



Image-Guided & Functionally Instructed Tumor Therapies

Cluster of Excellence

iFIT newsletter

Visualizing and Targeting Cancer Stress

issue 01 | February 2021

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Dear Members of the iFIT CoE.
Dear Colleagues.

Since its inception in January 2019 the **iFIT Cluster of Excellence** has welcomed 15 new iFIT Associate Investigators with projects funded by iFIT Flex Funding. Around 100 iFIT related publications have been released and our members have been collecting internal and external funding as well as prizes for their work.

It has been a year of great achievements as well as great investments. The renovation of the new building that will serve as home to all new iFIT research groups is progressing and is now predicted to be ready for occupation in the second half of 2021. The iFIT family room will provide a comfortable ambiance to keep work flowing while children can read or draw.

This year has taken us by surprise with the COVID-19 pandemic and all imposed restrictions that consequently led to general delays in the laboratories due to less people being allowed in the facilities and also due to delays with external services. Another major challenge was, and still is, the recruitment of

excellent new research groups and professorships as interviews for foreign applicants are not possible.

Despite all drawbacks iFIT nevertheless did great science. Hence, in this first edition of our iFIT newsletter we want to send out a big **THANK YOU** to all people involved in this project -

**Thank you for being (part of)
the iFIT Cluster of Excellence!**

Lars Zender
Hans-Georg Rammensee
Bernd Pichler



Visualizing and Targeting Cancer Stress

iFIT Research

● Area A | **FIMT – Functionally Instructed Molecular Therapies**

COORDINATORS: Lars Zender, Stefan Laufer

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS: Hiltrud Brauch, Nisar Malek, Alfred Nordheim, Birgit Schitteck, Matthias Schwab

ASSOCIATE INVESTIGATORS: Wolfgang Albrecht, Maya André, Eliezer Barreiro, Sandra Beer-Hammer, Saskia Biskup, Michael Bitzer, Jürgen Hetzel, Alfred Königsrainer, Daniela Kramer, Ulrich Lauer, Sven Nahnsen, Anne Nies, Antti Poso, Nikita Popov, Tassula Proikas-Cezanne, Olaf Riess, Elke Schaeffeler, Corinna Schneidawind, Dominik Schneidawind

NEW ASSOCIATE INVESTIGATORS: Daniel Dauch, Michael Forster, Matthias Gehringer, Josef Leibold, Omelyan Trompak, Thales Kronenberger, Pavlos Missios, Marc André Reymond, Martin Schenk, Stephan Singer

PhD GRADUATE: Katarina Wolter (Supervisor: Lars Zender) on September 8th, 2020

● Area B | **ImmT – Immunotherapy**

COORDINATORS: Hans-Georg Rammensee, Rupert Handgretinger, Helmut Salih

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS: Martin Röcken, Klaus Schulze-Osthoff, Ghazaleh Tabatabai

ASSOCIATE INVESTIGATORS: Stella Autenrieth, Claus Garbe, Cécile Gouttefangeas, Stephan Hailfinger, Gundram Jung, Manfred Kneilling, Peter Lang, Sven Nahnsen, Stefan Stevanović, Juliane Walz, Alexander Weber, Bettina Weigelin

NEW ASSOCIATE INVESTIGATORS: Ana Tapia Abellán, Teresa Amaral, Markus Löffler, Judith Feucht, Heike Niessner, Patrick Schlegel, Tobias Sinnberg

● Area C | **MFMI – Molecular and Functional Multiparametric Imaging**

COORDINATORS: Bernd Pichler, Christian la Fougère, Konstantin Nikolaou, Bernhard Schölkopf

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS: Leticia Quintanilla-Martinez de Fend, Katja Schenke-Layland

