

Dr. Helena Kandárová is the Director of the Institute of Experimental Pharmacology and Toxicology at CEM SAS and a Senior lecturer at the Institute for Biochemistry and Microbiology at the Slovak Technical University in Bratislava. She is also CEO of InVitroTox Consulting.

Helena obtained her PhD at FU Berlin in collaboration with ZEBET at the Federal Institute for Risk Assessment in Berlin, Germany. Her PhD research focused on the development and validation of in vitro methods for topical toxicity testing using 3D reconstructed human tissue models.

Subsequently, she joined a US-based, biotechnology-oriented company, MatTek, where she continued her scientific efforts and also assumed a new role of General Acting Manager for the EU market. In 2009, she returned to Slovakia to establish the EU subsidiary of MatTek and assumed the position of Executive director of the EU subsidiary. At MatTek, she led several important research and validation projects that contributed to new OECD and ISO test guidelines in the area of topical toxicity and established training initiatives that were shortlisted for a Lush Prize in 2018.

In 2019, she joined the newly formed Centre of Experimental Medicine at the Slovak Academy of Science and, in 2020, established a GLP-certified SK-NETVAL laboratory at the Institute of Pharmacology and Toxicology (IEPT). In 2021, she joined the large EU-funded project ONTOX as Deputy for Communication, Dissemination, Exploitation, and Data Management. Helena has been elected as a Director of the IEPT at CEM in 2023. Within CEM SAS, her tenure has been marked by significant contributions to the implementation of New Approach Methodologies (NAMs) in research and development.

Helena is active in many international organizations, networks, and committees, including EUROTOX (Eurotox 2017 Congress president, former Chair of the communication subcommittee, EUROTOX faculty, founding member of the In2Tox specialty section, etc.). Since 2020, she also serves as the President of the European Society of Toxicology In Vitro (ESTIV), and co-organized two ESTIV congresses in Barcelona, Spain, and Prague, as well as several ESTIV Applied Training Courses, which were shortlisted for a Lush Prize in 2022. She works at the OECD expert groups, and for two years, she also acted as a National coordinator of the OECD TG programme in Slovakia (pro bono).

Her academic and business credentials lay a solid foundation for her career, highlighting her commitment to alternative testing methods and the progression of toxicological sciences. Recognition of her work includes being a finalist for the ESET Science Award in 2023, the first EUROTOX Lecture award in 2022, the Bjorn Ekwall Memorial Award, the Doerenkamp-Zbinden Foundation award, and many other national and international recognitions.