

BIOME Retreat - Cellular and Molecular Immunology/Infectious Diseases/Tumour and Signalling

12-13.11.2026

Venue: Unperfekthaus, Friedrich-Ebert-Str. 18-26, 45127 Essen

PROGRAMME

PROGRAMME

A warm welcome to our annual retreat hosted at Unperfekthaus (UpH) in Essen!

Please note that both days from beginning to end are obligatory for the doctoral participants as the focus here is on close interdisciplinary exchange between all members of the three cores.

However, you are cordially invited to join the communal BIOME breakfast buffet on the ground floor at Unperfekthaus each morning as from 08:00 h before the retreat's official start at 09:00 h. This is entirely on a voluntary basis.

Timing:

- **TALKS: 10-12 minutes for each doctoral talk, 3-5 minutes for discussion - no more than 15 minutes altogether!!!**
- **POSTERS: 6 minutes poster presentation, 6 minutes for discussion - no more than 12 minutes altogether!!! (Poster size: DIN A0, portrait)**

Chairs:

- For each BIOME talk session, two doctoral members have been nominated as chairs. Please prepare for this role well.
- Please ensure that all slides have been uploaded on the lecture hall's equipment before each session starts.

Poster Walks:

- For the poster walks, it has been decided to break up the SC jury as well as the poster zones into mixed-core units. This is to expand the translational aspect of peer exchange and expert input.

Poster/Talk Peer Review:

- Each doctoral participant will be assigned two fellow BIOME members' posters or talks to assess in detail and give back critical feedback in an anonymous form.
  All information regarding this will be given to you shortly before the event.

The best talk and the top three posters will be selected and certified.

Unperfekthaus in Essen: *Address: Unperfekthaus, Friedrich-Ebert-Str. 18-26, 45127 Essen*

Meeting Rooms: 4th Floor - Main Meeting Room: Raum 423, with additional poster area in Raum 453.

Your Orga-Team 2026:

Immunology:
Hendrik.Winkel@uk-essen.de

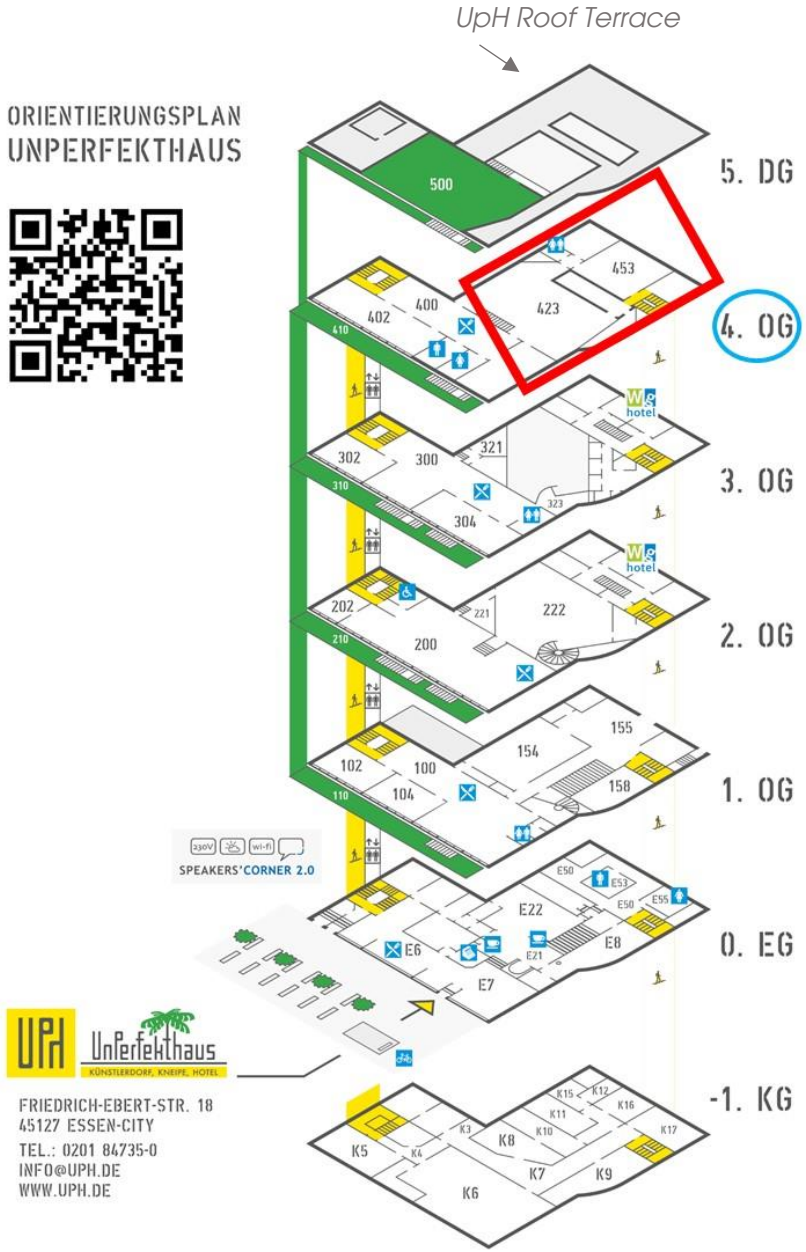
Infectious Diseases:
Isabel.Zydek@uk-essen.de

