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## **Final IMMUNO-model Annual Conference**

### **Building Bridges in Cancer Immunotherapy Modelling**

**20-22 May 2026, Ljubljana, Slovenia**

**Venue: National Institute of Biology, 121 Vecna pot, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia**

#### **Scientific Committee (SC)**

Eva Martinez-Balibrea, Germans Trias i Pujol Research Institute, Spain

Vinton Cheng, University of Birmingham, UK

Doreen Lau, Brunel University of London, UK

Rebeca Sanz Pamplona, Aragon Research Health Institute, Spain

Nuno Rodrigues dos Santos, i3S, University of Porto, Portugal

Rosalinda Sorrentino, University of Salerno, Italy

Catarina Rodrigues, Portuguese Institute of Oncology of Porto, Portugal

Barbara Breznik, National Institute of Biology, Slovenia

Metka Novak, National Institute of Biology, Slovenia

#### **Organizing Committee (OC)**

Barbara Breznik, National Institute of Biology, Slovenia

Metka Novak, National Institute of Biology, Slovenia

Špela Kladnik, National Institute of Biology, Slovenia

Emanuela Senjor, Jozef Stefan Institute, Slovenia

Pia Žižek, National Institute of Biology, Slovenia

**Attendees:**

**Core Group members**

**All attendees**

**Program**

**Day 1**

**20 May, Wednesday**

08.30 - 09.00 am	<b>Registration for the Core Group meeting, (Core Group members only)</b> <i>NIB registration desk</i>
09.00 - 12.00 pm	<b>IMMUNO-model Core Group Meeting (Core Group members)</b> <i>NIB conference room</i>
12.00 - 01.00 pm	<b>Lunch and NIB Lab tour (Core Group members)</b> <i>NIB gallery</i>

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## Start of the official program (All attendees)

- 12.00-01.00 pm      **Registration**  
*NIB registration desk*
- 01.15-01.20 pm      Welcome speech local organizers and NIB director  
*NIB conference room*
- 01.20-01.30 pm      Welcome speech Eva Martinez-Balibrea, action chair  
*NIB conference room*
- 01.30-03.30 pm      **TGRC session 1: Gender Equal Opportunities and the Sex Gap in Immunology and Immunotherapy**  
*NIB conference room*  
Chairs: Hanne Haslene-Hox, SINTEF, Norway & Catarina A. Rodrigues, IPO Porto, Portugal
- 01.30-02.00 pm **Invited speaker: Berna Özdemir (Bern University Hospital, Switzerland)**  
**Talk title: Sex and gender differences in immunotherapy efficacy and toxicity- what is the evidence?**
- 02.00-02.30 pm **Invited speaker: Sonja Loges (University Medical Centre Mannheim, Germany)**  
**Talk title: Sex Differences in NSCLC**
- 02.30-03.00 pm **Invited speaker: Camila Consiglio (Lund University, Sweden)**  
**Talk title: Decoding sex differences in human immunity using systems immunology**
- 03.00-03.30 pm **Roundtable discussion**  
**Uzma Hasan, The Lyon Immunotherapy for Cancer Laboratory, France**

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**Gianmarco Contino, University of Birmingham, United Kingdom**

03.30-04.15 pm

*Coffee break & Industry meetings*

*NIB gallery*

04.15-06.30 pm

**TGRC Session 2: Industry Presentations and Networking**

*NIB conference room*

Chairs: Denis Collins, Dublin City University, Ireland  
and Marta Maleszewska, University of Warsaw, Poland

04.15-04.22 pm INITIO CELL: Devrim Pesen Okvur

04.25-04.32 pm Labena d.o.o.: Uršula Prošenc Zmrzljak

04.35-04.42 pm Omega: Samy Dufour

04.45-04.52 pm Axion Biosystems: Aniello Lombardi

04.55-05-02 pm RWD Life Science Co., LTD: Fan Yu

05.05-05.12 pm Abbmira Therapeutics AG: Marc Creus

05.15-05.22 pm 28DIGITAL :Sonay Goneli

05.25-06-25 pm Open discussion with Industry

06.30 - 10.00 pm

IMMUNO-model Core Group Meeting Dinner, **Core Group members**

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## Day 2

21 May, Thursday

### Start of Scientific Program (all attendees)

08.15-09.15 am

**Registration**

*NIB registration desk*

09.15-10.00 am

**Scientific Session 1: Immuno-models in hematologic tumors  
WG4**

*NIB conference room*

Chair: Nuno R. dos Santos, i3S, University of Porto, Portugal

**Keynote lecture**

**Elisa Oricchio, EPFL, Switzerland**

**Use tissue explants to decode tumor evolution and  
response to therapies**

10.00-10.45 am

**Scientific Session 2: *In vivo* cancer immunotherapy models-  
WG2**

*NIB conference room*

Chair: Doreen Lau, Brunel University of London, UK

**Keynote lecture**

**Erik Aarntzen, Radboud University Medical Centre, the  
Netherlands**

**Imaging CD8 T-cells in vivo: the potential of PET imaging as  
biomarker technology**

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10.45-11.25 am	Coffee break & Poster session WG2+WG4  Lab tour  <i>NIB gallery</i>
11.25-12.10 pm	<b><u>Scientific Session 3: Advances in immuno-models</u></b>  <i>NIB conference room</i>  Chair: Eva Martinez-Balibrea, Germans Trias i Pujol Research Institute, Spain  <b>Keynote lecture</b>  <b>Jerôme Galon, INSERM, Université Sorbonne, France</b>  <b>The immune contexture in the era of cancer immunotherapies</b>
12.10-01.25 pm	Lunch & Poster session WG2+WG4  <i>NIB gallery</i>
01.25-01.55 pm	<b><u>Scientific Session 4: Immuno-model in hematologic tumors WG4</u></b>  <i>NIB conference room</i>  Chairs: Laura Belver, Josep Carreras Leukaemia Research Institute, Spain and Emanuele Azzoni, University of Milano-Bicocca, Italy  <b>Invited speaker: Emanuele Azzoni, University of Milano-Bicocca, Italy</b>  <b>From prenatal origins to novel therapeutic strategies targeting inflammatory pathways: leveraging pre-clinical models of Juvenile Myelomonocytic Leukemia (JMML)</b>

