

Simona Polo studied Biological Sciences and received her Ph.D. in Genetics at the University of Milan. She conducted postdoctoral research at San Raffaele Scientific Institute studying the molecular determinants of the receptor-mediated HIV entry and HIV-inhibitory functions of chemokines. In 1999 she joined the group of Prof. Pier Paolo Di Fiore at the European Institute of Oncology (IEO) Milan as senior scientist, acquiring a strong expertise in the field of endocytosis. At that time she discovered and defined the role of ubiquitin in the internalization of the epidermal growth factor receptor, EGFR. In 2005, she started her own line of research at IFOM studying ubiquitin as a signaling device with a particular focus on cancer biology. In Polo lab, biochemical and biophysical techniques, including mass spectrometry and crystallography, are coupled with classical mammalian cell-based assays and, more recently, with the use of *Drosophila* model system. Work of her lab in the last ten years has led to significant breakthroughs in the ubiquitin system. To name but a few her first paper published in the field (Polo et al., Nature 2002) and the first one signed as last author (Sigismund et al., PNAS 2005) received more than 500 citations/each. In recognition of her studies she received the prestigious EMBO Young Investigator award in 2009 and was elected EMBO member in 2016.