

Prof. Assaf Friedler – short biography

Prof. Assaf Friedler was born in Haifa, Israel, in 1971. He did his undergraduate studies in chemistry at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and Ph.D studies in chemistry at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem under the supervision of Prof. Chaim Gilon, in peptide chemistry and medicinal chemistry. After receiving his PhD degree, in 2000, Prof. Friedler moved to Cambridge, UK, to do his post-doctoral research at the MRC centre for protein engineering in the lab of Prof. Sir Alan Fersht, in the field of biophysical studies of protein-protein interactions. The major achievement of the post-doc was development of peptides that refold and reactivate mutants of the tumor suppressor p53. Since 2004 Prof. Friedler runs his independent research group at the institute of chemistry in the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel (<http://chem.ch.huji.ac.il/~assaf/>). Starting October 2010 he is the head of the school of chemistry at the Hebrew University.

His major research interests are using peptides to study protein-protein interactions in health and disease, and developing peptides as drugs that modulate these interactions. Specifically, studies are focused on biological systems related to AIDS and cancer, for example: (1) development of peptide inhibitors of the HIV-1 integrase protein; (2) mapping the interaction networks of apoptosis-related proteins; (3) modulating protein oligomerization using peptides. Prof. Friedler recently won the prestigious starting grant from the ERC (European Research Council) as well as the outstanding young scientist prize by the Israeli Chemical Society.