
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

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

Start of the official program (All attendees)

12.00-01.00 pm	Registration <i>NIB registration desk</i>
01.15-01.20 pm	Welcome speech local organizers and NIB director <i>NIB conference room</i>
01.20-01.30 pm	Welcome speech Eva Martinez-Balibrea, action chair <i>NIB conference room</i>
01.30-02.20 pm	<u>TGRC session 1: Equal opportunities - gender equality in research and the clinic</u> <i>NIB conference room</i> Chairs: Hanne Haslene-Hox, SINTEF, Norway & Catarina A. Rodrigues, IPO Porto, Portugal 01.30-01.55 pm Invited speaker: Shirin Heidari (GENDRO, Switzerland) Talk title: TBC 01.55-02.15 pm Invited speaker: Berna Özdemir (Bern University Hospital, Switzerland) Talk title: TBC
02.20-02.50 pm	<i>Coffee break & Industry meetings</i> <i>NIB gallery</i>

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- 02.50-04.10 pm **TGRC Session 2: The sex gap in immunology and immunotherapy**
- NIB conference room*
- Chairs: Uzma Hasan, The Lyon Immunotherapy for Cancer Laboratory, France & TBC
- 02.50-03.15 pm **Invited speaker: Sonja Loges (Universitäres Cancer Center Hamburg, Germany)**
- Talk title: TBC**
- 03.15-03.40 pm **Invited speaker: Camila Consiglio (Lund University, Sweden)**
- Talk title: TBC**
- 03.40-04.05 pm **Invited speaker: TBC**
- Talk title: TBC**
- 04.10-04.40 pm *Coffee break & Industry meetings*
- NIB gallery*
- 04.40-06.00 pm **TGRC Session 3: Industry Presentations and Networking**
- NIB conference room*
- Chairs: *TBA*
- 04.40-04.50 pm **Labena d.o.o. Uršula Prosenc Zmrzljak,**
- 04.50-05.00 pm **Thermo Fisher distributed by Omega D.O.O. Samy Dufour**
- 05.00-05.10 pm **Axion Biosystems Aniello Lombardi**
- 06.30 - 10.00 pm **IMMUNO-model Core Group Meeting Dinner, [Core Group members](#)**

Day 2

21 May, Thursday

Start of Scientific Program (all attendees)

08.15-09.15 am	Registration <i>NIB registration desk</i>
09.15-10.00 am	<u>Scientific Session 1: Immuno-models in hematologic tumors WG4</u> <i>NIB conference room</i> 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	<u>Scientific Session 2: <i>In vivo</i> cancer immunotherapy models- WG2</u> <i>NIB conference room</i> 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
10.45-11.25 am	Coffee break & Poster session WG2+WG4 Lab tour

NIB gallery

11.25-12.10 pm

Scientific Session 3: Advances in immuno-models

NIB conference room

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

Keynote lecture

Jerôme Galon, INSERM, Université Sorbonne, France

The immune contexture in the era of cancer immunotherapies

12.10-01.25 pm

Lunch & Poster session WG2+WG4

NIB gallery

01.25-01.55 am

Scientific Session 4: Immuno-model in hematologic tumors WG4

NIB conference room

Chair: Laura Belver, Josep Carreras Leukaemia Research Institute, Spain

Invited speaker: Emanuele Azzoni, University of Milano-Bicocca, Italy

From prenatal origins to novel therapeutic strategies targeting inflammatory pathways: leveraging pre-clinical models of Juvenile Myelomonocytic Leukemia (JMML)

01.55-02.25am

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 am **Short talk: Adrian Bogdan Tigu, "Iuliu Hațieganu"**
University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Cluj-Napoca,
Romania
- Synergizing Immunotherapy and Proteasome Inhibition in**
Mantle Cell Lymphoma
- 02.35-03.15 pm Coffee break & Poster session WG2+WG4
- NIB lab tour
- NIB gallery*
- 03.15-03.45 am **Scientific Session 5: *In vivo* cancer immunotherapy model**
WG2
- NIB conference room*
- Chairs: Prof. dr. Eleni Douni, Department of Biotechnology
Agricultural University of Athens/Institute for Bioinnovation,
B.S.R.C. "Alexander Fleming, Greece
- Invited speaker: Renata Stripecke, University Hospital**
Cologne, Germany
- Humanized mice and engineered CAR-T cells**
- 03.45-4.15 pm **Invited speaker: Gustavo Alviter-Raymundo, University of**
Cambridge, UK
- Humanised mouse models for pre-clinical investigation of**
cancer immunotherapies
- 04.15-04.25 pm **Short talk: Alfredo Perez Farah, University of Padova,**
Italy
- Myeloid-t cell therapy interactions reshape the tumor**
microenvironment to sustain tumor control

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- 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**

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
Chair: *Vinton Cheng, University of Birmingham, UK*
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**

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- The TRIPLEX study: use of patient-derived tumor organoids as an innovative tool for precision medicine in triple-negative breast cancer**
- 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**
- Imaging flow cytometry for decoding circulating tumor and normal cell interactions: implications for immunotherapy monitoring**

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- 12.50-01.20 pm **Invited speaker: József Dudás, Innsbruck Medical University, Austria**
- Advances form 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