 **Michael Gray** - Novel regulation of CFTR-dependent ion and fluid transport in the airways by luminal succinate
10:15 - 10:35 **Péter Hegyi** - Why the pancreas secrets bicarbonate
10:35 - 10:50 **Martin Steward** - Manchester-Budapest collaboration in exocrine physiology 1996-2009
10:50 - 11:05 **Zoltán Rakonczay** - From Gene Transfer to Inflammation: Mechanisms and Clinical Implications in Pancreatic Disease

11:05 - 11:20 COFFEE BREAK

11:20 - 12:15 Session 2 - Oral Biology

Chairs: Bea Kerémi, Anna Földes

11:20 - 11:45 **Pamela Den Besten** - The relationship between pH and ameloblast modulation; clues from CFTR loss of function and fluorosis mouse models
11:45 - 12:00 **Ákos Nagy** - Saliva as a diagnostic factor – Investigation of potentially malignant oral lesions based on salivary microRNA expression patterns
12:00 - 12:15 **János Vág** - Unifying error measurement across the digital prosthetic workflow

12:15 - 12:25 COFFEE BREAK

12:25 - 13:30 Session 3 - Translational & Clinical

Chairs: Gábor Gerber, Péter Hermann

12:25 - 12:45 **Ákos Zsembery** - Bicarbonate – not only a buffer!
12:45 - 13:05 **Miklós Sahin-Tóth** - Genetic risk factors of ductal dysfunction in chronic pancreatitis
13:05 - 13:20 **Ákos Szűcs** - Launching Robotic Pancreatic Surgery in Hungary: First Experiences
13:20 - 13:30 **László Márk Czumbel** - Innovative saliva diagnostics – moving beyond tradition during the Covid-19 pandemic

13:30 - 14:30 RECEPTION