

### **Professor Stefan Banach**

Stefan Banach – autodidact, creator of functional analysis and patron of the Prize – was born in 1892 in Cracow, where he spent his youth. A breakthrough moment for his career was the incidental meeting in Cracow Planty Park in 1916 with the later professor of mathematics, Hugo Steinhaus. Many years later H. Steinhaus considered the fact of noticing Banach’s talent his greatest scientific discovery. Thanks to Steinhaus, Banach was appointed assistant professor at the Chair of Mathematics, Faculty of Mechanics, at the Lviv Technical University. In 1920, before completing mathematical studies, Stefan Banach received the doctor’s degree at the John Casimir University in Lviv, where after four years he became a professor. In 1935 he was invited to give a plenary lecture at the International Congress of Mathematicians in Oslo. Shortly before the outbreak of World War II Stefan Banach was elected the president of the Polish Mathematical Society. He died in summer 1945 in Lviv.

Stefan Banach’s main scientific interests centred around functional analysis, an extensive section of mathematics important for the contemporary applications – he consolidated its fundamentals and introduced terminology accepted by mathematicians worldwide. He also dealt with **real function theory, orthogonal series theory and descriptive set theory. He authored several dozens of publications, including his most important work – „Teorie des operations lineaires” published in 1932, as well as a number of handbooks.**

Stefan Banach was the co-founder of the Lviv School of Mathematics, an important scientific centre dealing mainly with functional analysis. The main representatives of the LSM, apart from Stefan Banach, were the following distinguished mathematicians: Hugo Steinhaus, Stanisław Mazur, Władysław Orlicz, Juliusz Paweł Schauder, Stanisław Ulam, Marek Kac, Herman Auerbach, Antoni Łomnicki, Stanisław Ruziewicz, Włodzimierz Stożek, Stefan Kaczmarz, Stanisław Saks.

The path of Stefan Banach’s scientific career can set an example for the young generation. Despite the difficult beginnings of his scientific career, thanks to his exceptional features of mind and personality, his talent, determination and diligence, he became one of the most distinguished mathematicians of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.