

Cansford Laboratories – Biography

The life and work of Dr Lolita Tsanaclis PhD



Dr Lolita Tsanaclis is scientific director and joint founder of Cansford Laboratories. Lolita has been pioneering methods for the analysis of drugs in hair since 1993. Her expertise spans drug testing using hair, blood, and oral fluid samples in medico-legal and workplace sectors for over three decades.

Lolita is experienced in the preparation of expert witness reports for court, court attendance, presenting scientific data at international conferences, and reviewing and publishing papers in peer review journals.

Early years

Dr Lolita Tsanaclis was born in São Paulo in Brazil in 1953 to parents of Greek and Romanian origin who emigrated from Europe to Brazil after World War II. Growing up Lolita was inspired by the tales of Robin Hood. Naturally, Nottingham was the first place she visited in the UK at age 19. Now, Lolita admires those who work for people's well-being and those who strive for universal education to help change lives.

Educational achievements

It was during her university years, while pursuing a degree in Pharmacy and Biochemistry at the prestigious University of São Paulo, that she learned about DNA and from then she knew she wanted to be a scientist. After completing her first degree, Lolita continued her academic journey, earning a Master's Degree in Clinical Analysis, with a dissertation focussed on "Copper and Ceruloplasmin Serum Levels in Epileptic Patients".

In 1981, Lolita wanted to work with a professor who specialised in epilepsy and anti-epileptic drugs monitoring. The professor had accepted a Chair in Pharmacology at University Hospital of Wales in Cardiff. Living in Brazil, Lolita hadn't ever heard of Cardiff but made the decision to move to the UK. Apart from 18 months, when Lolita went back to Brazil, she has lived in Cardiff ever since.

Driven by her thirst for knowledge and dedication to her studies, Lolita achieved a PhD in Pharmacology at the University Hospital of Wales, UK, with her dissertation named “External Quality Assessment in Therapeutic Drug Monitoring”.

Early career

It was in Wales that Lolita's scientific career took off. She immersed herself in research, specialising in epilepsy and anti-epileptic drug monitoring. Her pioneering work in developing and validating gas-chromatography and liquid-chromatography assays laid the groundwork for her future accomplishments in the field of drug testing.

During this time, in 1989, Lolita met co-founder of Cansford Laboratories, John Wicks, while she was working at a Clinical Research Organisation on pharmacokinetics and quality assurance. Lolita describes her connection with John as being key to her achievements.

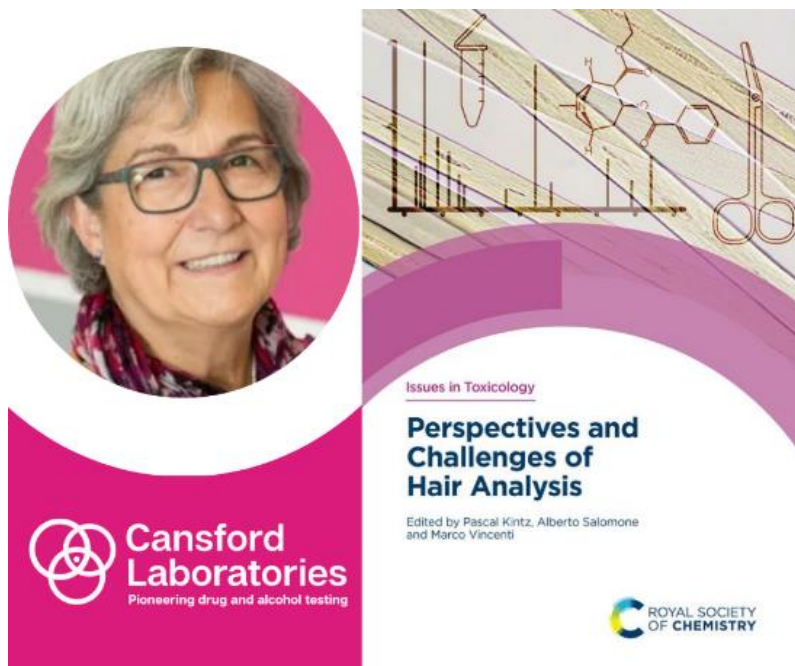
Scientific pioneer

Lolita's work with John Wicks led to them establishing TrichoTech in 1999 and later Cansford Laboratories in 2010 - two pioneering institutions at the forefront of drug and alcohol testing innovation.