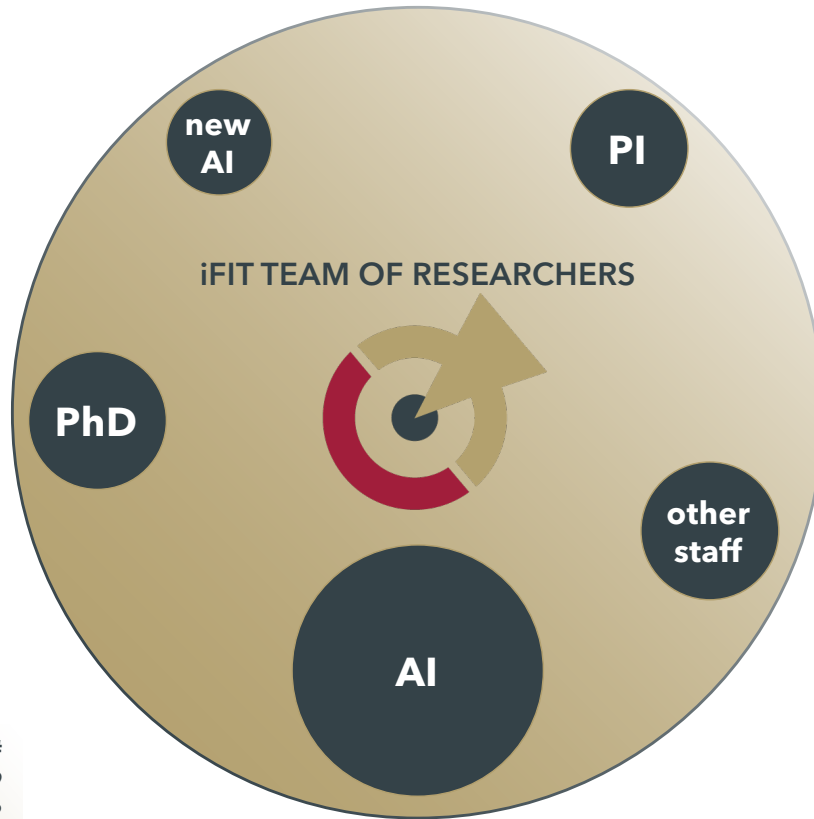
ASSOCIATE INVESTIGATORS: Sergios Gatidis, Brigitte Gückel, Manfred Kneilling, Julia Mannheim, Andreas Maurer, Gerald Reischl, Ulrich Rothbauer, Fritz Schick, Klaus Scheffler, Johannes Schwenck, Bettina Weigelin

NEW ASSOCIATE INVESTIGATORS: André Martins, Andreas Schmidt

PhD GRADUATE: Sabrina Hoffmann (Supervisor: Bernd Pichler) on September 16th, 2019

iFIT Team of Researchers

Currently 131 researchers are associated with the iFIT CoE, distributed as follows:



iFIT staff	#
PI	19
AI	42
FlexFund AI	16
PhDs	22
Other scientists/staff	32

PI = Principal Investigator
AI = Associate Investigator

new AI = new Associate Investigator with projects funded by iFIT FlexFunding

iFIT Research Progress

● Area A | FIMT – Functionally Instructed Molecular Therapies

- Clinical study with the highly selective p38a inhibitor Skepinone-L (treatment of hepatocellular carcinoma): further preclinical investigations requested by the BfArM are in the final phase - approval of the study expected for 2021
- Josef Leibold was recruited from the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, New York (USA) as Junior Professor and leads the iFIT IRG on "Functional Immunogenomics" within the research of functional genetic screening to dissect immunotherapy resistance
- Publication in Nature Cancer (in press): Rudalska, R et al, LXRα activation and Raf inhibition trigger lethal lipotoxicity in liver cancer
- Tübingen was selected as a partner site within the National Center for Tumor Diseases (NCT). Together with its partners in Stuttgart and Ulm, preclinically developed novel therapeutical strategies within the iFIT CoE will be translated into clinical trials at the NCT-SW

● **Area B |
ImmT –
Immunotherapy**

- Two mass spec devices (Q-Exactive and TimsTof) acquired and running (1.3M€)
- The PepIVAC study (personalized peptide vaccination ring for 6 solid tumors and already approved by the PEI) is now being resumed
- First-in-man clinical study with XS15 was approved
- iVAC-XS15-CLL study approved by the regulatory authorities and will be the first study in oncological patients evaluating the new Tübingen-developed adjuvant XS15“a”
- Judith Feucht was recruited from the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, New York (USA) and leads the IRG “Cellular Therapies”
- CC-1 bispecific PSMAxCD3 antibody, clinical study ongoing
- CC-2 bispecific FLT3xCD3 antibody, commercialization deal closed, GMP production ongoing
- CC-3 bispecific B7H3xCD3 antibody, GMP production will start in 01/2021, Helmholtz-Validierungsfonds (HVF) funded
- CC-4 bispecific CD105xCD28 antibody, HVF grant pending and positively reviewed

