Dear members, associates and friends,

Time flies and nearly a full season has passed since the last newsletter. We hope you enjoyed some snow and the clear winter sky during the last few weeks. Now it is time to remove the last remains of your Christmas decoration and welcome spring, Easter, and this newsletter with a sunny smile!

This issue will again focus on the latest Cluster highlights, but you will also find more information about the services we offer to our scientists and on upcoming events.

You can enjoy a short report on our bonds with Australia and you can read how Cluster groups jointly found a new role for an old friend in chronic viral infections. Cooperations like that make us strong and we are there to support you wherever needed.

With this, we wish you a Happy Easter and some relaxing days off!

Yours,
Cluster Coordination Office
In the last issue of this newsletter, the newly established DFG graduate training group “Bo&MeRang” offered 15 open PhD positions for joint projects between Bonn and Melbourne University. While reading that advertisement you might have wondered how it all started. Let me shed some light on our old and new bonds with Australia.

It all started with a young immunologist who did his postdoc at the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute for Medical Research (WEHI) in the late 1990s in the lab of Jacques Miller on antigen cross-presentation and autoimmunity. During his stay, he survived numerous encounters with Australia’s wild life, namely kangaroos, emus, koalas, kookaburras, cockatoos and many more… After his return to Germany, he never really let loose and always stayed in touch with Australian researchers.

This strong affinity between German and Australasian immunologists in general, and Christian Kurts (the “young immunologist” mentioned above) and Sammy Bedoui in particular, recently led to two exceptional German-Australian activities.

The first mutual act was establishing the international research training group “Bo&MeRang”, which offers outstanding German and Australian PhD students the opportunity to perform a joint PhD project on two different continents. The first cohort of German PhD students will start in a few weeks (April 1) and we wish them all the best for their projects and their stay abroad.

As a second act, they organized the first German Society for Immunology (DGfI) - Australasian Society for Immunology (ASI) joint workshop in Canberra, Australia. This event not only culminated in the picture above, but in many ideas for further interactions. You can find a detailed meeting report in the European Journal of Immunology.

We are looking forward to a continued good cooperation with our very cherished partners.
DFG review board elections 2015

The DFG review boards scientifically evaluate proposals to fund research projects in their respective subject areas. We are proud to announce that the following ImmunoSensation members have been elected for the term 2016-2019.

PROF. IRMGARD FÖRSTER
Life & Medical Sciences Institute (LIMES)
Subject Area 204-05 (Immunology)

PROF. ACHIM HÖRAUF
Institute of Medical Microbiology, Immunology and Parasitology (IMMIP)
Subject Area 204-03 (Medical Microbiology, Parasitology, Medical Mycology and Hygiene, Molecular Infection Biology)

PROF. CHRISTIAN KURTS
Institute of Experimental Immunology (IEI)
Subject Area 205-16 (Nephrology)
When the immune system is unable to clear acute viral infections, they become chronic. Certain viruses, like HIV, excel at riding out the patient’s immune response, which in turn leads to the inevitable progression of the disease.

Five groups of the Cluster have now jointly discovered how a usually pro-inflammatory mediator, tumor necrosis factor (TNF), switches sides and silences so called helper T cells. Without those, killer T cells remain inactive and do not join the fight against the infection.

But how was TNF identified as the “master switch” in this setting? The groups of Marc Beyer and Joachim Schultze used bioinformatical approaches to identify differentially regulated gene sets in helper T cells of healthy humans and HIV patients. Following RNA fingerprints of inhibitory (“silencing”) pathways, they could link TNF receptor signalling to the loss of function of helper T cells. In a joint effort with the Cluster groups of Zeinab Abdullah and Percy Knolle, it could be shown that neutralizing TNF indeed restored the impaired immune response and allowed control of chronic viral infections.

This important finding may establish new treatment options in the not so far future. TNF blocking agents are already used in humans to treat autoimmune disorders, like rheumatism, and can now be used to investigate what effect the drugs have in rheumatic patients who are additionally suffering from a chronic viral infection. This investigation, and the elucidation of the underlying molecular mechanisms are the next tasks for our Cluster researchers.

FIND ALL RECENT PUBLICATIONS HERE:
http://www.immunosensation.de/research/publications.html

© Photo Barbara Frommann/Uni Bonn
© Photo Uniklinik Aachen
The annual “Day of Immunology” is just around the corner. What? Day of Immunology? According to the European Federation of Immunological Societies (EFIS) public interest in health issues is high, but people without a scientific background often don’t understand the relevance of immunological research and findings. EFIS aim was to create a bridge between the mysterious world of immunology and the public. And here we go: Since 2005, the Day of Immunology has been the occasion to gather European scientists to bring immunology to the public. Due to its great success, it has been celebrated worldwide since 2007.

