



Centre for
Cancer Biomarkers



The Research Council of Norway



CCBIO Newsletter

www.ccbio.no

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DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Dear all

When we approach the end of this year, we can safely conclude that CCBIO 2.0 is as active and dynamic as ever. Congratulations to many groups for research grants from Helse Vest, and to Mari Halle for receiving a project grant from the Norwegian Cancer Society – as the only group from Bergen this year, and also to Harsh Dongre for a commercialization grant from RCN.

The Helse Vest Research Award 2023 was given to CCBIO and its director. We feel humble to be honored by Helse Vest, and we perceive this as a recognition not only of the many excellent research projects that we have performed and published, but also of the way our center and environment has been built. The CCBIO-model aim to focus on excellence in science, science organization, science education, science communication - and ultimately how to create an open, stimulating and responsible science culture. If we can provide advice and some guidance to others, we feel that this is also rewarding in itself.

Further, congratulations also to Saroj Rajthala and Lise Martine Ingebriksen for having defended their PhD thesis, to Kari S. Wagner-Larsen for "best scientific paper" and to Christiane Gjerde for "best oral presentation". And welcome to a lot of new faces – we are happy to include you in the CCBIO family.

Please take some moments to read the other stories in full, and take a look at the information on calls, courses, other events, publications and media coverage.

Finally, thank you to all at CCBIO, administration and researchers, for all the hard work. Be careful and stay safe - Merry Christmas and warm wishes for 2024!

Best regards, Lars A. Akslen, Director

*Capturing cancer complexity
and clinical challenges*

Prestigious recognitions to Lars A. Akslen and CCBio



The regional health authority Helse Vest's Research Award 2023 goes to Professor Lars Andreas Akslen and CCBio for groundbreaking research on cancer biomarkers. Akslen has also been subject to another prestigious recognition this fall, as he was recently elected as member of the Academia Europaea.

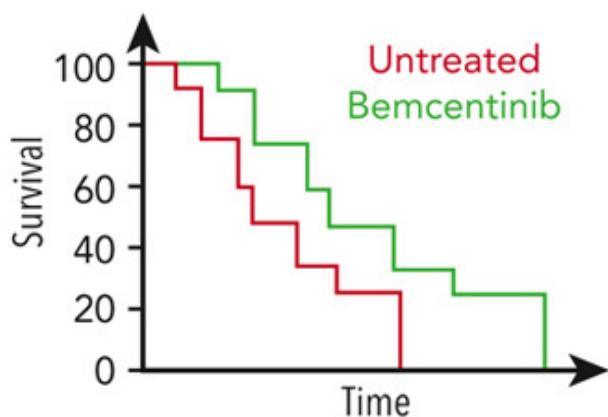
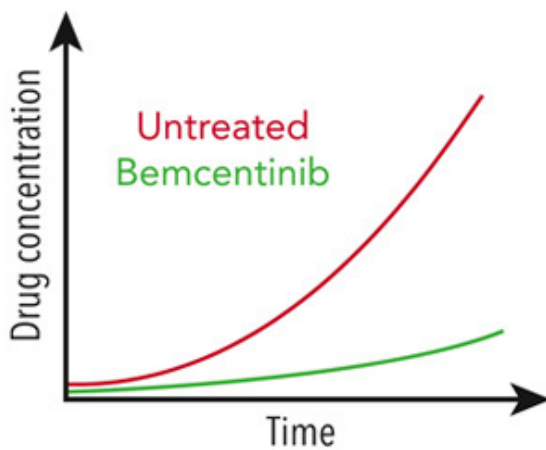
"Akslen is a worthy winner of the Research Award," says Bjørn Egil Vikse, Director of Medical Strategy and Development in Helse Vest. "He has been pivotal for modern cancer research through many years, both in our region and nationally. He is behind the initiative of the research center CCBio, which has established itself as an important engine for cancer research. In addition, Akslen has a vast network and is closely connected to research groups and research environments nationally as well as internationally," Vikse concludes.

This fall term has come with another recognition, as Lars A. Akslen was recently elected as member of the [Academia Europaea](#). The Academia Europaea is a functioning European Academy of Humanities, Letters and Sciences, composed of individual members. Membership is by invitation and only after peer group nomination, scrutiny and confirmation as to the scholarship and eminence of the individual in their field.

Congratulations to our Director with both these distinctions!

[Read more here.](#)

Potential for bemcentinib as target therapy for mantle cell lymphoma



The McCormack group with lead author Pascal Gelebart has recently published an article in *Blood*, showing [how Inhibition of a new AXL isoform, AXL3, induces apoptosis of mantle cell lymphoma cells.](#)

Mantle cell lymphoma (MCL) is an aggressive B-cell non-Hodgkin lymphoma having a poor overall survival. In this study, the group reports the identification and expression of a new isoform splice variant of the tyrosine kinase receptor AXL in MCL cells. This new AXL isoform, called AXL3, lacks the ligand-binding domain of the commonly described AXL splice variants and is constitutively activated in MCL cells. Interestingly, functional characterization of AXL3, using CRISPR inhibition, revealed that only the knock down of this isoform leads to apoptosis of MCL cells. Importantly, pharmacological inhibition of AXL activity resulted in a significant decrease in the activation of well-known proliferative and survival pathways activated in MCL cells (ie, β -catenin, Akt strain transforming, and NF- κ B). Therapeutically, preclinical studies using a xenograft mouse model of MCL indicated that bemcentinib is more effective than ibrutinib in reducing the tumor burden and to increase the overall survival. This study highlights the importance of a previously unidentified AXL splice variant in cancer and the potential of bemcentinib as a targeted therapy for MCL.

Blood also had [an editorial](#) about this. Additional attention: Pascal, May and Emmet were interviewed by "ASH daily news" which will be published under the ASH conference in San Diego Dec. 6-9.

No significant effect of bemcentinib in metastatic melanoma



Photo: Ingvild Festervoll Melien

Research results in the Straume groups shows that addition of bemcentinib to the standard-of-care therapies does not lead to improvements in overall response rate, progression-free survival, or overall survival in metastatic melanoma.

