

## Professor Ronald Laskey FRS FMedSci

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Ron Laskey started his career at Oxford, followed by post-doctoral posts on the scientific staff of Imperial Cancer Research Fund and the MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology in Cambridge. There he discovered signals that direct proteins to the cell nucleus and invented a range of sensitive methods for detecting radio-isotopes. In 1983 he moved to the Charles Darwin Chair of Animal Embryology in the University of Cambridge, first in the Department of Zoology, then as CRC Director of the Wellcome CRC Institute and more recently as Director of the MRC Cancer Cell Unit in the Hutchison/MRC Research Centre. His group discovered "importins", receptors for the signals that direct proteins to the cell nucleus.

Throughout most of his career, Ron Laskey's main interest has been how cells control DNA synthesis. He has developed cell-free systems that allow these processes to be studied in a test tube. Some of the proteins studied in this work are emerging as promising markers for the development of screening tests for the commonest cancers.

Ron Laskey is a Fellow of the Royal Society, a Member of Academia Europaea, Vice President of the Academy of Medical Sciences and a former President of the British Society for Cell Biology. His work has been recognised by several awards, including the Louis Jeantet Prize for Medicine. On a lighter note, he has written and recorded three albums called Songs for Cynical Scientists, More Songs for Cynical Scientists and now Selected Songs for Cynical Scientists.