Tumour & Signalling:
Georgia.Antonopoulou@uk-essen.de and
Lea.Otte@uk-essen.de

BIOME:
Delia.Cosgrove@uk-essen.de

IMPORTANT DETAILS

PROGRAMME



Detailed Plan, UpH, 4th Floor - with Poster Walk Zones A,B and C:



IMPORTANT DETAILS



Dr. Máté Kiss

Neutrophils in cancer; new strategies for therapeutic modulation

Georg-Speyer-Haus, Frankfurt am Main



PD Dr. Christoph Kreer

Characterization of human antibody responses, B cell immunity

Universitätsklinikum Köln



Prof. Monilola Olayioye

Cancer research, cell biology, signal transduction, 3D tissue culture models

University of Stuttgart

PROGRAMME

THURSDAY, 12.11.2026

08:00 – 09:00  **OPTIONAL: Communal BIOME Breakfast Buffet at *Unperfekthaus*** – please feel welcome to join us!

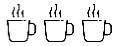
Before 09:00 – 1st Poster session participants to please hang up their posters.

GREETING

09:00 – 09:15 Scientific Coordinators and Orga-Team: **Welcoming Words**

SESSION 1	**Immunology**	**Doctoral TALKS, Chairs: Tim Milfeit and Ramesh Palaniappan**
09:15 – 09:30	Hendrik Winkel	Transmigration competence selects mature circulating neutrophils as the primary source of human tumor-associated neutrophils
09:30 – 09:45	Lamis Salem	Combination of tumour targeting bispecific antibody and arenavirus enhances antitumoral immunity
09:45 – 10:00	Ankit Singh	Epigenetic reawakening of apoptosis in drug-tolerant persister (DTP) state in colorectal cancer
10:00 – 10:15	Nelson Niski	HIF-1α stabilization restores immune metabolism in hereditary hemorrhagic telangiectasia
10:15 – 10:30	Angelo Novak	Proteomic responses to perinatal asphyxia-associated injury and therapeutic hypothermia across experimental models

SESSION 2

10:30 – 12:00 **1st POSTER Session during**  **BREAK**

Posters	**Group 1**	**Zone A**
1	Samira Ali	Dynamic changes in extracellular vesicle profiles during autologous conditioned serum generation using the Orthogen® device
2	Margaryta Ulanovsky	Characterization of extracellular vesicles derived from the peripheral blood of axial spondyloarthritis patients
3	Lea Allerchen	Multimodal preclinical imaging of *Aspergillus fumigatus* invasion and treatment

