

In Memoriam

Our dear friend and colleague Professor Emeritus Karin Caldwell, Djursholm, left us on January 18, 2026 at the age of 85. The closest mourners are her husband Dennis, family and friends.

As the granddaughter of Sweden's first Nobel Prize winner Svante Arrhenius, Karin entered chemistry and received her PhD in biochemistry at Uppsala University in 1976. There she began her scientific career in what was to become the golden age of Swedish separation technology. With Nobel Prize winners The Svedberg and Arne Tiselius as forefathers, new techniques emerged that could be applied industrially. Perhaps Karin already realized the power of combining academic cutting-edge research with industrial benefit here.

From 1968 to 1985 she worked at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City as a colleague in Professor Calvin Giddings' research group and made pioneering contributions in the new technology of field flow fractionation (FFF), especially in sedimentation FFF. It was here that she also met her husband. From 1985 to 1998, she was a professor in Biomedical Engineering and founded the Center for Biopolymers at Interfaces – a model for collaboration between universities and industry. She established herself as an international authority in surface and colloid chemistry and biomaterials.

Back at Uppsala University in 1998, she built up the Center for Surface Biotechnology with support from Amersham Biosciences. The center became a node for research into biomaterials and biosensors characterized by the same philosophy as in the USA: science with industrial relevance. Here, Karin developed new courses with an innovative industrial focus.

From 1999 to 2009, Karin was a very popular inspector at Uplands Nation. As the first woman in the post, she carried out the assignment with great commitment to the students. A portrait of Karin with her grandfather Svante Arrhenius in the background hangs in the Nation.

Karin had a big heart and was generous with her time and especially encouraged younger colleagues. Our dear Karin leaves behind a significant scientific legacy. It was a great privilege to work by her side. We remember her with great warmth.

Torgny Fornstedt, Professor of Analytical Chemistry
Karl-Gustav Wahlund, Professor Emeritus of Technical Analytical Chemistry
Colleagues in Biochemistry/Surface Biotechnology