Don’t worry, you do not have to save the date and we do not ask for your contribution! You can sit back and relax!

The Cluster Office decided to celebrate the “Day of Immunology 2016” properly. As you might know the Cluster is always dedicated to “enlightening” the public. Maybe you remember the Night of Science for people of all ages, the Girls’ Day for pupils and the Children’s University for even younger children.

In order to reach the young researchers of tomorrow the Cluster Office decided to visit the nursery “Max and Mary” and tell the children (age 4 to 6) everything they always wanted (or did not know they wanted) to know about immunology such as “why do I get forced to wash my hands?” We would especially like to thank “Max and Mary’s” chairman Dr. Joachim H. Baer who gave us the opportunity to spread our word.
MI SCEL LANEOUS

The pme family service - Holiday care

This time I’d like to highlight the holiday care, which is being provided by the pme family service. School holidays are always a critical time for parents and pme might offer a solution. The holiday care programs are tailored to the children’s needs, the children are supervised in suitable age groups and the childcare ratio (Betreuungsschlüssel) is above-average.

The courses for the Easter holidays are already booked out – due to their first come, first serve policy, but why not check out the courses for the summer holidays (in NRW: July 11 - August 28)?

pme provides for children age 3-6:
Zirkuswoche, Auf Safari, Lebensraum Wald etc.

And for children age 6-12:
Oh wie schön ist Bonn, Zurück in die Steinzeit, Let’s dance, Manege frei, Fußball-Camp, Backstube etc.

Why not give grandma a day off?

INFO
https://www.familienservice.de/web/255321/3

MI SCEL LANEOUS

Cluster goes Charity - Reloaded

Thanks to your support the Cluster has been really successful concerning charity projects, therefore we asked you for your help and contribution again.

The Cluster participated again in the project called “Alte Schuhe – neues Leben” (old shoes – new life). For those of you who have not heard of the project - its goal is: People donate old pairs of shoes, which are still wearable (exceptions are: motorbike shoes and boots, inline skates, ski boots and skates - in general shoes which are not made for walking) and the proceeds go to the “Fördergemeinschaft Deutsche Kinderherzzentren e.V.”.

This year you have already donated three boxes of shoes, I hope we can break last year’s record, which was three boxes in total.

So we have extended the deadline to April 4, 2016.

You can drop off your donation at my office: Nicole Dahms, Venusberg, building 13 (BMZ), room 216.3 (basement) or we come around and collect them.

I know I keep repeating myself, but we appreciate your support & contribution very much!! And don’t forget: You benefit from more space on your shoe rack for new shoes!!

INFO
http://www.kinderherzen.de/spenden/schuhspende/index.html
For those of you who don’t know our Blog team yet, let me introduce them with their own words:
„The ImmunoSensation Blog is a young investigators initiative and aims to inform about the research and events within the Cluster of Excellence. The ImmunoSensation Cluster is an association of several institutes and departments in Bonn connecting immunological research groups. We provide a set of information on past and upcoming events, via interviews, research profiles, editorials and background to publications.”
More information on the members of the Blog team and, maybe even more important, the Blog articles can be found at the ImmunoSensation Blog http://www.immunosensation.de/blog/.

MISCELLANEOUS

Our ImmunoSensation Cluster Blog turned into a Vlog for once

Four undaunted scientists from the Institute of Innate Immunity entered uncharted territory and successfully ventured onto making an explanatory film about their group’s main research topic. As a huge fan I would like to congratulate the film team for this fantastic idea and the excellent implementation. I hope this will inspire others and we will see more multimedia on the Blog, soon.

The film “What is NLRP3 and why do we care?” can be watched on http://www.immunosensation.de/blog/?p=1068.
The workshop “Good Scientific Practice” will be given by Dr. Peter Schröder and includes (but is not limited to):

- DFG recommendations on good scientific practice, rules & regulations and ethical considerations
- Documentation
- Intellectual property
- Interpretation vs. manipulation of data

You will also have the opportunity to talk about existing problems and work on solutions.

WHERE: University Hospital Bonn, IMBIE
WHEN: May 23, 2016
REGISTER UNTIL: May 9, 2016
MAIL TO: c.gottschalk@uni-bonn.de

ImmunoSensation will again participate in the Bonn Night of Science. We are looking forward to an experience at least as magnificent as last time. See you there!

WHERE: Bonn, Münsterplatz
WHEN: June 2 & 3, 2016
INFO: http://www.bonner-wissenschaftsnacht.de

Upcoming: 10th Night of Science

Find all upcoming workshops and events here:
http://www.immunosensation.de/graduate_program/announcements_iitb_events.html
Imprint

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ABOUT
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