

# Translational research: *bridging gaps, improving lives*

**Lectures from top experts in translational research. Translational research ideas pitches and competition – open to everyone.**

Event is open to all researchers interested in improving health. Attendance is free of charge.

**REGISTRATION**

**October 4, 2024**

Center for Medical Research  
Zaliuju ezeru str. 2, Vilnius

Organised by:



Faculty of  
Medicine



Life Sciences  
Center

In partnership with:



**A B Fondas**  
Ateities biomedicinos fondas

Endorsed by:



# Submit your proposal for the Research Idea Pitch Session sponsored by the Future Biomedicine Foundation



**Are you working on a research project translating knowledge from bench to bedside (or back)?  
Does your project involve personalized medicine approaches or multidisciplinary collaboration aiming to improve patient care?**

We are waiting for your translational research proposal idea by September 23rd, 2024. Selected presenters will be informed by September 27th, 2024.

We invite PhD students and researchers to present their ideas in the special translational research pitch session supported by the Future Biomedicine Foundation (in Lithuanian, Ateities Biomedicinos Fondas).

Each presenter will give a brief 3 minutes pitch followed by 2 minutes of questions and comments from the expert panel. The best translational research pitch will be awarded a prize of 2000 EUR. Selected presenters will be invited to submit a full proposal to the Future Biomedicine Foundation.

**SUBMIT YOUR IDEA**

# Event program

**9:30–10:00**

**Registration**

**Translational research:  
from theory to application**

**10:00–10:20**

Welcoming remarks

**10:20–10:35**

Eureka Institute for Translational Medicine. **Prof. Salvatore Albani** (DUKE-NUS, Singapore; online)

**10:35–11:00**

From Eureka to Impact: Avoiding the Valley of Death in Translational Research. **Prof. Berent Prakken** (Utrecht UMC, The Netherlands)

**11:00–11:20**

Advancing Clinical and Translational Research: the CTSA Program in the US. **Prof. Lisa Guay-Woodford** (University of Pennsylvania, USA)

**11:20–11:40**

Educating for a Translational Skillset and Mindset. **Dr. Marc van Mil** (Utrecht UMC, The Netherlands)

**11:40–12:00**

**Coffee Break**

**12:00–12:20**

A real-life perspective from a translational immunologist. **Prof. Femke van Wijk** (Utrecht UMC, The Netherlands)

**12:20–12:40**

Humanized experimental platforms from cancer to neurodegenerative diseases. **Prof. Makoto Suematsu** (CIEM, Japan)

**12:40–13:00**

Optimizing Gene Therapy for Neurodegenerative Lysosomal Storage Diseases: Challenges and Potential for Clinical Translation. **Dr. Angela Gritti** (SR-TIGET, Italy)

**13:00–14:00**

Panel discussion. **All**

**14:00–15:00**

**Lunch**

**Research Idea Pitch  
Session. Sponsored by  
Future Biomedicine  
Foundation**

**15:00–15:15**

Welcome and Introduction. **Future Biomedicine Foundation Representative**

**15:15–16:15**

Elevator Pitch: Translational Research Presentations. **Expert panel**

**16:15–16:35**

Awards and Closing Remarks. **Expert panel**

# Speakers



## **Prof. Salvatore Albani**

Salvatore Albani is an internationally renowned rheumatologist and immunologist. He is a professor at Duke-National University of Singapore Medical School and Director of the Translational Immunology Institute at SingHealth-Duke-NUS Medical Centre. He co-founded and is the current president of the non-profit foundation, the Eureka Institute for Translational Medicine. Prof. Albani's research focuses on understanding human immunity and translating this knowledge into therapeutic and diagnostic advancements. His distinguished career is marked by numerous publications in top-tier journals such as Nature Medicine, The Lancet, JCI, PNAS, Nature Rheumatology, as well as approximately 100 patents. Prof. Albani has mentored many promising individuals and is dedicated to cultivating the next generation of translational scientists and expanding his efforts in advancing medical science and education.



## **Prof. Berent Prakken**

Berent Prakken is vice-dean and director of the biomedical education centre at the University Medical Center Utrecht (UMCU), the Netherlands. He is also a professor of pediatric immunology at the UMCU and a honorary professor at the University of Ghent, Belgium. Prof. Prakken has built a translational research lab that focuses on regulation of inflammation and biomarker development in human inflammatory diseases. The work of his group is published in all major international journals, including Nature Medicine, PNAS, Immunity, the Lancet, and others. Over the years he successfully mentored more

than 40 PhD students. Prof. Prakken's personal commitment is to training and education and to improve the impact of science. Prof. Prakken was member of the Dutch National Health Council, the president of the Pediatric Rheumatology European Society and member of the the European Alliance of Associations for Rheumatology executive committee. Unconventional thinking and crossing traditional boundaries inspired him and his co-founders to set up the Eureka Institute for Translational Medicine.



