

naturIMMUN



Newsletter

April 2016

CONTENTS

A new coordinator since July 2014

Prof. Ulrike Köhl of the Hannover Medical School in Germany took over the role of Coordinator of the NaturImmun project in July 2014 after Prof. Hofer retired from the Medical University of Vienna.



Prof. Dr. Ulrike Köhl from the Hanover Medical School in Germany

Prof. Ulrike Köhl, an immunologist, is the director of the Institute of Cellular Therapeutics at the MHH. She studied both, biology and medicine, received her PhD in

1995 and continued her scientific work at the MD Anderson Cancer Centre in Houston, USA. In 2000 she became the head of the laboratory of stem cell transplantation and immunotherapy in the Paediatric Haematology and Oncology at the University Hospital, Frankfurt, Germany. In 2008 she finished her habilitation in medicine and immunology and received lecturer's qualification.

Since May 2012 she started with a full professorship for Cellular Therapeutics in the Integrated Research and Treatment Centre for Transplantation (IFB-Tx), leading the GMP Development Unit (GMPDU) and the Cellular Therapy Centre (CTC), being one of the Qualified Persons in the latter one. All her goals have a clinical focus on the development and manufacturing of cell-based therapies including Advanced Therapy Medicinal Products (ATMPs) and the improvement of cell processing strategies. She is a member of numerous national and international societies and is serving as a reviewer for the European Medicine Agency.



A busy month of October

Last October, the NaturImmun fellows organized a satellite Symposium in Göttingen, Germany and participated in the Summer School in Barcelona. Page 2

The NaturImmun Logo

Aldi Pupuleku, a fellow of the NaturImmun project, won the contest for the new NaturImmun logo with the best design. Page 3

Team news

We have welcomed new students and a new PI. Page 3

Marie Curie Actions network news

We have welcomed new students and a new PI. Page 4

Final NaturImmun meeting

Amsterdam 25-26 April 2016 Page 5

A busy month of October

A successful Satellite Symposium organized by the NaturImmun fellows

12 young scientists from Spain, Italy, Germany, Austria, Greece, Spain, Portugal, Albania, India, Mexico and the Netherlands were invited to present their results. "We have managed to achieve many of our goals much earlier than we had expected." commented the EU doctoral students at the Natural Killer Cell Symposium in Göttingen, Germany, in October 2015. It is important to note that, alongside the research results they presented on "natural killer cells" (NK cells), the European PhD students autonomously organized a high-level satellite symposium.

"We have managed to achieve many of our goals much earlier than we had expected"



Presentations

Leading experts of virology, immunology and medicine such as Dr. Jeffrey Miller and Dr. Sarah Cooley from the USA, Prof. Dr. Winfried Wels, Prof. Dr. Helmut Salih and Dr. Martin Treder from Germany as well as Dr. Antonio Perez-Martinez from Spain accepted the invitation and presented their latest clinical data and research to the audience. Their presence and the ensuing highly topical discussions gave the event an exciting atmosphere. The focus of the satellite symposium was on "trispesific antibodies" and "chimeric antigen receptor" to make NK cells specific in the attack against cancer cells.

Thus therapies for leukemia patients could be sustainably improved in the future.



Poster session



The NaturImmun team enjoying a tour of Barcelona.

Summer School in Barcelona

The PhD students and postdocs then reunited at the NaturImmun consortium meeting, which took place in Barcelona, Spain. There, they were advised by their respective thesis committee on how to proceed with their projects. The Summer School in Barcelona also featured a very engaging and filled workshop with courses on international patent law.

"Each time we [European fellows] meet, it almost feels like a class reunion" says Alessa Ede Valverde da Silva of the Hannover Medical School while Prof. Dr. Ulrike Köhl adds: "It is nice to see, how more and more bridges are being built in Europe." The students will soon get to meet again, this time - in April 2016 - in Amsterdam after first completing an intensive experimental phase for their respective dissertation topics.



The international patent law course



TEAM NEWS

We have welcomed new members to the NaturImmun team:

Giorgia Begnini, who comes from Italy, started working at Institut Pasteur in Paris as an ER since 16 February 2015.



Dr. Martin Treder has replaced Dr. Eugene Zhukovsky as Chief Scientific Officer at Affimed in Heidelberg, Germany



Laura Surace, who comes from Italy, recently started working at Institut Pasteur and will stay until the end of the project in September 2016. Laura trained in Maries van de Broek lab in Zurich.