PROGRAMME

4	Alexander Beyer	Mechanisms of humoral immune dysfunction in the Eμ-TCL1 adoptive transfer mouse model of chronic lymphocytic leukemia
5	Roman Frings	Molecular analysis of the TSC complex and its lysosomal tethering mechanisms

Posters	**Group 2**	**Zone B**
6	Charlotte Breuer	uDKK3 as an early urinary biomarker of kidney disease in the sylvatic setting of the Taï National Park, Côte d'Ivoire
7	Pauline Plaumann	HOXB13 and its putative role in cell morphologic and metastatic processes in Ewing sarcoma
8	Jillian Brown	Compartment-resolved HIF1α expression in pancreatic cancer
9	Finn Wichmann	Toward a molecular definition of cytotoxic Hodgkin lymphoma: Transcriptomics and functional analyses
10	Abdelrahman Negmeldin	Dissecting the LCMV-induced antitumor immune response in pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma (PDAC)

Posters	**Group 3**	**Zone C**
11	Justus Müller	NPTXR expression in human and murine tissues and antitumor efficacy of an NPTXR-targeted antibody-drug conjugate in patient-derived xenografts
12	Samantha Rühl	Defining amino acid transporter dependencies underlying metabolic stress adaptation in melanoma
13	Klaudija Matic	Impact of high-fat diet-induced microbiota alterations on neutrophil responses following ischemic stroke
14	Paula Busskamp Castro	A third-generation lentiviral vector system for flow cytometric analysis of HIV phenotypic diversity

SESSION 3	**Keynote Speaker**	**Chair: Hendrik Winkel**
12:00 – 13:00	**Dr. Máté Kiss** *Neutrophils in cancer ; new strategies for therapeutic modulation* ***Georg-Speyer-Haus, Frankfurt am Main***	Transcriptional regulation of neutrophil plasticity in cancer
13:00 – 14:00		**LUNCH (1st / 2nd Poster session switch at 13:55)**

THURSDAY, 12.11.2026

PROGRAMME

SESSION 4	Tumour & Signalling	Doctoral TALKS, Chairs: Foteini Filippopoulou and Yanosan Thavarasa
14:00 – 14:15	Gaurav Manik Borse	Inflammatory macrophage-derived itaconate promotes environmental lung carcinogenesis through incomplete mitochondrial apoptosis
14:15 – 14:30	Mariana Ferreira Pissarra	Hydrogel bead-based 3D multiplex platform for high precision and high throughput quantification of mTORC1-4E-BP1/2-dependent translation
14:30 – 14:45	Frida Marie Kaußen	New approaches in retinoblastoma treatment - How nanoparticles enhance the effectiveness of proton beam therapy
14:45 – 15:00	Kjell Michalek	Preclinical evaluation of molecular targets for the enhancement of radiotherapy in osteosarcoma
15:00 – 15:15	Lea Otte	ROBO-Slit signaling links lineage programs to migration and therapy resistance in melanoma
15:15 – 15:30	Paniz Salimitari	Exploring ALDH9A1 as a potential regulator of metastatic progression in NSCLC

SESSION 5

15:30 – 17:00 **2nd POSTER Session during BREAK**

Posters	Group 1	Zone A
1	Yihong Gong	Functional heterogeneity of $CD74^{+}$ neutrophils and their interaction with regulatory T cells in HNSCC
2	Bin Cheng	B3GAT3-dependent glycosylation of LAPTM5 promotes HBV replication by facilitating lysosomal degradation of DDX17
3	Nele Kahlert	Developing a therapeutic approach for YARS- and KARS-reactive HIV-associated B cell lymphomas as a proof of concept
4	Leoluca Di Ninni	Identification of enhancers of CAR-T efficacy in DLBCL treatment

