

**Sandra Karner**

**“Let’s Talk About GOLD!”**

**A research project within the Austrian Genome Research Program GEN-AU**

Quite often it is assumed that scientific controversies are in particular linked to the field of genetics. Therefore it seems to be necessary to improve the science-society interactions and to intensify participatory processes in shaping science and technology. In order to improve the relationship between society and the scientific community a better understanding of the way how lay-people position themselves towards research is needed. How do they perceive the social and ethical issues that are at stake and how may gender or the fact of being directly affected influence this? The presented project follows the Swiss model of the "Round Tables" and tries to develop a setting, which allows a constructive discussion process between researchers and lay-people from diverse perspectives on the topic. It is aimed at developing a new form of communication between the biosciences and lay-people and analysing the interactions as a learning process. Over a period of one year the group of about 16 people will meet regularly and discuss different aspects about a current research project, which deals with Genomics of Lipid-Associated Disorders (GOLD). The researchers will describe their work and present their perspectives on potential impacts of their research. The lay members of the Round Tables will contribute their own situated experiences and will be enabled to develop a differentiated view of this kind of research and to take up a position towards its ethical and social dimensions. The chosen setting should allow a common communicative development of experiences in the engagement of medical genome research and society. A mutual learning process should be fostered and the expression of expectations, hopes and fears from both, lay-people and researchers, with regard to the research topic should get their space within the discussions.

The presented project is carried out in cooperation with VIRUSS, University of Vienna. Project co-ordinator: Prof. Dr. Ulrike Felt (VIRUSS)