



**Prof. Maria Yazdanbakhsh**

Professor

Leiden University Medical Center, the Netherlands

Professor Maria Yazdanbakhsh heads Parasitology at Leiden University Medical Center, in the Netherlands, where medical specialists, (inter)national medically qualified PhD students and scientists work together in a setting with a strong scientific track to 1) develop of effective vaccines against neglected and poverty-related parasitic diseases and 2) identify parasite-derived immune modulatory molecules to control hyper-inflammatory diseases. She is involved in the assessment of vaccines that are developed to combat malaria, schistosomiasis and hookworm infections. At the same time, she has a long track record in the area of immune modulatory molecules that parasites use to evade the host immune system, which have the potential to cure inflammatory diseases.

As an immunologist Maria Yazdanbakhsh is interested in how the immune system is influenced by parasites and her research is characterized by the interplay between laboratory studies at the LUMC and field studies with collaborative centers in Indonesia, Gabon and Ghana. As part of her activities in developing countries, she puts much emphasis on capacity building. This is largely through training clinicians and scientists to perform biomedical research at a high standard. As part of this, fifteen students from Indonesia, Gabon and Ghana have already obtained their PhD degrees under supervision of Maria Yazdanbakhsh. She holds honorary professorships at two universities in Indonesia (University of Indonesia and University of Hasanuddin).

In terms of professional activities beyond research and teaching, Maria Yazdanbakhsh is the president of Dutch Society for Parasitology and she is on executive committee of European Journal of Immunology as well as editorial boards of Parasite Immunology, PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases and Journal of Infectious Diseases. She is a member of the following scientific boards: 1) LUMC scientific advisory board, 2) advisory committee of Zon-Mw TOP grants, and 3) the board of NWO-WOTRO for global development.