Oddbjørn Straume presented the results at [the 2023 ESMO Congress](#) in Madrid October 20-24. This [phase Ib/II-study](#) evaluated the AXL-inhibitor bemcentinib in combination with the standard-of-care therapies of pembrolizumab or dabrafenib plus trametinib, in patients with metastatic melanoma.

"No significant differences in responses or survival were observed in the efficacy population or in the biomarker-defined subgroups between standard treatments and the combinations with bemcentinib," Oddbjørn Straume said in a presentation of the data.

The treatment was however well tolerated, with only acceptable adverse effects.

"We still believe that this is an important target for therapy, but in this setting and this study, we did not detect any improved effect," Straume says.

Read more in these articles:

[OncLive](#) (English), [HealthTalk](#) (Norwegian) and [Dagens Medisin](#) (Norwegian).

McCormack in management group of new COST action



IMMUNO-model
Modelling immunotherapy response
and toxicity in cancer

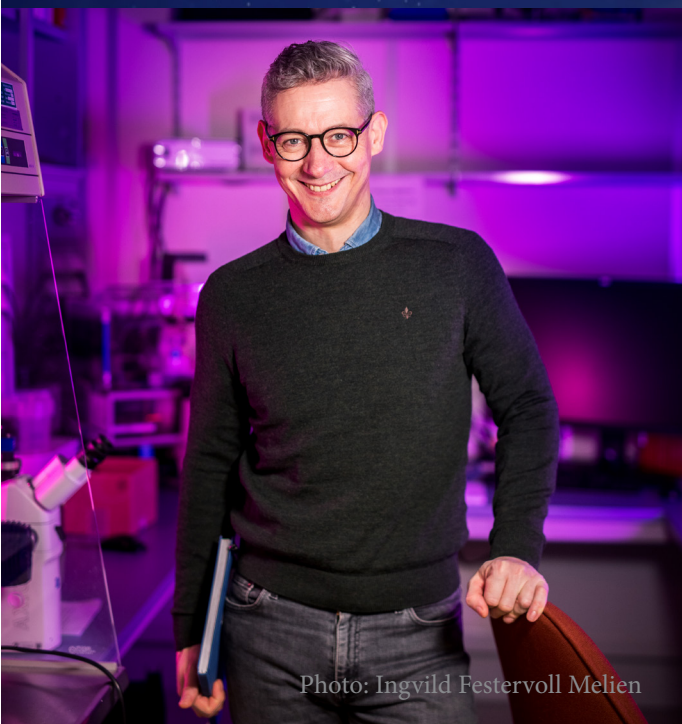


Photo: Ingvild Festervoll Melien

Emmet McCormack will be part of the new COST Action IMMUNO-model, where a network of scientists involved in the development and implementation of preclinical models evaluating the response and toxicity induced by immunotherapies, is challenged to expand our knowledge in their mechanisms of action and improve the survival and quality of life of cancer patients.

The unprecedented change that immunotherapy has represented in the treatment of cancer is best illustrated by the spectacular results obtained in previously incurable malignancies, such as metastatic melanoma. However, there are still important challenges to address, such as limited effectiveness and associated toxicities, and the scarcity of preclinical models that faithfully recapitulate human immunity and contribute to identify novel therapeutic targets, characterize biomarkers of therapeutic response and toxicity, and generate reliable data on drug synergies..

McCormack will lead the **WG2** (working group 2): *In vivo cancer immunotherapy models*.

"Drawing on the experiences and insights gained through the application of our CCBIO projects [Kleinmanns et al. Cancers 2022, Kleinmanns, Fosse et al. EBiomedicine 2020], we have joined together with European researchers from diverse sectors such as academia, clinical and industry with the common goal of establishing a network that endorses immuno-oncology research by specifically promoting the sharing, standardization and application of immunotherapy preclinical models," Professor McCormack explains.

[Read more here.](#)

8 mill from the Norwegian Cancer Association to Mari Kylesø Halle



Photo: Ingvild Festervoll Melien

Mari Kylesø Halle received a frame allocation of NOK 8 million in the Researcher Projects 2023 call from the Norwegian Cancer Association, and we are proud to see this CCBIO Masterclass alumna as a project leader for the first time.

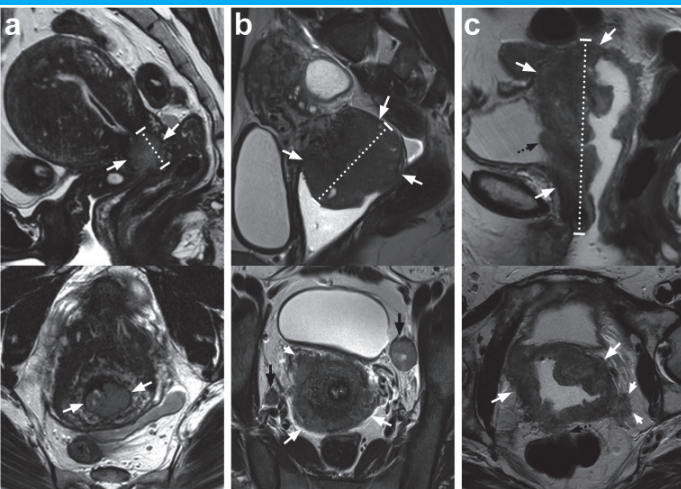
Project title is *Decoding the Landscape of Cancer Vulnerabilities in high-risk Cervical Carcinomas to detect new treatment strategies*.

This project aims to detect new treatment strategies for patients suffering from high-risk cervical cancer. By genomic characterization and CRISPR-Cas12 screen, the team will detect novel cancer vulnerabilities, and by establishing 3D models from high-risk cancer patients, they will detect possible treatment strategies exploiting these vulnerabilities to treat the patients.

Mari is allocated a four-year researcher position, and the team will also consist of a 3-year PhD position and a master student.