● **Area C |
MFMI –
Molecular and
Functional
Multiparametric
Imaging**

- Upgrade of the dual beam of the existing 16 MeV Cyclotron (616k€)
- Purchase of the Leica Thunder Imager 3D Intravital Microscope (1.1M€)
- Signed agreement with ImaginAb that positions Tübingen as the first center in Europe for the GMP production of a CD8 minibody
- New IRGs:
Bettina Weigelin, recruited from the MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston (USA) leads the IRG “Multiscale Immunoimaging”

André Martins, recruited from the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas (USA), leads the IRG “Hyperpolarized Metabolism and Multi-Imaging Sciences (HyperM&Ms)”

- One PARP tracer has been completed and the publication will soon be submitted

● **Area A/C |
FIMT/MFMI**

- Regarding the senescence imaging study, clinical phase I / II will soon start as all approvals have been received from BfS, BfArM and ethics
 - ABX-CRO advanced pharmaceutical services will lead the trial’s management
 - Patients’ recruitment should start in January 2021

That's new: iFIT Data Clubs

iFIT Data Clubs are organized by group leaders or senior staff members to specifically mentor junior researchers, PhD students, and non-scientific team members concerning the documentation, handling and interpretation of scientific data. The following clubs are already active - **for details and agenda contact the iFIT office.**

Data clubs | area A

- Target Discovery & Molecular Therapies Club
- Senescence Club
- Academic Drug Discovery & Development

Data clubs | area B

- Immunology Progress Reports
- Immuno Journal Club
- T cell Club
- Antibody Club
- Peptide Club
- Innate-Immunity Club
- Innate-Immunity Journal Club

Data clubs | area C

- Preclinical Imaging Club
- Oncology Focus Club
- Immunology Focus Club
- Radiochemistry Focus Club
- Imaging Science Focus Club
- Radiological Colloquium Club
- AI Data Club
- Hybrid Imaging Club

iFIT InSight

External Funding



Successful Grant Applications & Awards – Congrats!

Since the start of our iFIT CoE in January 2019, more than **50 external grants/awards** were received by iFIT members. And there are more to come - use the support of your iFIT office concerning grant writing!



Name: Hans-Georg Rammensee

Award: Landesforschungspreis 2020 for his groundbreaking research into peptide and mRNA vaccinations against cancer and viral infections

Amount: 100k€

Prof. Rammensee, a leading scientist in the field of antigen-specific immunobiology

Hans-Georg Rammensee's research focuses on the interaction of T cells with their antigens and according to the Landesforschungspreis jury he "is one of the world's leading scientists in the field of antigen-specific immunobiology".

With this prize he aims at the "development of personalized cancer immunotherapy through therapeutic vaccination with cancer-specific peptides in a clinical study in which six different types of cancer are to be combated."

Name: Christian la Fougère together with Bernd Pichler and Konstantin Nikolaou

Co-PIs: Lars Zender, Bernhard Schölkopf, Metin Sitti, Daniela Thorwarth, Jürgen Schäfer

Grant/Award: Forschungsgroßgeräte from DFG

Project: Purchase of an Ultra-Long-Field-of View PET/CT scanner

Amount: 4.84M€



Prof. la Fougère, could you briefly describe the focus of the project?

“The so-called **Ultralong-FOV-PET/CT** will have a 10-fold higher sensitivity compared to the currently available PET/CT devices and a significantly improved spatial and temporal resolution, which guarantees an unprecedented image quality for the detection of the smallest tumor lesions at an early stage. This new development can thus be regarded as a major milestone in molecular imaging.

The awarded funding for the acquisition of this unique PET device will allow for completely new research opportunities in various fields:

- (radio-)drug development & testing, possibilities for more accurate diagnostics and therapy management in oncological disease aiming at personalized management of complex oncological combination therapies

- Individual prediction or early therapy stratification
- Multiparametric image analysis by artificial intelligence and most accurate imaging of metabolic changes
- Research into novel theranostics as microroboters and microswimmers are to be imaged by PET”



Name: Helmut Salih

Grant/Award: Helmholtz-Validierungsfonds HVF

Project I: Bispecific antibody for treatment of colorectal cancer COLOMAB

Amount: 2.66M€

Project II: Development of an optimized bispecific FLT3xCD3 antibody for immunotherapy of leukemias

Amount: 2.66M€

Project III: Bispecific CD28 costimulator to reinforce T cell based cancer treatment

Amount: 2.66M€

Prof. Salih, could you briefly describe the focus of the projects?