However, their journey to success wasn't without its challenges. In 1993, when John first offered the idea of drug hair testing, they faced scepticism from industry leaders who doubted the viability of such a venture.

Undeterred, they persevered, developing methods for hair testing that would revolutionise the field and set new standards for accuracy and efficiency.

In 1999, along with their respective spouses Colin and Lizzie, Lolita and John took a bold leap of faith, remortgaging their homes to fund TrichoTech. Their vision paid off and the company quickly gathered momentum, becoming one of the largest in the world in its field, employing almost 50 staff before it was sold in 2007.



The birth of Cansford Laboratories

Three years later, in 2010, Lolita and John founded Cansford Laboratories, driven by a desire to further refine and optimise hair testing procedures. Through relentless innovation and the lab's commitment to quality, Cansford Laboratories became synonymous with excellence, providing clients with rapid and accurate results that transformed lives and safeguarded communities.

Cansford Laboratories improved hair testing turnaround times of results to clients from over two weeks to just three days or less – an industry leading guaranteed turnaround time. The laboratory focussed on developing novel ways of processing samples and improving the technology and the implementation of quality services, so that it could get more accurate results quicker to customers including family courts and organisations wanting to ensure a safe workplace.



Through technology transfer and funding, Lolita and John subsequently established and developed Chromatox Ltd - a laboratory in São Paulo, Brazil. When sold in 2019, Chromatox was a successful business with 120 employees that could test over 4000 hair samples a day.

Published prowess

Lolita's contributions to the scientific community have been remarkable throughout her career. Her pioneering research has been published in numerous peer-reviewed journals, earning her international acclaim and



recognition. From her early work on external quality assessment schemes for therapeutic drug monitoring to her groundbreaking studies on patterns of hair analysis results and on external contamination, Lolita's legacy is one of innovation, quality and impact.

Her latest book chapter, *Effects of External Contamination and Cosmetic Treatments on Hair Testing Can be Explained...Most of the*

Time, is published by Royal Society of Chemistry in *Perspectives and Challenges of Hair Analysis*.



Lolita is a Member of the Society of Hair Testing (SOHT), the London Toxicology Group (LTG), and The International Association of Forensic Toxicologists (TIAFT).

Also, amongst her many professional accolades, Lolita was the Brazilian Honorary Consulate for Wales appointed by the Brazilian Embassy in London and ratified by the Welsh Assembly Government from 2007 to 2018.

Greatest achievements

Lolita's greatest professional achievements lie in the lives she has touched and the minds she has inspired. Over the years, Lolita has mentored and trained countless individuals – in Wales and in Brazil - imparting her scientific knowledge and instilling in them a sense of confidence and curiosity that will serve them well for years to come.

On a personal level, Lolita is proud of her circle of friends and family, which includes her English family who combined with her Brazilian family and now live in Canada and France. Lolita enjoys travelling to meet them in different parts of the world.

Lolita prides herself on being a practical person who has a forward-looking attitude. She continually strives to find more efficient ways of doing things that provide a better service to customers. Her advice to others who wish to embark on a scientific career path is to have patience and perseverance. She holds firm that success is 10% inspiration and 90% perspiration.

Lolita's legacy as a pioneer in scientific research and entrepreneurship serves to inspire future generations. Her commitment to excellence, along with her boundless curiosity and compassionate spirit, has made an indelible mark on the world of science.