

ERA-NET TRANSCAN-2

NEWSLETTER 9

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**THE ERA-NET: Aligning national/regional
translational cancer research programmes
and activities**

**TRANSCAN-2 Scientific Symposium on
Tumour Heterogeneity
Milan, Italy, October 2019**

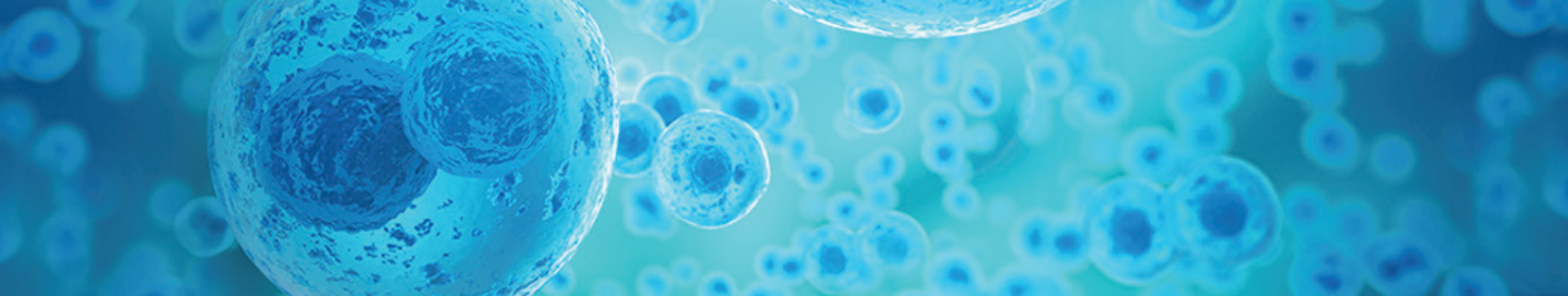
The third and last TRANSCAN-2 Scientific Symposium took place in Milan, Italy on 24th October 2019 hosted by Regione Lombardia at Palazzo Pirelli. It was organized by the Chief Scientist Office of Israeli Ministry of Health in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, Italy, Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Fondazione Regionale per la Ricerca Biomedica - Regione Lombardia and Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, Slovenia. The Symposium brought together representatives of TRANSCAN-2 funding organisations, established and early career scientists, expert members from TRANSCAN-2 Scientific Advisory Board as well as outstanding scientific experts from diverse fields of cancer research, including tumour heterogeneity.



More information can be found on
<http://www.transcanfp7.eu/>

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020
Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement no 643638.

Produced by MIZS, SI and CSO-MOH, IL



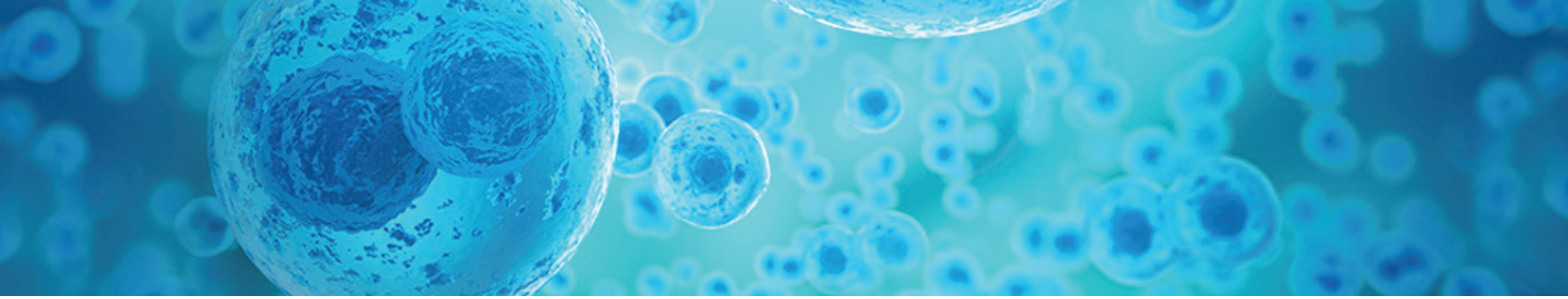
(on the left) Project presentation, (on the right) Poster session. Copyright © 2019, TRANSCAN-2