“Our overall goal is to enable the rapid translation of results from basic science to clinical application in early clinical studies (bench to bedside), which is central for our understanding of ‘truly translational immunology’. Three recent grants from HVF enable to conduct mainly the GMP production (besides other translationally required analyses) of novel bispecific antibodies: (i) a novel CD276xCD3 antibody for treatment of gastrointestinal cancers, with first clinical

evaluation planned for colorectal cancer (COLOMAB); GMP production will be initiated in April 2021; (ii) a FLT3xCD3 bispecific antibody for treatment of acute leukemia (ALEUKOMAB). This bsAb is now being developed within a recently founded spin-off company of DKFZ, UKT and Cullinan Oncology (MPM Capital); GMP production is completed, the first clinical trial in AML is expected to start recruitment in Q1/2021; (iii) a bispecific costimulator that for the first time

enables target cell restricted CD28 costimulation (REINFORCE). This more closely mimics physiological T cell activation, where simultaneous provision of a first and a costimulatory signal is required to achieve optimal efficacy. GMP production is planned to start in July 2021, clinical evaluation will be conducted in combination with our PSMAxCD3 bispecific antibody that is presently undergoing clinical evaluation as monotherapy in patients with prostate carcinoma.”

Name: Judith Feucht

Grant/Award: ERC Starting Grant

Project: Senolytic CAR T cells as novel therapeutic concept for solid tumors and senescence-associated diseases

Amount: 1.5M€



Dr. Feucht, could you briefly describe the focus of your project?

"The overall goal of this project is to **develop new therapeutic options for patients with solid tumors and inflammatory disorders** with poor prognosis by reprogramming immune cells to redirect their therapeutic potential against such diseases. I aim to investigate synergistic treatment approaches with therapies that alter the tumor microenvironment and to design immune cells that can overcome current limitations of engineered cellular therapies."



Name: Klaus Scheffler

Grant/Award: ERC Advanced Grant

Project: SpreadMRI - Ultra-Fast, Spread-Spectrum Magnetic Resonance Imaging

Amount: 2.78M€

Prof. Scheffler, could you briefly describe the focus of your project?

"SpreadMRI goes beyond the current concepts of image encoding by **exploiting a spectral spin modulation** that so far has not been utilized. It will provide spatially unique information that will then be used to disentangle parts of the object, and thus to drastically boost imaging speed.

The specific approach of SpreadMRI will lead to major changes in the hard- and software environment of current MR-scanners. It will not only provide new insight within the areas covered by the proposal, but will definitely **benefit conventional MR diagnostic** by enabling new applications with a simultaneous reduction of motion artifacts and increased patient throughput".

Name: André Martins

Grant/Award: Sofja Kovalevskaja Award by Alexander-von-Humboldt Foundation

Project: Image-Guided Modulation of Tumor Aggressiveness

Amount: 1.65M€



Dr. Martins, could you briefly describe the focus of your project?

"Most cases of malignant solid tumors cannot be treated with conventional therapies. That is why combination therapies are increasingly being used. They are more precise and personalized, but they are also more expensive and complex. Furthermore, solely locating the tumor and the dimensions by standard

imaging techniques is no longer fit for purpose (CT, MRI and PET/CT). We believe that **understanding the role of metabolism in the tumor microenvironment is essential** to predict the fate of cancer and therapy response. This 5-year project is aimed at **research on cancer metabolism and metabolic imaging**

to better understand **tumor heterogeneity**. To this end, we use non-invasive high-tech **imaging methods, machine learning and clinically translatable smart metabolic sensors**. The project will open up new venues in personalized medicine by identifying metabolic factors that impact the tumor microenvironment conferring resistance to treatment."

iFIT intramural FlexFunding

We would like to thank you for all applications submitted to the 2019 (24) and 2020 (20) open calls for intramural iFIT FlexFunding. Each application was reviewed in accordance with the guidelines from the DFG. In 2019, **15 applications** were approved, **17** in 2020.