The NaturImmun Logo

by Aldi Pupuleku

At the Supervisory Board meeting in March 2015 in Bergisch-Gladbach, the PIs agreed that the NaturImmun project urgently needed to replace the old logo. It was decided that the Coordinator would launch a contest for the NaturImmun students and PIs who would be able to submit designs for a new logo. The winner was offered 2 antibody vials and 100 €.

Aldi Pupuleku secured the most votes with his design. We asked him how he came up with the idea for the NaturImmun logo:



"I have always been fascinated by graphic design so I volunteered myself to design a logo for the consortium. Ulrike then came up with the idea of a "Logo Contest" in which everyone was encouraged to participate to win a symbolic prize.

I was so excited about the idea I already had a first sketch in mind, designed in my head. The "Naturimmun" word had to contain some elements reflecting our subject and field of interest: NK cells and Immunology. During the meeting break I had already drawn a first draft. When I arrived back in Barcelona, thanks also to the help of my colleague Marcel, I managed to develop the actual version which got positive feedback from everybody and was finally chosen as the winner logo for the consortium."



MSCA EVENTS

For the fellows:**Career Development Seminar**

2 May 2016 in Heidelberg from 10:00 to 17:00 at EMBL.

The focus of the Seminar deals with the choices that researchers face after finishing their PhD or Postdoctoral Fellowship.

ESOF Research and Society

28-29 July- free of charge, coordinators who would like to attend should bring at least 2 fellows.

It is a unique opportunity for the fellows to meet other researchers, and they have a poster. The grant can be used to cover their travel and accommodation.

For fellows and coordinators:**Main ESOF**

23-27 July – discount rate for MSCA participants mentioning that you are involved in MSCA projects

For the coordinators:**Science communication event**

24 July – free of charge

Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions network news

Researchers Questionnaires:

Each recruited researcher must commit him/herself to complete questionnaires.

At the end of their training period, all fellows need to complete the evaluation questionnaire. This questionnaire is designed to give the REA some feedback on the overall impact of the network's activity.

Two years after they have finished their appointment, all fellows will complete the follow-up questionnaire. The follow-up questionnaire is composed of three sections: (i) Career progress; (ii) Recognition of research excellence; (iii) Scientific outputs.

The information requested in the questionnaires will be kept in strict confidence by the Commission and the REA and will mainly be used for assessing the level of satisfaction of the fellows and scientists taking part in the project as well as for assessing the impact of the action.

The questionnaires are accessible for researchers from direct SESAM link:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/sesam-fp7/questurl.do>

In order to access questionnaires, fellows need to type only the 6 digits of the project number [317013 for NaturImmun].

Alumni Association:

The Marie Curie Alumni Association (MCAA) organizes training events that support the career development and networking of Marie Curie Researchers and Alumni.

Membership of the MCAA is free to all past and current beneficiaries of the European Commission's Marie Curie Actions at <https://www.mariecuriealumni.eu/user/register>. The MCAA is supported by the European Commission to provide feedback on the operation of the MSC Actions and the career progression of our members.

Our career development and outreach activities are mutually beneficial to both our members and host institutions as such activities find a very prominent place in the Guide for Applicants for Marie Curie Funding and Final Reports. We can provide high-quality career development training in the English language that is fine-tuned to the needs and interests of our members.

Support for the integration of researchers displaced by conflicts:

The European Association for International Education (EAIE) has invited the European Commission to lead a workshop on the topic of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions as a resource for researchers displaced by conflicts. This will be part of the EAIE annual conference in September, a major event for university international managers from around Europe and indeed beyond.

The Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions enable researchers of any nationality to start or continue their careers in Europe, including after an interruption. We have created a webpage and presentation (also in Arabic) on opportunities in the Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions that might be particularly relevant to researchers faced by these circumstances:

http://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/news-events/news/2015/1216-researchers-at-risk_en.htm

The EU Erasmus+ programme also has a page on higher education aspects of this issue: http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/migration/higher-education-refugees_en.htm

In addition, you can give job advertisements placed on the EURAXESS portal the 'Science4Refugees' label, as described at

<http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/index.cfm/jobs/science4refugees>

NATURIMMUN Final Meeting

Meeting in Amsterdam (25-26 April 2016)

Our final meeting will take place in Amsterdam on the 25th and 26th of April 2016. We would like to thank John Veluchamy for organizing the event.

The meeting will be held at the VU Medisch Centrum Cancer Center Amsterdam (VUmc CCA) and rooms have been reserved at the Ramada Apollo Amsterdam Centre. Please note that a Free airport shuttle available from Amsterdam Schiphol airport to the Hotel. John will meet the group at the hotel at 8:30 and accompany them to the Cancer Center Amsterdam.