The symposium was focused on the projects funded under the TRANSCAN-2 co-funded First Joint Transnational Call 2014 (JTC2014) on “Translational research on human tumour heterogeneity to overcome recurrence and resistance to therapy”¹. It was composed of four sessions, with altogether fifteen project presentations², chaired by Ulrich Pfeffer (IRCCS AOU San Martino – IST, Italy), Atanasio Pandiella (Centro de Investigación del Cáncer, CSIC, Spain), Peter Devilee (Leiden University Medical Center, Netherlands) and Rolf Skotheim (Institute for Cancer Research, Oslo University Hospital, Norwegian Radium Hospital, Norway). In parallel with the symposium, a poster exhibition was organised and a Best Poster Award was to be given during the closing session. Twelve poster presentations were made by early career scientists (coming from the funded projects or otherwise related to the field of tumour heterogeneity). The Poster Prize Evaluation Committee, made up of three scientific experts, interacted with young researchers and evaluated their posters and their presentations.

The last session of the symposium was concluded by an open joint discussion between funders and scientists on the added value and impact of transnational collaboration in translational cancer research, chaired by Hubert Misslisch (PT-DLR, Germany, TRANSCAN-2 funding organization) and Jennifer Barrett (Leeds Institute of Cancer and Pathology, United Kingdom). The researchers were given the stage to pinpoint the general, as well as the specific hurdles and difficulties they encountered with the TRANSCAN-2 funding programme and to make suggestions for improvement, to be taken into consideration for the future.

¹ Link to the programme: https://www.transcanfp7.eu/images/documents/archive/TRANSCAN-2_ThirdSymposium_Programme.pdf

² Link to the abstract book: https://www.transcanfp7.eu/images/documents/archive/20191024_Abtract_Book_TRANSCAN-2_3rd-Symposium.pdf



Peter Devilee

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Hubert Misslisch and Jennifer Barrett

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This symposium was the first to be open to the public. It provided a significant opportunity for a wider dissemination of the impact and outcome of the TRANSCAN-2 funded projects as well as for networking at several levels: within the projects' consortia, between scientists themselves, as well as between scientists and funders.

The evening ended with the Poster Prize Ceremony, in which Matilde Calderoni from the University of Genoa, Italy, received an award certificate and a prize of 300 € for her poster presentation on "45A ncRNA expression impairs microtubules dynamics affecting drug response in neuroblastoma".

Winner of the TRANSCAN-2 Best Poster Prize



Matilde Calderoni
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Matilde Calderoni Short Personal Interview

Matilde Calderoni from the Department of Experimental Medicine, University of Genoa, Italy was chosen among the 12 early career scientists as the winner of the Best poster prize for her poster 45A ncRNA EXPRESSION IMPAIRS MICROTUBULES DYNAMICS AFFECTING DRUG RESPONSE IN NEUROBLASTOMA.

1. What is the topic of your research?

My PhD project aims to understand the role of 45A non-coding (nc) RNA in neuroblastoma progression. In the last years, in our lab we discovered that 45A expression in cancer cells induces a remarkable modification of cell cytoskeleton leading to a perturbation of proliferation control, cell migration, tumorigenic potential and cell adhesion properties. In our lab it was previously shown that the tuned regulation of 45A ncRNA expression controls the level of GTSE1 (G2 and S-Phase Expressed 1) synthesis, a protein involved in the regulation of microtubules organisation with relevant effects on cancer development. In this context, I am trying to bring to light the comprehensive protein pathway regulated by 45A, in order to provide novel specific markers to be used as therapeutic targets against neuroblastoma. The results we recently obtained are promising and suggest pursuing this way of investigation.

2. What most interests you in your research?

I am very interested in my research as I see in my project a concrete possibility to contribute to neuroblastoma research. Indeed, some preliminary results of our work are showing that we might be able to modify pharmaceutically the susceptibility of cancer cells to anticancer drugs.

3. What are your career plans for the future?

First, I want to finish my PhD at the University of Genoa and this will take two more years. Then, I would very much like to continue research on neuroblastoma in order to find a cure for this tumour, possibly in an academic scientific environment.