### **Prof. Lisa Guay-Woodford**

Lisa Guay-Woodford is Senior Advisor for Clinical and Translational Research Initiatives and an attending physician at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia in the Divisions of Nephrology and Human Genetics, professor of Pediatrics in the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania. She is an internationally recognized pediatric nephrologist, her research focuses on identifying clinical and genetic factors involved in the pathogenesis of inherited renal disorders. Dr. Guay-Woodford has been a leader in promoting clinical and translational science, along with her clinical and investigative work. Dr. Guay-Woodford has established, directed national and international collaborative research groups, and assumed numerous positions: president of the Society for Pediatric Research, councilor for the International Pediatric Nephrology Association, chair of the NIH Cellular and Molecular Biology of the Kidney Study Section, board of trustee member for the Polycystic Kidney Disease Foundation, board member for the Association of Clinical and Translational Science, and member of the NIDDK Advisory Council.





### **Dr. Marc van Mil**

Marc van Mil is an associate professor in biomedical education at UMCU. He cares about and contributes to the professional development of future clinicians, clinician scientists and biomedical scientists; both by being an excellent teacher and a dedicated educational researcher. Marc's background in biotechnology, combined with a PhD in the educational sciences forms a unique and solid basis for his scholarly work within the educational institute of the medical faculty of Utrecht University. His current line of research, entitled 'Educating for Open Science', explores educational strategies that help students to cross boundaries between disciplines and broaden their perspective on the societal impact of biomedical innovations. In his view, education can play a crucial role in helping health care professionals to identify how to contribute to the challenges in translational medicine. In 2017 Marc was awarded "Higher Education Teacher of the Year" in the Netherlands.



### **Prof. Femke van Wijk**

Femke van Wijk is a Professor in Tissue Immunology at the Center for Translational Immunology at the UMCU. Her team aims to elucidate peripheral and local T cell responses in health and inflammation and to translate these insights into tools for (pre-clinical) disease monitoring and therapeutic targeting in chronic inflammatory diseases. She takes a disease- and age-overarching approach to decipher pathogenic processes underlying different inflammatory conditions. Prof. van Wijk has been the manager of research for the division of pediatrics at

the Wilhelmina Children's Hospital and has also served as the scientific director of the Federation of Clinical Immunology Societies Center of Excellence. Prof. van Wijk is an advocate for a transition in science towards less ego, more inclusivity, greater diversity, more impact, and is committed to empowering the next generation of clinical scientists. In 2023, she received the Athena award for outstanding female researchers from the Dutch Research Council.



### **Prof. Makoto Suematsu**

Prof. Makoto Suematsu is a distinguished scientist, Professor Emeritus at Keio University, and the Research Director and Board Member of the Central Institute for Experimental Medicine and Life Science. He was the Founding President of the Japan Agency for Medical Research and Development. Throughout his career, prof. Suematsu has led significant research projects, including the Global Center of Excellence for Life Sciences in Human Metabolomic Systems Biology and the JST ERATO Suematsu Gas Biology Project. His research focuses on gas biology, microcirculatory physiology, metabolomics, and bioimaging of cancer metabolism. He is a member of various international advisory boards and global health committees, including Vilnius University Faculty of Medicine. Among his many honors are the Cross of the Knight of the Order for Merits to Lithuania, the Momofuku-Ando Grand Award for gas biology and medicine, and the Fukuzawa Award for contributions to gas biology and metabolomic systems medicine.



### **Dr. Angela Gritti**

Angela Gritti is an associate professor of Histology at Vita-Salute San Raffaele University and Group Leader at the San Raffaele Telethon Institute for Gene Therapy in Milan, Italy. She leads a research team focusing on rare genetic neurodegenerative diseases affecting the central nervous system. Her work bridges basic and translational research, utilizing *in vivo* and *ex vivo* gene therapy, cell therapy, and genome and epigenome editing. Dr. Gritti's research employs murine and human models, including patient-specific iPSC-derived neural populations, to study early pathogenic events and refine gene therapy strategies. As an educator, she is an assistant professor of Human Histology at Vita-Salute San Raffaele, where she teaches medical and international MD students. Her teaching emphasizes interactive learning on tissue types, development, function, and regenerative medicine, addressing the latest advances in stem cell manipulation and tissue replacement while recognizing current limitations and knowledge gaps. Dr. Gritti is widely recognized for her contributions to gene and stem cell therapy research, supported by numerous grants and a strong publication record.