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Editorial

In 1998 a special issue "Lipid–protein interactions" was published in BBA Reviews on Biomembranes, vol. 1375, pp. 243–484. I accepted to be the guest editor of that issue, because at that time interest in lipid–protein interactions was booming among cell biologists, biochemists and biophysicists. Lipid–protein interactions are essential for the structure, function, biogenesis and trafficking of membranes. Lipid–protein interactions are also at the heart of many biological processes such as lipolysis, blood coagulation and the mode of action of polypeptide antibiotics. That special issue consisted of 14 articles in the broad area of lipid–protein interactions and was very well received by the scientific community as witnessed from subsequent citation analysis.

Since 1998 interest in lipid–protein interactions has only further increased. The discovery through genome analysis of the abundance of membrane proteins, the identification of the many specific functions that lipids have, and the detection of lipids at specific sites in atomic structures of membrane proteins are just three of the many developments that formed the basis for this second special issue on lipid–protein interactions. This issue solely concentrates on lipid–protein interactions in membranes with as many as 17 contributions of colleagues that enthusiastically accepted the invitation to this special issue.

I dedicated the previous issue to Laurens van Deenen for his many contributions to membrane research. This year we commemorate that 10 years ago we lost this eminent scientist.

I dedicate this special issue to the young next generation of scientists that has entered this field. You will encounter that you have to bridge in your approaches the specifics of the world of membrane lipids and the special features and difficult handling of proteins that are present in membranes or interact with them. You will encounter the urge to bridge the gap between experiments in simple model systems and the real world. This poses special demands on you and the infrastructure you work in. I wish you all success in your endeavors in the intriguing world of interactions between the two main building blocks of membranes, i.e. lipids and proteins.

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