[Read more here.](#)

Best scientific article of 2022

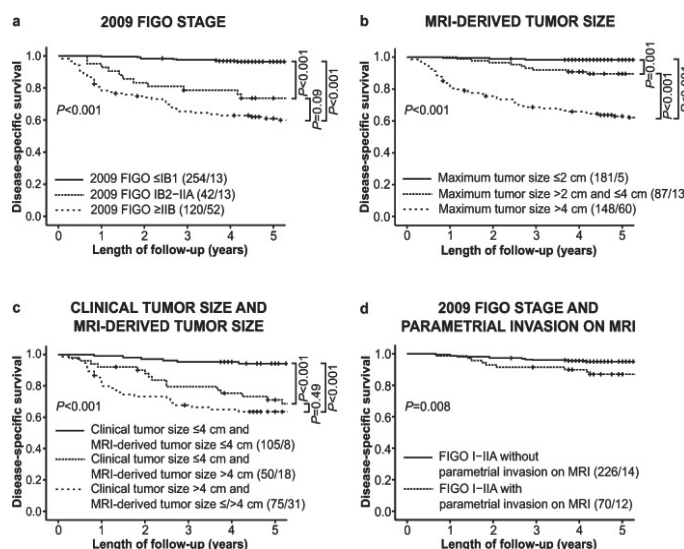


Kari S. Wagner-Larsen, CCBIO PhD candidate and senior consultant at Haukeland University Hospital's Department of Radiology, was honored with The Norwegian Society of Abdominal Radiology's award for the best scientific article of 2022.

Her work, titled [Interobserver agreement and prognostic impact for MRI-based 2018 FIGO staging parameters in uterine cervical cancer](#), was published in the esteemed journal *European Radiology*. Kari is part of the Krakstad group, with Ingrid Haldorsen as main supervisor.

The staging of cancer diseases is done daily and in substantial volumes at most radiology departments across the country. Cancer treatment largely relies on the staging conducted by radiologists, and it is crucial that this is as accurate and reproducible as possible. With the continual introduction of new staging methods and criteria, it is essential that these approaches are thoroughly reviewed.

This retrospective study evaluated the interobserver agreement among radiologists in staging cervical cancer according to the 2018 FIGO criteria. It entailed a review of MRI scans from 416 patients by three radiologists. The study demonstrated good interobserver agreement on key parameters in the 2018 FIGO staging system, and highlighted how MRI evaluations based on the FIGO criteria can identify patients with aggressive disease and poor survival. Praised for its clinical relevance, clear design, and comprehensive statistical assessments, Wagner-Larsen's work significantly contributes to the accuracy and reliability of cervical cancer staging, reinforcing the importance of evidence-based evaluations in both diagnosis and personalized cancer treatment.



2024 project funding from Helse Vest



Helse Vest has recently announced their funding for 2024, and several CC BIO groups have received funding for new projects, as well as continuation of established projects, PhDs and postdocs.

Open project support:

- **Bjørn Tore Gjertsen** with NOK 1.500.000 for 2024 for the project Single cell immune and signaling profiling guiding cancer therapy
- **Camilla Krakstad** with NOK 1.500.000 for 2024 for the project Clinical implementation of imaging and molecular markers for Endometrial Cancer: Final analyses of data from the multiregional MOMATEC2 2 study
- **Daniela Elena Costea** with NOK 1.500.000 for 2024 for the project Predictive Biomarkers for Immunotherapy in Head and Neck Cancer
- **Lars Andreas Akslen** with NOK 1.500.000 for 2024 for the project Stratification of breast cancer by proteomic classification

These project supports are over 3 years, totaling 4.5 mill. per project.

- Continuation of project support to: **Arne Östman**, **Ingfrid Haldorsen**, and **Oddbjørn Straume**.
- Continuation of PhD grants to **Ankush Gulati**, **Irini Ktoridou-Valen**, **Kari Strøno Wagner Larsen**, and **Rasmus Olai Collett Humlevik**.
- Continuation of postdoc grants to **Kristine Eldevik Fasmer** and **Stein-Erik Gullaksen**, plus a 6 month travel grant to Stein-Erik.

Congratulations to all! [Read more here](#) about the Helse Vest grants.

Illustration: Colourbox.com and Helse Vest logo

Commercialization grant from the RCN

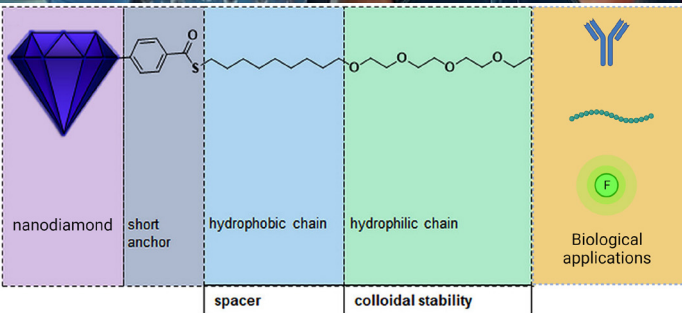


Based on the results from his PhD and postdoctoral research, Harsh Dongre in Costea's group has received a commercialization grant from the Research Council of Norway for the project *Nanoparticle-based targeted topical treatment of skin and mucosa cancers*.

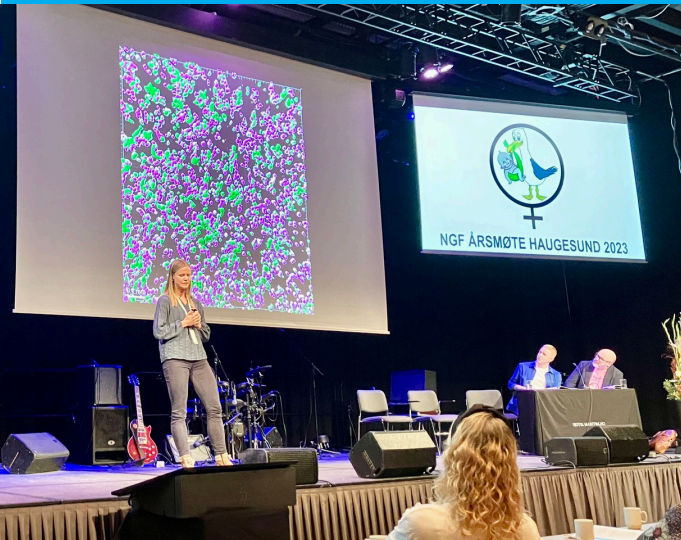
The project utilizes double functionalized nanodiamond (NDs) that are activated by near-infrared (NIR) light to kill only the cancer cells, where we want and when we want. This will enable new ointments or mouthwash-based treatment for patients with skin, oral and vulvar cancer.