Posters	Group 2	Zone B
5	Ruth Rockson	Beyond cytotoxicity: Perforin as a regulator of T-cell activation
6	Tina Dluzak	Cellular reorganization and host-pathogen interactions in hantavirus infections
7	Luisa Lengenfelder	Proteomic profiling of cell type-specific metabolic disruption by PFAS
8	Rieke Wingenfeld	Beyond inhibition: Functional characterization of Taspase1 and development of modular bioPROTACs

THURSDAY, 12.11.2026

PROGRAMME

Posters	Group 3	Zone C		
9	Asif Shafi Lone	Type I interferon signature correlates with thyroid cancer dedifferentiation and determines its immunological fate		
10	Ali Hamza	Identification of glycan biomarkers for an HIV cure		
11	Eileen Kleinfelder	B7-H3- specific CAR T-cell therapy in 2D and 3D models of head and neck squamous cell carcinoma		
12	Lisa Ebel	Role of FGF-receptor tyrosine kinases as oncogenic drivers of GIST		
SESSION 6	**Keynote Speaker**	**Chairs: Georgia Antonopoulou and Lea Otte**		
17:00 – 18:00	**Prof. Monilola Olayioye** *Cancer research, cell biology, signal transduction, 3D tissue culture models* ***University of Stuttgart***	*Ex-vivo* tumor slice cultures: A platform for personalized cancer therapy		
18:00 – 19:00		**RETREAT SOCIAL: BUFFET with drinks (Poster removal at 20:00)**		
SESSION 7a	**Meet-the-Expert**	**Chairs: Georgia Antonopoulou, Lea Otte, Hendrik Winkel and Isabel Zydek**		
19:00 – 19:30	**Plenary Session *(general)*** with Dr. Máté Kiss, PD Dr. Christoph Kreer and Prof. Monilola Olayioye	**Podium discussion, Q&A session:** Keynote speakers are invited to describe their personal career paths, sharing some words of advice with the young researchers for their professional futures based on their own experience. The audience is then invited to ask the speakers any *general, overarching* questions.		
SESSION 7b	**Meet-the-Expert**	**Chair: Hendrik Winkel**	**Chair: Isabel Zydek**	**Chairs: Georgia Antonopoulou and Lea Otte**
19:30 – 20:00	**Parallel Session *(specific)*** with each keynote speaker	**Session with Dr. Máté Kiss** BIOME members are invited to ask any further *specific* questions regarding the speaker's career path, their personal tips, as well as more in-depth questions about their particular work and research.	**Session with PD Dr. Christoph Kreer** BIOME members are invited to ask any further *specific* questions regarding the speaker's career path, their personal tips, as well as more in-depth questions about their particular work and research.	**Session with Prof. Monilola Olayioye** BIOME members are invited to ask any further *specific* questions regarding the speaker's career path, their personal tips, as well as more in-depth questions about their particular work and research.

THURSDAY, 12.11.2026

PROGRAMME

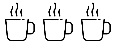
FRIDAY, 13.11.2026

08:00 – 09:00		**OPTIONAL: Communal BIOME Breakfast Buffet at *Unperfekthaus*** – please feel welcome to join us!

Before 09:00 – 3rd Poster session participants to please hang up their posters.

SESSION 8	**Infectious Diseases**	**Doctoral TALKS, Chairs: Paula Busskamp-Castro and Muhila Mohanarangan**
09:00 – 09:15	Zhongsheng Liu	A FASN-palmitate-sensitive lipid axis modulates the HBV life cycle
09:15 – 09:30	Vaasudevan Sridhar	Role of linoleic acid administration in murine NK cell functions
09:30 – 09:45	Yue Yu	Dissecting IFNα subtype-specific antiviral mechanisms against SARS-CoV-2
09:45 – 10:00	Isabel Zydek	Isolation and characterization of antiviral antibodies against herpes simplex viruses

