Dr. Klang, in 2016 you were awarded the “Back to Research Grant” – what has this grant enabled you to do?

The “Back to Research Grant” has enabled me to re-start my career in science after my maternity leave in a family-friendly manner.

What research project are you currently working on?

My work deals with the skin permeation of medications and pharmaceutical excipients along with their interactions with the skin. My current project is designed to investigate the interactions between drug release systems and the skin using spectroscopic methods, in particular FTIR, RAMAN and NMR. These data provide valuable information on the skin irritation potential of the applied substances because we can render the effects visible on the molecular level. I plan to also focus on allergenic reactions, i.e. irritation of the skin and mucous membranes.

Fig3


The initiative “Women in Biology” has recently compiled the latest data on the distribution of men and women along the scientific career ladder (see the above article). Where do you see the crux behind the extreme divergence in the post-PhD phase? Do you have any ideas on how to change this situation?

Scientific careers traditionally follow a scheme that doesn’t foresee interruptions to start a family or provide other part-time work options. The solutions lie in scholarships and grants, comprehensive childcare programs, as well as in a larger number of permanent research positions.

What challenges are you facing in trying to reconcile your scientific career with family life?

The biggest challenge is to separate work and private life such that both can be pursued with pleasure and without time constraints.