The aim of the application type Commercialisation Project is to contribute to increasing commercial exploitation of publicly-funded research. Harsh's project has advanced to a point where engaging in a more direct conversation with market participants was essential. RCN's support of NOK 500.000 will contribute to ensuring that the project is tailored to meet the requirements of potential future customers.

The grant has been prepared in close collaboration with VIS, and senior consultant Malgorzata Barczy is the project manager and in charge for establishing dialogue with potential customers and conducting market research.



Best oral presentation in Haugesund

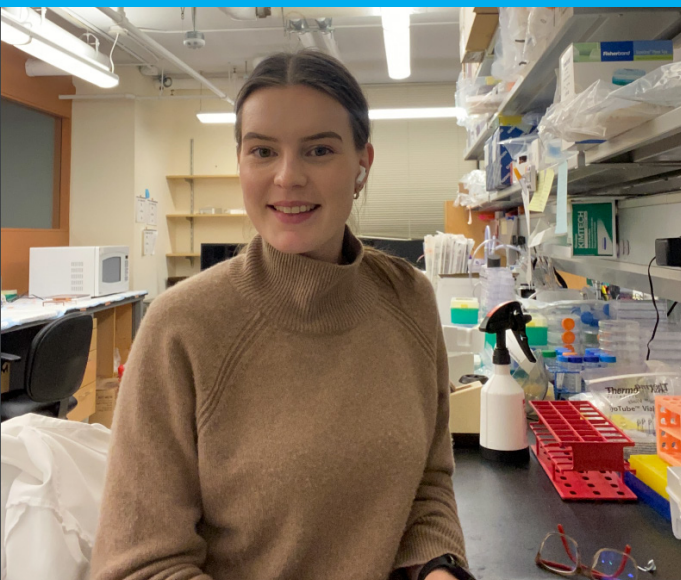


As you could read in the previous newsletter, CCBIO PhD Candidate Christiane Helgestad Gjerde was [one of the nine young researchers](#) competing at the Forsker Grand Prix in Bergen September 27. This was a great learning experience, perhaps contributing to a new recognition, now as Best Oral Presentation at the Norwegian Gynecologic Association Annual Meeting in October in Haugesund.

Christiane presented her project on the development of better preclinical models for ovarian cancer through the establishment, characterization and application of an organoid platform. She has grown cancer cells on peritoneum from pigs, together with immune cells and supporting cells that are normally found in cancerous tumors.

Congratulations with another great accomplishment from one of our Masterclass participants!

One year in Boston



CCBIO PhD Candidate Marta Espevold Hjelmeland in the Krakstad group spends her second year of her PhD program in Boston, and sends a report back home.

Marta's PhD work focuses on pre-clinical models and identifying new treatment strategies for endometrial cancer patients. She got the opportunity to spend the second year of her PhD program in Boston with Professor Rameen Beroukhim at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard University.

The Krakstad group has had a longstanding collaboration with the Beroukhim lab and Marta feels she has been very fortunate with the stay. "As a gynecological cancer researcher, my time in Boston has not only broadened my understanding of a specific field but also provided a unique opportunity to gain insights into several other facets of cancer research," she says.

[Read more here.](#)

New facilities for the Gyn group

October 16th 2023 was a historic day for the Bergen Gynecologic Cancer Research Group and its leader Professor Camilla Krakstad. After 22 bustling years of biobanking and exciting research in the basement of the Women's Clinic, they now continue their quest towards new breakthroughs in new facilities in the U1 unit in building 8 at Glasblokkene 2. They extend an open invitation to come have a look!



The previous research lab, established in 2001 by Professor Helga Salvesen.



New, modern lab facilities at Glasblokkene. 6

100th Anniversary Symposium for the Norwegian Society of Pathology



The Norwegian Society of Pathology celebrated the first 100 years with a symposium on *Updates and Future of Pathology*. The event was supported by CCBIO and also celebrated with a history book covering the Society and its activities through 1923-2023.

The book (in Norwegian, 450 pages) was edited by CCBIO's Director Lars A. Akslen together with G. Cecilie Alfsen, and Ying Chen. It contains a brief history of the pathology field in Norway, an overview of the society, and presentations of hospital units, university departments and private labs as well as national registry functions.

Akslen was chair of the committee for the anniversary symposium which took place at the eminent Grand Hotel in Oslo November 17-18, 2023, with participation from the authorities, international and national pathology experts, industry representatives and patient organisations. [See the program here.](#)

The history book costs NOK 499 and can be obtained by email to cecilie.alfsen@medisin.uio.no or to lars.akslen@uib.no.

Recent doctoral defenses



Saroj Rajthala defended Thursday November 23 his doctoral work at the University of Bergen with the thesis "Functional and Prognostic Role of MicroRNAs in Cancer Associated Fibroblasts and Stroma in Oral Squamous Cell Carcinoma."

Saroj has done his work at the Department of Clinical Medicine and CCBIO with supervisors Professors Anne Christine Johannessen, Daniela Elena Costea and Dipak Sapkota.

Saroj has particularly studied changes in micro-RNA in the connective tissue from cancer tumors from the oral cavity and investigated whether they may have an impact on cancer development and prognosis. He found that 12 various micro-RNAs was altered in the connective tissue cells from cancer tumors. These were grown in cell culture together with cancer cells, and the results demonstrated that two of them, micro-RNA-204 and -138, could inhibit the cancer cells' further growth. Patients with oral cancer having an elevated level of micro-RNA-204, lived longer and had fewer relapses than people with lower levels of micro-RNA-204. This opens up new possibilities for the treatment of oral cancer.