Please see the agenda below:

NATURIMMUN FINAL MEETING

**EC Initial Training Network
FP7-PEOPLE- 2012-ITN-317013
“NATURIMMUN”**

**April 25-26, 2016
AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS
VU Medisch Centrum Cancer Center Amsterdam (VUmc CCA)**

Meeting days: Monday April 25th & Tuesday April 26th, 2016

“Free airport shuttle available from Amsterdam Schiphol airport to Hotel Ramada”

Please follow the directions for Hotel transfers and Airport shuttles on arrival at Amsterdam Schiphol airport and look for “Ramada Apollo Amsterdam” shuttle stop sign

Arrival

Ramada Apollo Amsterdam Centre
Staalmeesterslaan 410
1057 PH Amsterdam
Netherlands

CONTACT

John Veluchamy
E-mail: j.veluchamy@vumc.nl
Mobile: +31 651362809

Monday, April 25, 2016

VUmc Cancer Center Amsterdam (VUmc CCA)
Room no CCA 3.38,
De Boelelaan 1081 HV
Amsterdam

09:00 - 09:15 Arrival at VUmc CCA
 (John will meet you at the hotel at **8:30 am** and accompany to CCA)

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

09:15 - 09:30 **Tanja de Gruijl**
(VUmc Cancer Center Amsterdam)

Ulrike Köhl
(Hannover Medical School)

Fellow presentations (20 min talk + 10 min discussion, Thesis defence type)

09:30 - 09:55	Giorgia Benigni <i>(Institut Pasteur, Paris)</i>	Innate lymphocytes in long-term protection against influenza virus
09:55 - 10:25	Mirte Post <i>(Medical University of Vienna)</i>	Generation of mature NK cell subsets from CBSC: A potential role of the transcription factor ZNF683, ZEB1 and MEF2C
10:25 - 10:55	Dominik Schmiedel <i>(Hebrew University Jerusalem)</i>	miRNA control of NK cell response to tumors and viruses: Regulation of NKG2D ligands by RNA-binding proteins and miRNAs
10:55 - 11:20	<i>Coffee break</i>	
11:20 - 11:40	Katrina Van Der Ploeg <i>(University of Cambridge)</i>	Identifying novel ligands for activating killer Ig-like receptors
11:40 - 12:10	Aldi Pupuleku <i>(Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona)</i>	Unravelling the reconfiguration of the NK cell repertoire by human CMV: Implications in transplantation
12:10 - 12:40	Konstantina Kyriakouli <i>(Medical University of Vienna)</i>	Detection of polymorphisms from next-generation sequence data: NK receptors/ligands polymorphisms and disease susceptibility
12:40 - 14:00	<i>Lunch</i>	

14:00 - 14:30	Alessa Ede Valverde da Silva <i>(Hannover Medical School)</i>	Improvement of NK cell cytotoxicity to overcome resistance against relapse leukemia
14:30 - 15:00	Maria Dels o Vallejo <i>(Miltenyi Biotec, Bergisch-Gladbach)</i>	Identification of signals to induce NK cell proliferation for immunotherapy against cancer
15:00 - 15:15	<i>Coffee break</i>	
15:15 - 15:45	Silvia López Lastra <i>(Institut Pasteur, Paris)</i>	NK cell subsets important for leukemia therapy & HIS mouse models: The role of the transcription factor Id2
15:45 - 16:15	John Veluchamy <i>(Glycostem Therapeutics, Oss)</i>	Allogeneic cord blood derived NK cells in the treatment of solid tumors
16:15 - 16:45	Supervisory board meeting	Separate and joint with fellows
19:30	<i>Dinner</i>	

Tuesday, April 26, 2016

09:00 - 09:30	Sue Gibbs <i>(Founder, A-Skin)</i>	<i>From immune competent skin equivalents to skin-on-chip models</i>
09:30 - 10:30	Jan Spanholtz, Moderator <i>(CSO, Glycostem Therapeutics)</i>	Naturimmun brains to m
10:30 - 10:45	<i>Coffee Break</i>	
10:45 - 11:15	Jan Spanholtz <i>(CSO, Glycostem Therapeutics)</i>	<i>oNKord - The first allogeneic 'off-the shelf' NK cell product in oncology</i>
11:15 - 11:45	Ada Kruisbeek <i>(CEO, DC prime)</i>	<i>DCPrime: developing an off-the shelf dendritic cell vaccine</i>
11:45 - 12:30	Ulrike Köhl <i>(Hannover Medical School)</i>	Naturimmun project summary
12:30 - 14:00	<i>Lunch</i>	
18:00	Boat trip and dinner	