

PMOD/WRC press release

22 Feb. 2019

Obituary: Claus Fröhlich

Until almost his last day, Claus Fröhlich put his heart and soul into being a researcher. He was born on 10 October 1936, and came to Davos and the Physikalisch-Meteorologisches Observatorium Davos (PMOD) in 1969 as a physicist. His PhD thesis in the field of solid-state physics at the ETH Zurich was awarded a medal in the same year. With his willingness to take over the leadership of the newly created World Radiation Center, the specialist in heat conduction enabled the Center to be established at PMOD and, as such, revived the institute's traditional focus on instrument development.

In 1975, Fröhlich took over as institute director and in the same year oversaw the relocation of the now PMOD/WRC institute to the former schoolhouse of Davos Dorf, and subsequently its official opening two years later.

Until his retirement in 1999, Fröhlich was also a lecturer at the ETH Zurich until 2001 when he was 65. An important milestone for the development of the PMOD/WRC was the development of space experiments under the direction of Claus Fröhlich. His most important project, the VIRGO (Variability of Solar Irradiance and Gravity Oscillations) space experiment, was managed by him even after retirement. Through instruments onboard the SOHO (Solar and Heliospheric Observatory) satellite, operating since 1995, he was able to study solar irradiance variability in an eleven-year cycle. As the mission, originally planned for three years, still provides data to this day, Claus Fröhlich was examining the possible variability over an even longer period of time.

Only a few days before his death, he was working on the latest calibration parameters, which ensure the continuity of the data.

The PMOD/WRC offers a valuable and very respected colleague our deepest regards.