You can download Saroj's thesis [on this link.](#)



Lise Martine Ingebriktzen defended Thursday November 30 her doctoral work at the University of Bergen with the thesis "Breast cancer of the young: Exploring age-related breast cancer biology."

Lise has done her work at the Department of Clinical Medicine and CCBIO with supervisors Professor Elisabeth Wik, Professor Lars A. Akslen and PhD Erling Høivik.

In her doctoral work, Lise has focused on gaining better knowledge of breast cancer biology in young breast cancer patients. By investigating age-related gene expression changes, the aim has been to explain why the underlying biological factors in the tumor give younger patients more aggressive breast cancer than what is observed in older patients. Results point to higher tumor cell proliferation in young breast cancer patients, and this doctoral work has identified a gene signature consisting of six genes associated with tumor proliferation, aggressive tumor functions and reduced patient survival. Such an age-related gene signature can be an additional tool in identifying subgroups of patients with a poorer prognosis than initially expected.

Further, Lise's work included in-depth studies of Aurora kinase A (AURKA) on the basis of its strong association with tumor proliferation. High expression of both the Aurora kinase A protein and AURKA gene expression was associated with young age, aggressive breast cancer characteristics, and reduced survival.

See the [press release here.](#)

New faces in the CCBIO family

Welcome to new members in the CCBIO groups!



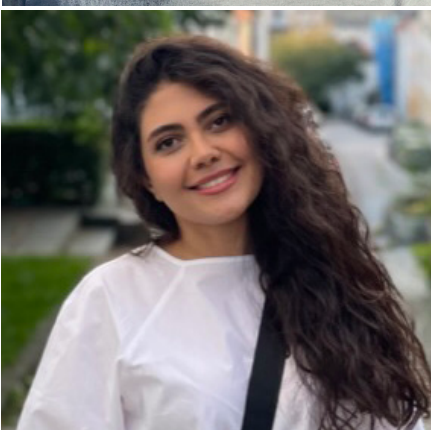
Borgel Greenaway is a new staff engineer in Emmet McCormack's group, with a PhD in Immunology from the University of Nottingham and experience as technician at various UK institutes. This portfolio includes experience with working with stem cells for drug manufacture in a Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) cleanroom facility at University College London. These experiences are now channeled into advancing cancer research, particularly in the development of humanized mice models (patient-derived xenografts or PDX). Currently, his focus is on providing operational support to refine protocols for generating induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSCs) from reprogramming human peripheral blood mononuclear cells (PBMCs). These iPSCs are crucial for reconstituting the immune system in mice models, a key step in enhancing the evaluation of immunotherapies, such as CAR T cells.



Pia Aehnlich is a new researcher connected to the research group of Emmet McCormack. Pia received her PhD in summer 2023 from the University of Copenhagen. During her PhD, she worked on strategies to improve adoptive cell therapy with gamma delta T cells at the National Center for Cancer Immune Therapy, Herlev Hospital, Denmark. At UiB, Pia will be working on novel targets for CAR T cell therapy.



Ryan Dunkel is a new Master student in his second year of the Biomedicine Program at the Faculty of Medicine, connected to the research group of Emmet McCormack. Ryan has a background in industrial and clinical CAR T manufacturing and is working on the project "Pre-Clinical and Phenotypic characterization of a Novel CAR T Therapy for B-cell Lymphoma Malignancies". Using mouse models, he will be comparing the efficacy of different CARs and track phenotypic changes of the T cells throughout the treatment. His supervisors are Pascal Gelebart and Emmet McCormack.



Ghazal Lessan Toussi is a new PhD candidate affiliated with the Strell group. She obtained her Master's degree in Biomedical Sciences from the University of Bergen in June and subsequently joined Strell's group. In the course of her PhD, she will focus on the project titled "How cellular ecosystems impact immune evasion and therapy response in early breast cancer." Her primary research interest is centered on investigating the progression of Ductal Carcinoma In Situ (DCIS) to invasive breast cancer within its microenvironmental tissue context. Carina Strell is the main supervisor, while Patrick Micke and Lars Muhl serve as co-supervisors.



Thea Marie Låstad has recently joined Kinn Therapeutics as a laboratory engineer and guest researcher in Emmet McCormack's group. She holds a master's degree in Genetic Science from the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU), specializing in gene editing, pseudotyped viral vectors, cell culturing, and sequencing technology. Her work in will include conducting preclinical trials for acute myeloid leukemia (AML) drug treatments and contributing to the development of PDX models.

Coming CCBio Research School events

Research school leaders Agnete Engelsen and Erling Høivik reminds us of the coming courses for the spring term. If you are a PhD candidate or student, remember to sign up for these subjects in Studentweb if you want the ECTS/study points.



CCBIONEUR911: Clinical Trials course, January 17-19, 2024

The completed program qualifies for a Good Clinical Practice (GCP) certificate and covers several aspects of clinical trials – from design planning to execution – with learning examples from cancer research and neurological research alike. A 2 ECTS course, also open for non-ECTS participation. [See program here.](#)

Topics in the course:

- What is a clinical study?
- Study design
- The pharmaceutical company perspective
- The patient's perspective
- Ethics
- GCP overview and concepts
- Practical running of a clinical trial
- Formalities and regulations
- Writing a protocol
- Applications and funding
- Contracts
- Translational research protocols
- Clinical trials as part of normal clinical operations
- Success factors
- Clinical trials in the future

For non-ECTS participation, please [use this link](#) (if you would like to get the a Good Clinical Practice (GCP) certificate, but do not need the study points which are for students.)

For ECTS, you register in [Studentweb](#).

NOTE: DEADLINE IS JANUARY 5 FOR THIS COURSE.

Academic responsible are Line Bjørge and Øivind Torkildsen.

[More info here.](#)



CCBIO903: Cancer research: Ethical, economic and social aspects, April 8-12, 2024 + June 3-6, 2024

This unique 5 ECTS course focuses on ethical, economical and societal aspects of cancer and cancer research and aims to equip cancer researchers with tools for reflecting on the limits, challenges and opportunities of their own research, as well as provide an understanding of the outside-the-lab context, with discussions on the broader ethical, social, economic and political implications of their research.

