

Obituary for

Prof. Dr. Dr. h. c.

HERIBERT OFFERMANNS

*who passed away on 24 November 2025
at the age of 88 in Hanau*

Note: This obituary corresponds to the obituary for Prof. Heribert Offermanns published by Global Energy Solutions e. V. in its newsletter for the first quarter of 2026. Heribert Offermanns was a member of the board of trustees at Global Energy Solutions from its inception.

Like the institute's director, Heribert Offermanns was influenced by RWTH Aachen University and the Aachen region. This applies to both science and, for example, coal mining – even across the border in Belgium. In Offermanns' words, a world and chemistry 'without fossil raw materials' has been a recurring theme in the research activities of technical chemistry at RWTH Aachen University for almost 100 years¹. Offermanns names Walter M. Fuchs, Friedrich Asinger and Wilhelm Keim as influential figures in the management of the institute. Methanol played a central role in the institute's work, a topic that was later popularised in the Anglo-Saxon world by Nobel Prize winner Georg A. Olah from the USA. A description of how Heribert Offermanns, Ludolf Plass and Franz Josef Radermacher pursued this topic can be found in the source '*Grüne Methanol-Technologie: Königsweg statt Irrweg*' (Green Methanol Technology: The Royal Road Instead of the Wrong Turn)². Another very interesting source is '*Methanol findet zu wenig Beachtung als Kraftstoff und Chemierohstoff der Zukunft*' (Methanol Receives Too Little Attention as a Fuel and Chemical Raw Material of the Future)³. This also applies to '*Energie aus der Wüste*' (Energy from the Desert)⁴ and especially to the comprehensive monograph '*Methanol: The Basic Chemical and Energy Feedstock of the Future – Asinger's Vision Today*'⁵.

Heribert Offermanns was a great researcher and implementer, and also a respected entrepreneur during his many years on the board of Degussa AG. His areas of interest were very broad. He thought 'big' and did not get lost in the details. Without him, Global Energy Solutions e. V. would probably never have been founded. He helped initiate an entire tradition of thinking in Ulm.

We are deeply indebted to Heribert Offermanns and will honour his memory.

¹ Offermanns, H.: Ein Institut und eine Vision, Nachrichten aus der Chemie (64), April 2016, www.gdch.de/nachrichten

² Offermanns, H., Plass, L., Radermacher, F. J.: „Grüne“ Methanol-Technologie: Königsweg statt Irrweg, Naturwissenschaftliche Rundschau, 73, Jahrgang, Heft 1, 2020

³ Bertau, M., Effenberger, F., Keim, W., Menges, G., Offermanns, H.: Methanol findet zu wenig Beachtung als Kraftstoff und Chemierohstoff der Zukunft, Chemie Ingenieur Technik, 2010, 82, No. 12

⁴ Offermanns, H.: Energie aus der Wüste, Nachrichten aus der Chemie (67), Dezember 2019, www.gdch.de/nachrichten

⁵ Bertau, M., Offermanns, H., Plass, L., Schmidt, F., Wernicke, H.J.: "*Methanol: The Basic Chemical and Energy Feedstock of the Future – Asinger's Vision Today*", Springer Verlag Berlin Heidelberg, 2014