

The Tumour Ecosystem: From Mechanisms to Novel Therapeutics Programme

Bergamo, Italy

17 - 19 March 2026



Scientific Programme

Tuesday 17th March 2026

Listed times are in Central European Time (CET)

- 11:30 REGISTRATION (LIGHT REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED AT 12:00)
- 13:00 CONFERENCE WELCOME
- SESSION 1
- Chair: Leila Akkari**
- 13:10 OPENING KEYNOTE LECTURE
- Ashani Weeraratna**
Johns Hopkins, Baltimore, USA
'A Complex TIME: how the tumor immune microenvironment governs tumor progression'
Q&A 13:40 - 13:55
- 13:55 **Neta Erez**
Tel Aviv University, Tel Aviv, Israel
'Stromal and Immune Plasticity Shape the Metastatic Microenvironment'
Q&A 14:15 - 14:25
- 14:25 **Sebastian Igelmann**
KuLeuven-VIB, Belgium
Proffered Paper 1: 'Age-accumulated senescent cells fuel melanoma metastasis growth via NK cell inhibition'
Q&A 14:35 - 14:40
- 14:40 EXHIBITOR INTRODUCTIONS
Led by members of the Scientific Programme Committee
- 14:50 COFFEE BREAK, EXHIBITION AND SOLO TRAVELLER MEET-UP
- 15:20 **Daniela Quail**
McGill University, Montreal, Canada
'Exploiting myeloid-driven inflammation in cancer progression'
Q&A 15:40 - 15:50
- 15:50 **Erik Sahai**
Francis Crick Institute, London, UK
'Modeling Tumor-Stroma Boundaries'
Q&A 16:10 - 16:20
- 16:20 POSTER SPOTLIGHTS
Led by members of the Scientific Programme Committee
- 16:35 NETWORKING QUIZ

- 17:05 WELCOME RECEPTION
- 18:00 POSTER DISCUSSION SESSION 1
Led by members of the Scientific Programme Committee

Wednesday 18th March 2026

Listed times are in Central European Time (CET)

- 08:15 EARLY POSTER VIEWING WITH COFFEE & BISCUITS
- 08:45 INDUSTRY SPOTLIGHT - CELL SIGNALING TECHNOLOGY
Flora Guarnotta
Cell Signaling Technology
'Spatial Analysis of Tumor Microenvironments via SignalStar® Multiplex IHC'
- SESSION 2
Chair: Erik Sahai
- 09:00 **Yardena Samuels**
Weizmann Institute, Rehovot, Israel
'The various layers of intratumor heterogeneity and their impact on tumor immunity'
Q&A 09:20 - 09:30
- 09:30 **Merav Cohen**
Tel Aviv University, Sackler Faculty of Medicine, Israel
Proffered Paper 2: 'Single cell transcriptomics of efferocytosis identifies a pro-angiogenic tumor associate macrophage state in melanoma'
Q&A 09:40 - 09:45
- 09:45 **Mikael Pittet**
Agora, Lausanne, Switzerland
'Myeloid cells in cancer'
Q&A 10:05 - 10:15
- 10:15 **Andrea Schietinger**
MSKCC, New York, USA
'Tumor-specific CD8 T cell differentiation and dysfunction'
Q&A 10:35 - 10:45
- 10:45 COFFEE BREAK & EXHIBITION
- 11:15 **Mara Sherman**
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, New York, USA
'Mapping cellular hierarchies in the pancreatic tumor microenvironment'
Q&A 11:35 - 11:45
- 11:45 **Greta Mattavelli**
University Hospital Würzburg, Germany
Proffered Paper 3: 'Tumor-draining lymph node stroma supports pre-metastatic niche formation by promoting immunosuppressive cellular networks'
Q&A 11:55 - 12:00
- 12:00 POSTER SPOTLIGHTS
Led by members of the Scientific Programme Committee

- 12:15 LUNCH
- 13:15 POSTER DISCUSSION SESSION 2
Led by members of the Scientific Programme Committee
- SESSION 3
Chair: Johanna Joyce
- 14:45 THE EMBO YOUNG INVESTIGATOR LECTURE
Leila Akkari
Netherlands Cancer Institute, Amsterdam, Netherlands
'Leveraging Myeloid Cell Diversity in Cancer- A Matter of Plasticity and Metabolism'
Q&A 15:05 - 15:15
- 15:15 **Charles Earnshaw**
CRUK Manchester Institute, UK
Proffered Paper 4: 'Glucocorticoids inhibit the GARP/TGF- β axis triggering immune-dependent melanoma control'
Q&A 15:25 - 15:30
- 15:30 **Nicolae Ciobu Zubenco**
Columbia University, USA
Proffered Paper 5: 'Lipid desaturation as a metabolic checkpoint for T cell immunity suppression in liver cancer'
Q&A 15:40 - 15:45
- 15:45 **Anna Obenauf**
IMP, Austria
'Unlocking immunity: Decoding and reprogramming the immune-evasive tumor microenvironment'
Q&A 16:05 - 16:15
- 16:15 COFFEE BREAK & EXHIBITION
- 16:45 **Ilaria Malanchi**
Francis Crick Institute, London, UK
'Shaped by Cancer: Neutrophil Systemic Rewiring and Metastatic Support'
Q&A 17:05 - 17:15
- 17:15 **Jacco van Rheenen**
NKI, Amsterdam, Netherlands
'Timing Matters: How Hormonal Rhythms Govern Mutation Clearance, Cancer Initiation, and Treatment Response'
Q&A 17:35-17:45
- 17:45 PANEL DISCUSSION - MEET THE EXPERT
Ashani Weeraratna (Johns Hopkins, USA), Daniela Quail (McGill University, Canada), Direna Alonso-Curbelo (IRB Barcelona, Spain), Jacco van Rheenen (NKI, Netherlands)
- 19:30 CONFERENCE DINNER (OPTIONAL TICKETED EVENT)

Thursday 19th March 2026

Listed times are in Central European Time (CET)

- 08:15 EARLY POSTER VIEWING WITH COFFEE & BISCUITS
- 08:45 INDUSTRY SPOTLIGHT - MOLECULENT
Jeroen Aerts
Moleculent
'Deciphering cell-cell interactions at scale'
- SESSION 4
Chair: Neta Erez
- 09:00 THE EMBO KEYNOTE LECTURE
Johanna Joyce
University of Lausanne, Lausanne, Switzerland
'Unraveling the Complexity of Cancer Ecosystems'
Q&A 09:20 - 09:30
- 09:30 **Dinorah Friedmann-Morvinski**
TAU, Tel Aviv, Israel
'Overcoming the immunosuppressive Microenvironment to enhance CAR T cell therapy in brain tumors'
Q&A 09:50 - 10:00
- 10:00 **Sarai Martinez Pacheco**
Centro Nacional de Investigaciones Oncológicas (CNIO), Spain
Proffered Paper 6: 'TET2-Dependent Immunosuppressive Programs Drive Ovarian Cancer Progression'
Q&A 10:10 - 10:15
- 10:15 COFFEE BREAK & EXHIBITION
- 10:45 **Direna Alonso-Curbelo**
IRB Barcelona, Spain
'When Tissues Decide: Epigenetic Plasticity at the Crossroads of Inflammation and Cancer'
Q&A 11:05 - 11:15
- 11:15 CLOSING KEYNOTE LECTURE
Frank Winkler
DKFZ, Heidelberg, Germany
'Neural influences on brain tumors: from fundamental insights to new therapies'
Q&A 11:45 - 12:00
- 12:00 SUMMARY & CLOSE
- 12:10 DEPART