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- 01.55-02.25 pm      **Invited speaker: Jordi Minguillón, CIEMAT/IIS-FJD and IdiPAZ/CNIO, Madrid**
- Preclinical and Clinical Research on CAR T-Cell Therapy for Pediatric Leukemia**
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- 02.25-02.35 pm      **Short talk: Adrian Bogdan Tigu, "Iuliu Hațieganu" University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Cluj-Napoca, Romania**
- Synergizing Immunotherapy and Proteasome Inhibition in Mantle Cell Lymphoma**
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- 02.35-03.15 pm      Coffee break & Poster session WG2+WG4
- NIB lab tour
- NIB gallery*
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- 03.15-03.45 pm      **Scientific Session 5: *In vivo* cancer immunotherapy model WG2**
- NIB conference room*
- Chairs: Eleni Douni, Department of Biotechnology Agricultural University of Athens/Institute for Bioinnovation, B.S.R.C. "Alexander Fleming, Greece and Renata Stripecke, University Hospital Cologne, Germany
- Invited speaker: Renata Stripecke, University Hospital Cologne, Germany**
- Humanized mice and engineered CAR-T cells**
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- 03.45-4.15 pm      **Invited speaker: Gustavo Alviter-Raymundo, University of Cambridge, UK**

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**Humanised mouse models for pre-clinical investigation of  
cancer immunotherapies**

04.15-04.25 pm      **Short talk: Alfredo Pherez Farah, University of Padova,  
Italy**

**Myeloid-t cell therapy interactions reshape the tumor  
microenvironment to sustain tumor control**

04.25-04.55 pm      **WG2 and WG4 showcase and discussion**

*NIB conference room*

**Chair: Emmet Mc Cormack, Laura Belver**

05.00-05.10 pm      **GROUP PHOTO**

06.00-10.00 pm      **NIB welcome reception- Social dinner**

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## Day 3

22 May, Friday

### Scientific Program (all attendees)

08.30-09.00 am

**Registration**

*NIB registration desk*

09.00-09.45 am

**Scientific Session 6: *In vitro* and *ex vivo* cancer immunotherapy models WG1**

*NIB conference room*

Chairs: Vinton Cheng, University of Birmingham, UK and  
Hanne Haslene-Hox, SINTEF, Norway

**Keynote lecture**

**Frederik De Smet, KU Leuven, Belgium**

**From patient tissue to *in vivo* models: multiscale analysis of tumour-immune interactions in brain tumours**

09.45-10.15 am

**Invited talk: Jordane Divoux, CLCC François Baclesse, France**

**The TRIPLEX study: use of patient-derived tumor organoids as an innovative tool for precision medicine in triple-negative breast cancer**

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- 10.15-10.45 am      **Invited talk: Kristina Kromer, Institute of Human Biology, Switzerland**
- Modelling the development of tumor-associated macrophages (TAMs) in colorectal cancer using a complex human in vitro system of the tumor microenvironment**
- 10.45-10.55 am      **Short talk: Ferran Grau Leal, Germans Trias i Pujol Research Institute (IGTP), Badalona, Spain**
- Implementation of Patient-Derived Organotypic Tumor Spheroids (PDOTS) from Primary and Metastatic Colorectal Cancer for Ex Vivo Immunotherapy Testing**
- 10.55-11.35 am      Coffee break & Poster session WG1+WG3
- NIB gallery*
- 11.35-12.20 pm      **Scientific Session 7: Immuno-models in solid tumors**
- WG3**
- NIB conference room*
- Chairs: Rosalinda Sorrentino, University of Salerno, Italy and Rebeca Sanz Pamplona, Institute for Health Research Aragon (IISA), Spain
- Keynote lecture**
- Marinka Žitnik, Harvard University, USA**
- Empowering cancer research with AI**
- 12.20-12.50 pm      **Invited speaker: Natalia Bednarz-Knoll, Medical University of Gdańsk, Poland**

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**Imaging flow cytometry for decoding circulating tumor and normal cell interactions: implications for immunotherapy monitoring**

12.50-01.20 pm

**Invited speaker: József Dudás, Innsbruck Medical University, Austria**

**Advances from the COST Action CA21135 “Modelling immunotherapy response and toxicity in cancer” for the translational research in ENT-clinic in Innsbruck, Austria**

01.20-01.30 pm

**Short talk: Fatih Özefe, Izmir Institute of Technology, Turkey**

**Perfusion-based Melanoma-Immune Microenvironment (MIME) Platform for Modeling Adoptive Immune Response**

01.30-2.00 pm

**Lunch & Poster session WG1+WG3**

NIB lab tour

*NIB gallery*

02.00-02.30 pm

**WG1 and WG3 showcase and discussion**

*NIB conference room*

**Chair: Lukasz Skalniak, Marleen Ansems**

02.30-3.30 pm

**Interactive session: Immuno-model showcase,  
achievements, closure and future**

**Poster awards**

*NIB conference room*

*Chair:* Eva Martinez-Balibrea, Germans Trias i Pujol Research  
Institute, Spain