**Gordana Vunjak-Novakovic** is a bioengineer appointed University Professor, the highest academic rank at Columbia University reserved for only a few active professors out of 4,000, as the first engineer in history of Columbia to receive this highest distinction. She is also the Mikati Foundation Professor of Biomedical Engineering and Medical Sciences, and a faculty in the Irving Comprehensive Cancer Center and in the Center for Human Development. She directs the Laboratory for Stem Cells and Tissue Engineering with 40 investigators serving as the bioengineering lead of the Columbia Stem Cell Initiative, and the Center for Advanced Regeneration Technologies (cART). She serves on the Columbia University President’s Task Force for Precision Medicine, and on the Executive Leadership of the Columbia University Medical Center. She received her Ph.D. in Chemical Engineering from the University of Belgrade in Serbia, holds a doctorate *honoris causa* from the University of Novi Sad, and was a Fulbright Fellow at MIT.

The focus of her research is on engineering functional human tissues for regenerative medicine and studies of development and disease. Gordana published 3 books, 60 book chapters, 390 journal articles (including those in *Nature, Cell, Nature Biotechnology, Nature Biomedical Engineering, Nature Communications, Nature Protocols, Science Advances, PNAS, Cell Stem Cell, Science Translational Medicine*). With over 42,000 citations and impact factor h=117, she is one of the most highly cited individuals of all times, in all disciplines. She also gave 420 invited talks, and has 390 conference abstracts and 101 licensed, issued or pending patents. With her students, she founded four biotech companies: epiBone ([epibone.com](http://epibone.com)), Tara Biosystems ([tarabiosystems.com](http://tarabiosystems.com)), Xylyx Bio ([xylyxbio.com](https://xylyxbio.com)), and Immplacate (immplacatehealth.com) that are all based in NYC.

She has served on editorial boards of 31 journals, Council for Tissue Engineering and Regenerative Medicine, Board of Directors of the Center for Advancement of Science in Space (CASIS) - where she chairs the Science/Technology Committee, Board of Directors of the American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering, and as the US Section Head for Musculoskeletal Repair & Regeneration for the Faculty 1000 of Medicine. She serves on Advisory Boards at several academic institutions (Boston University, Sloan-Kettering Center for Stem Cell Biology, New York Stem Cell Foundation, New York State Stem Cell Science, City College New York, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Washington University, University of Washington Seattle Dialysis Center, University of Maryland Center for Engineering Complex Tissues, University of Vermont, University of Pennsylvania, Pensylvannia State University, University of Toronto Medicine by Design) and companies (Forkhead, Ionic Biomedical Inc, epiBone, Tara Biosystems, East River, Immplacate, Advanced Cell Technology, Organovo, Modern Meadow, StemSave). 25 of her trainees now hold faculty positions (10 of them are women).

Among her many recognitions, Dr Vunjak-Novakovic was elected to the Council of the National Institute for Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering (NIBIB), American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering (AIMBE) where she was the Chair of the College of Fellows (2016-17), inducted into the Women in Technology International Hall of Fame "for developing biological substitutes to restore, maintain or improve tissue function", and received the Clemson Award of the Biomaterials Society “for significant contributions to the literature on biomaterials” (2009), the Pritzker Award of the Biomedical Engineering Society (2017) and Shu Chien Achievement Award (2018). She gave the Director's lecture at the NIH, as the first woman engineer to receive this distinction.  She was elected to the New York Academy of Sciences for contributions to biomedical engineering, Academia Europaea for contributions to translational research, and the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts for contributions to biology and chemistry. She is a Fellow of the Biomedical Engineering Society, a Fellow of the AAAS, a Founding Fellow of the International Society for Tissue Engineering and Regenerative Medicine, one of the Foreign Policy’s 100 Leading Global Thinkers for 2014.

Dr Vunjak-Novakovic has been elected to the National Academy of Engineering (as the first women faculty at Columbia University), the National Academy of Medicine (the first engineering faculty at Columbia University), and the National Academy of Inventors.