Such knowledge is not only important on a personal level as a researcher, but also in funding proposals to be able to clarify any ethical issues related to the implementation of projects, and be better equipped to provide an explanation of how such issues will be dealt with.

You register for the course in [Studentweb](#). Deadline is February 1.

Academic responsible are Roger Strand and Anne Blanchard.

[More info here.](#)





CCBIONEUR910: Patient and public involvement in medical and health research, April 17-19, 2024

This 2 ECTS course aims to inspire increased user participation in research trials and will present methods on how to involve user representatives. This is highly relevant to all biomedical research fields, and Patient and Public Involvement is documented to positively impact the relevance and efficacy in medical research.

Academic responsible are Nina Jebsen (CCBIO), Kjell-Morten Myhr (Neuro-SysMed) and Tone Skår (VIS). The course is a collaboration between CCBIO, Neuro-SysMed, REMEDY, NorHEAD, MATRIX, NorCRIN and Nasjonalforeningen for folkehelsen.

You register for the course in [Studentweb](#). Deadline is February 1.

Read more [about the course here](#).



CCBIO908: Scientific Writing and Communication Seminar, May 21-22, 2024

This 2 ECTS course is part of the CCBIO/INTPART program, where students' education and exchange is promoted through collaboration between CCBIO and the Boston based Harvard Medical School and Harvard Kennedy School.

Learn how to:

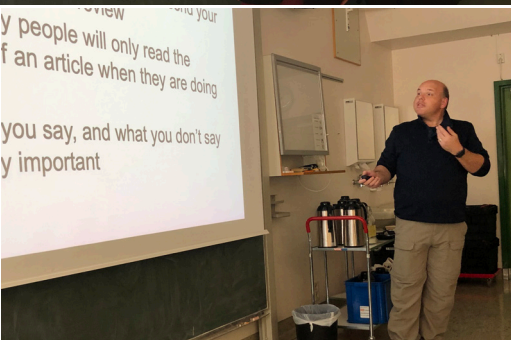
- Organize ideas, results and messages in a scientific paper
- Improve titles and abstracts
- Present a clear problem statement
- Use punctuation, grammar and numbering in a text
- Write an informative and convincing cover letter

The course will also present and discuss what is good research communication.

Academic responsible is Elisabeth Wik.

You register for the course in [Studentweb](#). Deadline is February 1.

[More info here](#). Also open for non-ECTS participation.



CCBIO904: Biomarkers and tumor biology in clinical practice, May 29-31, 2024

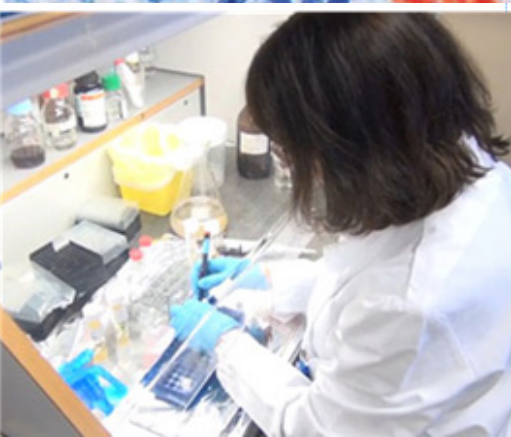
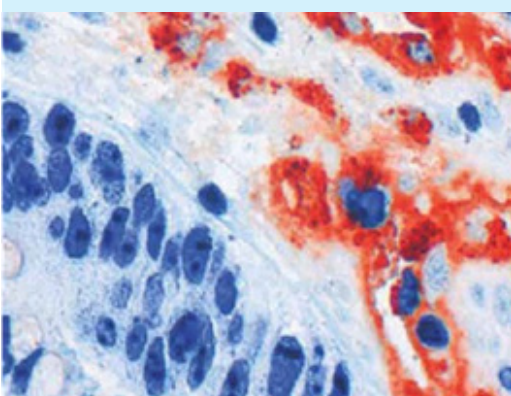
This 4 ECTS course covers broad tumor biological topics that are important for understanding how cancer occurs, the mechanisms that control tumor growth, proliferation and morbidity. The course will focus especially on tumor biological changes that may have or already have significance for personalized cancer treatment and clinical trial studies of new diagnostics and treatment.

- Get a broad understanding of all aspects of tumor biology based on updated knowledge.
- Gain deeper insight into how knowledge about tumor biological changes affects our strategies to customize assessment and treatment for this group of patients.

Academic responsible is Oddbjørn Straume.

You register for the course in [Studentweb](#). Deadline is February 1.

[More info here](#).



Relevant calls for funding



Here is an overview of upcoming deadlines for funding, relevant to CCBIO students and researchers. For more details, please check the links below and find more at the Medical Faculty's page on [External funding opportunities](#). Do you have concrete plans to apply for funding, want to discuss funding possibilities for your idea, or want more information on a specific call, please send an email to: medforsk@uib.no

The [UiB application portal for Funds and Bequests \(Fond og Legater\)](#) is now open. The UiB has a number of foundations with statutes aimed towards research and education. These foundations announce their grants/funds for whom both employees and students can apply for. Some of the foundations will also allow external applicants apply for a grant/funding, as mentioned in their separate statutes. The largest of these foundations, is the L. Meltzer University Fund. Another 25 foundations are also available to apply funds/grants from. **Deadline: January 12th 2024.**

[NFR Qualification - Research Commercialisation from Publicly Funded Research.](#)

200.000-500.000 NOK, 3-12 months. The funding must be used to clarify the commercial potential of promising research results. **Deadline: open-ended**

[NFR Doctoral Project in the Public Sector.](#) Doctoral scholarships, 3-4 years. The public sector PhD-scheme (OFFPHD) is intended to expand research activities in public sector bodies, to increase researcher recruitment within the public sector and to promote greater collaboration between academia and the public sector. **Deadline: continuous**

[NFR Three-year Researcher Project with International Mobility \(FRIPRO\).](#) 4-4,4 MIO NOK, 3 years. For researchers with a doctoral degree. Must hold a masters or PhD from a Norwegian research institution. Mobility requirement: two years abroad, one year in Norway. **Deadline: continuous**

