

Persister Cells: from Bacteria to Cancer Programme

Lyon, France

18 - 20 March 2025



Scientific Programme

Tuesday 18th March 2025

Listed times are in Central European Time (CET)

11:30 REGISTRATION

Light refreshments will be served at 12:00

13:00 CONFERENCE WELCOME

13:10 PERSISTERS: WHERE ARE WE NOW... AND WHERE ARE WE GOING?

Is it really possible to give a definition of persister cells? Our Scientific Programme Committee come together to discuss the aims of the meeting and the key questions in the field.

SESSION 1: NOVEL METHODOLOGIES FOR STUDYING PERSISTENT CELLS

Chair: Yaara Oren

13:55 Jan Michiels

VIB-KU Leuven Center for Microbiology, Belgium

'Mechanistic Insights and Evolutionary Dynamics of Antibiotic Persistence in Escherichia coli'

Q&A: 14:15 - 14:25

14:25 Shensi Shen

West China Hospital, P.R. China

Proffered Paper 1: 'Cross-cancer Insights into Persister Cells Reveal an RNA methyltransferase Driving Immune Evasion'

Q&A: 14:35 - 14:40

14:40 EXHIBITOR INTRODUCTIONS

14:50 COFFEE BREAK, EXHIBITION & SOLO TRAVELLER MEET-UP

15:20 Yaara Oren

Tel Aviv University, Israel

'The day after the drug- investigating persister cells memory'

Q&A: 15:40 - 15:50

15:50 Direna Alonso-Curbelo

IRB Barcelona, Spain

'Uncovering tissue-level interactions dictating tumor and senescent cell state persistence'

Q&A: 16:10 - 16:20

16:20 INDUSTRY SYMPOSIUM - PROMOCCELL

Janina Moros

PromoCell

'How to kill your fibroblasts and save the cancer stem cells in your culture'

- Q&A: 16:40-16:50
- 16:50 **Cedric Blanpain**
Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium
'Tumor States mediating Resistance to Chemotherapy'
- Q&A: 17:10-17:20
- 17:20 [POSTER SPOTLIGHTS 1](#)
- 17:30 [WELCOME RECEPTION](#)
- 18:15 [POSTER DISCUSSION SESSION 1](#)
Led by members of the Scientific Programme Committee

Wednesday 19th March 2025

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- 08:30 [EARLY POSTER VIEWING](#)
- [SESSION 2: DECIPHERING THE PERSISTENT CODE: MOLECULAR MECHANISMS](#)
- Chair: Lenka Munoz**
The University of Sydney, Australia
- 09:00 **Susan Rosenberg**
Baylor College of Medicine, USA
'Drugging Bacterial and Cancer Evolution'
- Q&A: 09:20 - 09:30
- 09:30 **Lenka Munoz**
University of Sydney, Australia
Proffered Paper 2: 'Histone methyltransferase PRDM9 promotes survival of drug-tolerant persister cells in glioblastoma'
- Q&A: 09:40 - 09:45
- 09:45 **Céline Vallot**
Institut Curie, France
'Investigating mechanisms of cell plasticity in breast cancers with single-cell epigenomics'
- Q&A: 10:05 - 10:15
- 10:15 [THE EMBO KEYNOTE LECTURE](#)
- Chris Marine**
VIB - KU Leuven Center for Cancer Biology, Belgium
'A cell geometry-based approach to monitor and contend with cancer cell plasticity and therapy resistance in melanoma and beyond'
- Q&A: 10:35 - 10:45
- 10:45 [COFFEE BREAK & EXHIBITION](#)
- 11:15 **Aaron Hata**
Massachusetts General Hospital, USA
'Mechanisms driving evolution of drug resistance in lung cancer'
- Q&A: 11:35 - 11:45
- 11:45 **Jukka Westermarck**
University of Turku and Åbo Akademi University, Finland

Proffered Paper 3: 'Transcriptional profiling of awakening of drug tolerant persisters (DTEPs) reveals DUSP6 as key driver of HER2i tolerance'

Q&A: 11:55 - 12:00

12:00 [POSTER SPOTLIGHTS 2](#)

12:10 [LUNCH](#)

Light refreshments will be served.

13:00 [POSTER DISCUSSION SESSION 2](#)

Led by members of the Scientific Programme Committee

[SESSION 3: EMERGING VULNERABILITIES: TARGETING PERSISTER CELLS](#)

Chair: Ultan McDermott

14:30 **Ultan McDermott**

AstraZeneca, UK

'Genome-wide CRISPR screens identify the YAP/TEAD axis as a driver of persister cells in EGFR mutant lung cancer'

Q&A: 14:50 - 15:00

15:00 **Olivier Calvayrac**

Centre de Recherches en Cancérologie de Toulouse, France

Proffered Paper 4: 'Farnesyltransferase inhibition overcomes oncogene-addicted non-small cell lung cancer adaptive resistance to targeted therapies'

Q&A: 15:10 - 15:15

15:15 **Eduard Batlle**

IRB Barcelona, Spain

'Plasticity, therapy resistance and immune evasion in metastatic colorectal cancer'

Q&A: 15:35 - 15:45

15:45 [COFFEE BREAK & EXHIBITION](#)

16:15 **Johannes Zuber**

IMP - Institute of Molecular Pathology, Austria

'Unveiling persister cell vulnerabilities through in-vivo CRISPR screens'

Q&A: 16:35 - 16:45

16:45 **René Bernards**

Netherlands Cancer Institute, Netherlands

'Finding vulnerabilities of drug-tolerant persisters identified through functional genetics'

Q&A: 17:05 - 17:15

17:15 [EARLY CAREER ADVICE: MANAGING THE WORK LIFE BALANCE](#)

Scheduled to end at 18:00 CET

19:30 [CONFERENCE DINNER](#)

[Thursday 20th March 2025](#)

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08:30 [EARLY POSTER VIEWING](#)

SESSION 4: PERSISTER CELLS IN THE CLINIC

Chair: Caroline Robert

- 09:00 **Wendy Mok**
UConn Health, USA
'Targeting bacterial metabolism and defenses to eradicate antibiotic persisters'
Q&A: 09:20 - 09:30
- 09:30 **Shruti Bhatt**
National University of Singapore, Singapore
'The Great Escape: From Persisters to Resistance Through Apoptotic Priming Loss in Leukemia Models'
Q&A: 09:50 - 10:00
- 10:00 **Isabel Puig**
Vall d'Hebron Institute of Oncology (VHIO), Spain
Proffered Paper 5: 'Proteomic and interactomic profiling to understand the complexities of colorectal cancer persistence'
Q&A: 10:10 - 10:15
- 10:15 COFFEE BREAK & EXHIBITION
- 10:45 **Alessia Mira**
University of Turin, Italy
Proffered Paper 6: 'Targeting oxidative metabolic vulnerabilities in sotorasib-tolerant lung cancer cells'
Q&A: 10:55 - 11:00
- 11:00 **Caroline Robert**
Gustave Roussy, France
'Interactions of the Persister Cells with the tumor microenvironment'
Q&A: 11:20 - 11:30
- 11:30 **Trever Bivona**
UCSF, USA
'Mechanisms of persister cell biology in lung cancer'
Q&A: 11:50 - 12:00
- 12:00 SUMMARY & CLOSE
- 12:15 DEPART