

TAMARA MIKELADZE-DVALI

ABOUT

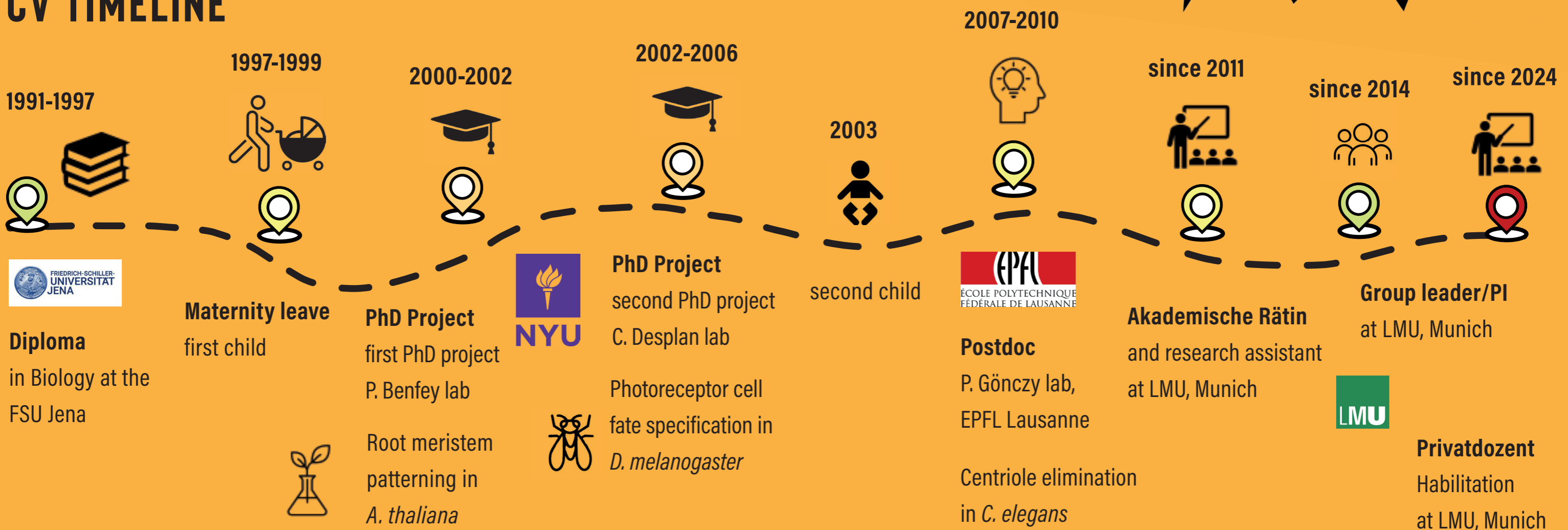
Tamara Mikeladze-Dvali is a molecular biologist of Georgian-German origin, trained as a cell- and developmental biologist at NYU. After graduating, Tamara received the EMBO and HSFP postdoctoral fellowships and worked as a postdoc at NYU and EPFL. During her training, Tamara explored plants, flies, worms, and zebrafish, as model systems. She joined the LMU Munich Biocenter in 2011 and established a DFG-funded research group in 2014. Her research is focused on deciphering the molecular mechanisms regulating centrosome dynamics. Deregulation of centrosome proteins in humans is linked to diseases ranging from cancer to microcephaly and ciliopathies. Tamara's group is using the nematode *C. elegans* to study the regulation of centrosomal proteins in the context of embryogenesis and development. In 2024 Tamara completed her Habilitation at the LMU and is now a Privatdozent. She is lecturing 'Mechanisms of Animal Development', teaches several seminars and practical courses ('Lab Methods', 'Model Organisms' and 'Topics in Evolutionary Developmental Biology'), and serves as an ombudsperson at the LSM graduate school. Tamara is happily married to a physicist and has two grown-up children.



WHAT TO TELL STUDENTS

„Be open-minded, have fun in science, and let curiosity drive you!“

CV TIMELINE



KEY EXPERIENCE

I was trained in a very vibrant and dynamic scientific environment. This gave me the privilege to learn first-hand from world-class scientists doing cutting edge research. However, my path was not linear, instead it was scattered with many obstacles: I started graduate school with a two-year-old child. After 18 months into my project, my PI decided to move to a different university. Since I was bound to the place by my family, I was required to change the lab, trash my work and start from scratch. This was one of the moments when I came very close to quitting. Sometimes you need the right people at the right time to give you a little push and encouragement. For me, these people were my second PhD advisor and my husband. I learned to have the courage to restart and dive into a new topic. Four years later, I graduated with two children, a Cell paper, and an outstanding dissertation award. Today I cannot imagine myself doing a different job. I love being a detective figuring out how molecular mechanisms work, and I love to see the excitement in my student's eyes when they watch for the first time how a cell divides.

And let me tell you a little secret: as a woman in science, you discover many 'hidden powers'. Find your hidden power, if I could pull it off, you can do it too!

MAJOR SCIENTIFIC FINDING

Tamara's group identified and decoded the centrosomal function of PCMD-1, the pericentrin of *C. elegans*. Pericentrin is a structural protein of the centrosome that plays an important role in the regulation of ciliogenesis and cell proliferation. In humans, mutations in pericentrin are linked to Seckel Syndrome-4 and Microcephalic Osteodysplastic Primordial Dwarfism type II (MOPD II).