[NFR Researcher Project for Early Career Scientists \(FRIPRO\).](#) 4-8 MIO NOK, 3-4 years. All thematic areas. Applicants must hold a PhD, defense date within the last 2-7 years. **Deadline: continuous**

[NFR Researcher Project for Experienced Scientists \(FRIPRO\).](#) 4-12 MIO NOK, 3-8 years. Must have approved doctoral at least 6 years ago. All thematic areas. **Deadline: continuous**

[NFR Qualification - Research Commercialisation from Publicly Funded Research.](#) 200.000-500.000 NOK, 3-12 months. The funding must be used to clarify the commercial potential of promising research results. **Deadline: continuous**

[NFR Research Projects \(top-down\).](#) 12 MIO NOK, 4 years. Global Development: Addressing better health for vulnerable groups in low- and lower-middle-income countries (LLMICs). **Deadline: 6 March 2024**

[Horizon Europe / ERC starting Grant.](#) 1,5 MIO EUR, 5 years. For researchers to start their own research group, 2-7 years after their PhD. UiB offers a mentoring program for first-time applicants, proposal reading sessions, and writing courses. Contact medforsk@uib.no. **Deadline: recurring. Next: Fall 2024**

[Trond Mohn Foundation \(TMS\) Starting Grants 2023.](#)

The Trond Mohn Foundation awards grants towards research, research supporting activities and translational research in Bergen. **Deadline (prequalification round): recurring, March each year**

[EMBO Postdoctoral Fellowships.](#) 2-year fellowships with obligatory mobility, relocation allowance and support for children. Eligibility: 0-2 years after obtained PhD, extensions are possible due to career breaks. Applicants must have at least one first (or joint first) author primary research paper accepted for publication or published in an international peer reviewed journal at the time the application is complete. **Deadline: continuous**

[Helse Vest mobility grant](#) - Granted for 6 or 12 months. Postdoctoral fellowship applicants are especially encouraged to apply for an overseas fellowship over the course of their fellowship period. **Deadline: continuous**

[Research Council of Norway mobility grant](#) - Scholarship for research stays abroad for 3 -12 months for PhD candidates and Post Doctors in projects with funding from the Research Council. **Deadline: continuous**

[DAM Foundation, Doctoral grants \(Forskning\).](#) 1,5-3 MIO NOK, 4 years. Support for health research aimed at target groups in Norway which contributes to promoting living conditions, physical and mental health, coping, quality of life or social participation. **Deadline: February each year.**

[DAM Foundation, Research grants \(Forskning\).](#) 1,5-3 MIO NOK for 3 years. Stiftelsen Dam is one of Norway's largest foundations and provides funding for health and research projects that will provide better health through participation and activity for people in Norway. **Deadline: February each year**

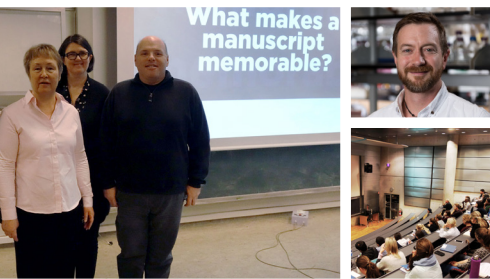
Grants through the IMMUNO-model COST Action:

(The grants are available to all who sign up for the COST Action, this is just a case of [joining online](#) and selecting the 2 WGs that is most appropriate for each individual. Norway is a COST Full Member Inclusiveness Target Country (ITC). Once you have signed up, you are eligible to apply for grants.)

a. Short-Term Scientific Missions (STSMs) Grant: to carry out short-term research in another institution abroad, use the [1st Call for STSM Applications – Grant Period 2, 01 November 2023 – 29 February 2024 – IMMUNO-model.](#)

b. Inclusiveness Target Country (ITC) Conference Grant: if you are Young Researcher and Innovator and would like to present your own work at a high-level conference (organised by third parties), please use the [1st Call for ITC Applications – Grant Period 2, 01 November 2023 – 31 October 2024 – IMMUNO-model.](#)

Coming CCBIO events



Make sure to save the dates in your calendar, and register when applicable. You can see all planned CCBIO events in the [CCBIO web calendar](#).

- December 14, [CCBIO Seminar](#), Bergen: Thomas Barker, Professor of Biomedical Engineering, Cell Biology and Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine, Schools of Engineering and Medicine, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, USA Title: "Targeting the Matrix in a matrix-centric disease: The holy grail of Fibrosis therapeutics?"
- January 17-19, [CCBIONEUR911: Clinical Trials course 2024](#), Bergen
- January 25, CCBIO seminar, Bergen
- February 22, CCBIO seminar, Bergen
- March 21, CCBIO seminar, Bergen
- April 8-12 and June 3-6, the course [CCBIO903, Cancer research: Ethical, economic and social aspects](#), Bergen
- April 25, CCBIO seminar, Bergen
- May 14-15, SAVE THE DATE for [CCBIO's 12th Annual Symposium](#), Solstrand, Bergen
- May 21-22, [CCBIO908, Scientific Writing and Communication Seminar](#), Bergen
- May 29-31, the course [CCBIO904, Biomarkers and tumor biology in clinical practice](#), Bergen
- May 30, CCBIO seminar, Bergen
- June 20, CCBIO seminar, Bergen

Other relevant coming events



Events from collaboration partners and other relevant events.