SESSION 9

10:00 – 11:30 **3rd POSTER Session during**  **BREAK**

Posters	**Group 1**	**Zone A**
1	Rasika Bhitale	Investigating the interaction between immune cells and bone cells *in vitro*
2	Jeffrey Hastings	Eliminating the retroviral reservoir: therapeutic induction of cytotoxic follicular T helper cells that kill infected cells in B cell follicles
3	Eduarda Honstein	Comparative analysis of the hypoxia impact on adenovirus-types for the identification of favorable oncolytic vector candidates
4	Seema Ouhadi	Shifted amino acid metabolism in TSC patients
5	Tobias Perings	CLEANSER: improving somatic variant detection from plasma cell-free DNA

Posters	**Group 2**	**Zone B**
6	Leandra Jürgens	Competition between rat cytomegalovirus vXCL1 and endogenous rat XCL1 in innate immunity
7	Annika Kruppa	Identification and characterization of interferon γ-stimulated effector proteins and interferon γ-repressed dependency factors limiting cytomegalovirus replication

PROGRAMME

8	Georgia Antonopoulou	Spatial profiling of PDAC-derived peritoneal metastases reveals a gradual cellular transition from tumor to adipose-rich tissue
9	Finlay MacMillan-Hughes	Defining functional hallmarks and cell-to-cell dynamics of the HIC1-mediated CAF state transition
10	Tim Milfeit	Optimization of chemically defined culture conditions to enhance therapeutically relevant EV production from ciMSCs

Posters	**Group 3**	**Zone C**
11	Amal Al Kadi	Linking MTAP loss to PRMT5 dependency and apoptotic regulation in uveal melanoma
12	Foteini Filippopoulou	mTOR and the cellular stress response; The effects of tryptophan (TRP) deprivation in glioblastoma
13	Palaniappan Ramesh	Reprogramming the tumor microenvironment to overcome drug-tolerant persister cells (DTPs) in lung adenocarcinoma
14	Jenny Leipe	The influence of the microenvironment on the function of natural killer cells in sepsis
15	Yun Long	Lipidomics and transcriptomics reveal comprehensive insights into antibacterial effects of sphingosine against *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*

SESSION 10	**Keynote Speaker**	**Chair: Isabel Zydek**
11:30 – 12:30	**PD Dr. Christoph Kreer** *Characterization of human antibody responses, B cell immunity* ***Universitätsklinikum Köln***	Build on diversity – From B cell receptor repertoires to biological insight
12:30 – 13:30		**LUNCH (Poster 3rd / 4th session switch at 13:55)**
SESSION 11 **13:30– 14:30**	**4th POSTER Session during BREAK**	

FRIDAY, 13.11.2026

PROGRAMME

SESSION 11 **13:30– 14:30**	**4th POSTER Session during** ☕☕☕ **BREAK**	

Posters	Group 1	Zone A/B
1	Muhila Mohanarangan	The impact of the virus-producing cell type on the spread and neutralization sensitivity of HIV swarms
2	Caini Yang	Spatial and mechanistic characterization of HBsAg expression during HBV-associated hepatocarcinogenesis
3	Judith Düring	Biocompatibility of MXenes and their conjugates in gastric cell lines

Posters	Group 2	Zone C
4	Abdallah Belbaisi	Characterization of a C-type lectin-like gene encoded by rat cytomegalovirus (RCMV)
5	Ilgim Özerk	CCR4-Not: The missing link between mTOR and mRNA deadenylation
6	Yanosan Thavarasa	Role of intra-domain localizations of primary KIT mutations in gastrointestinal stromal tumors

SESSION 12	**Retreat Finale**	
14:30 – 14:45	All Participants	Democratic vote on best doctoral talk award
14:45– 15:00	Poster Committee	Conclave to decide on best poster awards
15:00 – 15:30		The BIOME 2026 Retreat Award Ceremony **– Prizes for the best 3 posters and the best talk** BIOME Scientific Coordinators **– Closing Remarks**

(4th Poster session removal at end of retreat)

FRIDAY, 13.11.2026