- December 14, [the 1st IMMUNO-model webinar entitled Emerging Innovations for Immuno-models](#), streamed live on the ZOOM platform on December 14, 2023 at 2.00 -3.30 pm CET.
- January 25, [Cancer Crosslinks 2024, Bridging innovations to improve clinical outcomes for cancer patients](#), Oslo Cancer Cluster, Oslo, and digital option.
- February 15, BBB seminar, Ron Wevers, Radboud University Medical Centre, The Netherlands: Untargeted metabolomics in body fluids and tissues. Bergen.
- February 28-March 1, [Cancer Neuroscience Symposium 2024](#), University of Texas, MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, USA, plus online option.
- February 29-March 2, [the Multidisciplinary Head and Neck Cancers Symposium](#), Phoenix, USA, plus online option.
- March 13-16, [EUROGIN International Multidisciplinary HPV Congress](#), Stockholm, Sweden
- March 14-15, IMMUNO-model COST Action workshop: Predictive Biomarkers of Toxicity and Immunotherapy Response in Advanced Melanoma, Skopje, North Macedonia.
- March 22-23, [4th Nijmegen Prostate Cancer Prospects](#), Nijmegen, the Netherlands
- April 5-10, [AACR Annual Meeting 2024](#), San Diego, California
- May 15-17, [ESMO Breast Cancer](#), Berlin, Germany, plus online option.
- May 31-June 4, [2024 ASCO Annual Meeting](#), Chicago, USA and online option.
- June 10-13, [EACR 2024 Congress: Innovative Cancer Science](#), Rotterdam, the Netherlands
- July 3-6, [World Congress on Gastrointestinal Cancer](#), Barcelona, Spain

Publications

You can find the CCBIO publications on [this pubmed link](#). See some of the most recent below.

- Tettero JM, Buisman Y, Ngai LL, Bachas C, Gjertsen BT, Kelder A, van de Loosdrecht AA, Manz MG, Pabst T, Scholten W, Ossenkoppele GJ, Cloos J, de Leeuw DC. [Prognostic Significance of Measurable Residual Disease Detection by Flow Cytometry in Autologous Stem Cell Apheresis Products in AML](#). *Hemasphere*. 2023 Nov 21;7(12):e981. doi: 10.1097/HS9.0000000000000981. eCollection 2023 Dec. PMID: 38026789
- Rosti G, Brümmendorf TH, Gjertsen BT, Giraldo-Castellano P, Castagnetti F, Gambacorti-Passerini C, Ernst T, Zhao H, Kuttischreuter L, Purcell S, Giles FJ, Hochhaus A. [Impact of age and comorbidities on the efficacy and tolerability of bosutinib in previously treated patients with chronic myeloid leukemia: results from the phase 4 BYOND study](#). *Leukemia*. 2023 Nov 25. doi: 10.1038/s41375-023-02080-y. Online ahead of print. PMID: 38007586
- Vilming B, Fallås Dahl J, Bentzen AG, Ingebrigtsen VA, Berge Nilsen E, Vistad I, Dørum A, Solheim O, Bjørge L, Zucknick M, Aune G, Lindemann K. [Real-world data on niraparib maintenance treatment in patients with non-gBRCA mutated platinum-sensitive recurrent ovarian cancer](#). *Int J Gynecol Cancer*. 2023 Nov 24;ijgc-2023-004484. doi: 10.1136/ijgc-2023-004484. Online ahead of print. PMID: 38000795
- Moen CA, Falkenthal TE, Thorkelsen TK, Hopland A, Rio OE, Honoré A, Juliebø-Jones P, Dongre HN, Costea DE, Bostad L, Brennan P, Johansson M, Ferreiro-Iglesias A, Brenner N, Waterboer T, Nygård M, Beisland C. [Penile Cancers Attributed to Human Papillomavirus Are Associated with Improved Survival for Node-positive Patients. Findings from a Norwegian Cohort Study Spanning 50 Years](#). *Eur Urol Oncol*. 2023 Nov 8:S2588-9311(23)00233-X. doi: 10.1016/j.euo.2023.10.013. Online ahead of print. PMID: 37949729
- Zeltz C, Kusche-Gullberg M, Heljasvaara R, Gullberg D. [Novel roles for cooperating collagen receptor families in fibrotic niches](#). *Curr Opin Cell Biol*. 2023 Oct 31;85:102273. doi: 10.1016/j.ceb.2023.102273. Online ahead of print. PMID: 37918273 Review.

Recent CCBIO in the media

Recent media appearances by CCBIO PIs and group members. For all media hits, see [CCBIO's web pages](#).

- 23.11.23, Dagens Medisin (paper version), "Helsefolk", Lars A. Akslen
- 20.11.23, OncLive, "[Bemcentinib plus SOC is well tolerated, but does not improve efficacy in metastatic melanoma](#)", Oddbjørn Straume
- 19.11.23, Onkologisk Tidsskrift, "[Kreftregisterets tall: Null tilfeller av livmorhalskreft blant 25-åringene i 2022](#)", Line Bjørge
- 17.11.23, Helse Vest Nyheter, "[Detektiven som ville løse kreftgåta](#)", Lars A. Akslen
- 16.11.23, Helse Vest Nyheter, "[Gjeve prisar til kreft- og stamcelleforskning](#)", Lars A. Akslen
- 25.10.23, HealthTalk, "[Norsk kreftlege presenterte norsk medisin på Europas største kreftkongress](#)", Oddbjørn Straume
- 24.10.23, Onkologisk Tidsskrift, "[Induksjonskjemoterapi til lokalt avansert livmorhalskreft kan bli ny standard](#)", Line Bjørge.
- 21.10.23, HealthTalk, "[Livmorkreft: Nye data fra studie som imponerte](#)," Line Bjørge.
- 21.10.23, Dagens Medisin, "[Presenterte norsk forskning på pasienter med metastatisk melanom](#)", Oddbjørn Straume.

Programs and Research Teams

Mechanisms of Tumor Micro-environment Interactions:

- Donald Gullberg
- Karl-Henning Kalland
- Emmet McCormack

Exploration and Validation of Cancer Biomarkers:

- Lars A. Akslen
- Jim Lorens
- Camilla Krakstad
- Daniela Costea
- Elisabeth Wik
- Carina Strell
- Agnete Engelsen

Clinical Applications and Trial Studies:

- Bjørn Tore Gjertsen
- Oddbjørn Straume
- Line Bjørge

Health Ethics, Prioritization and Economics:

- Roger Strand
- John Cairns
- Ole Frithjof Norheim

Additional resources:

- **Bioinformatics and Big Data**
- Inge Jonassen

Strategic Advice

- Rolf Reed

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