2019 iFIT FlexFunding – supported projects, applicants & related areas

● *Area A | FIMT – Functionally Instructed Molecular Therapies*

- Computational Cancer Epigenetics and multiomics data integration for rapid validation of experimental hypotheses – **Sven Nahsen**
- Development of novel Inhibitors of ATM-Kinase and their evaluation in combination with RPA3 inhibitors in anti-tumor therapies – **Stefan Laufer, Michael Forster**
- Label-free Raman spectroscopy-based monitoring of anti-cancer drug uptake in colorectal cancer organoids for patient-individualized optimization of treatment – **Matthias Schwab, Eva Brauchle**
- Mechanisms and Therapeutic targeting of HIF2a-driven tumor metastases and immune evasion – **Nikita Popov, Omelyan Trompak**
- Pharmacological induction of lipotoxicity for the treatment of Solid Tumours – **Nikita Popov, Daniel Dauch**
- PPI inhibitors targeting the replication protein A (RPA) as a promising new therapy option against therapy resistant solid tumors – **Matthias Gehringer**

● *Area B | ImmT – Immunotherapy*

- Development and evaluation of a multicolor flow cytometry panel for the determination of minimal residual disease in patients with breast cancer – **Stella Autenrieth**
- Establishment of protocols for TCR gene sequencing and production of TCR transgenic T cells with specificities for tumor-associated antigens – **Rupert Handgretinger, Peter Lang, Armin Rabsteyn**

● *Area C | MFMI – Molecular and Functional Multiparametric Imaging*

- Imaging of PARP expression and activity as a marker for replicative stress – **Andreas Maurer**
- In vivo imaging of T cell infiltrates in tumors – **Johannes Schwenck**
- Purchase of Nanostring nCounter Sprint Profiler as core instrument – **Leticia Quintanilla-Martinez de Fend, Falko Fend**

● *FIMT/ImmT – Functionally Instructed Molecular Therapies & Immunotherapy*

- HLA ligand profiles and cancer-specific alterations associated with colorectal cancer subtypes and metastasis – **Alfred Königsrainer, Markus Löffler**
- In vivo functional genetic screening for therapeutic targets to enhance intratumoral infiltration and function of CAR-T cells – **Patrick Schlegel, Lars Zender**
- Senescence-associated antigens for the development of novel combinatorial cancer therapies – **Juliane Walz, Lars Zender**

● *ImmT/MFMI – Immunotherapy & Molecular and Functional Multiparametric Imaging*

- Regulation of T cell-mediated cytotoxicity by Sly1 – **Stephan Hailfinger, Bettina Weigel**

2020 iFIT FlexFunding – supported projects, applicants & related areas

- **Area A | FIMT – Functionally Instructed Molecular Therapies**
 - Development of scientific covalent inhibitors of Protein kinase CHK2 for targeted anti-tumor therapy – **Matthias Gehringer**
 - Dissecting resistance mechanisms to nuclear transport directed therapy – **Stefan Singer**
 - Induced lipotoxicity for the treatment of cancer – **Stefan Laufer, Daniel Dauch, Thales Kronenberger**
 - Examining the role of let-7 miRNA transfer through exosomes in the metastatic niche – **Nisar Malek, Pavlos Missios**
 - Intercellular communication via tunneling nanotubules (TNTs) within the tumor microenvironment of HCC – **Alfred Nordheim, Tassula Proikas-Cezanne**
 - Optimized CAR-iNKs to treat relapse following allogeneic hematopoietic cell transplantation – **Corinna Schneidawind, Dominik Schneidawind**
 - Translational control of stress response in targeted therapy resistance of malignant melanoma – **Birgit Schitteck**
- **Area B | ImmT – Immunotherapy**
 - cGAS to caspase-5 signaling in senescence - molecular steps” – **Alexander Weber**
 - Development of immunopeptidome-based biomarkers for immune checkpoint-inhibitor therapy – **Juliane Walz**
 - Development of a novel bispecific CD28 costimulator to reinforce T cell-based cancer treatment – **Helmut Salih, Gundram Jung**
 - Genomic and transcriptomic evolution of cutaneous melanoma - from primary tumor to metastasis – **Martin Röcken, Tobias Sinnberg, Heike Niessner, Teresa Amaral**
 - SASP tuning via innate pathways for efficient immune clearance and therapy – **Alexander Weber, Ana Tapia Abéllan**
- **Area C | MFMI – Molecular and Functional Multiparametric Imaging**
 - Image-guided tumor therapy with innovative quantitative Deuterium Metabolic MR Imaging – **Klaus Scheffler, André Martins**
 - Metabolic multiscale and hybrid imaging to predict therapy response in tumor senescence – **Bettina Weigelin, André Martins**
 - Quantitative MRI for non-invasive hypoxia mapping to guide tumor therapy – **Fritz Schick, Andreas Schmid**
- **ImmT/MFMI – Immunotherapy & Molecular and Functional Multiparametric Imaging**
 - Evaluation of [¹⁸F]-PSMA-1007-PET/CT for prediction and assessment of response upon treatment of squamous cell lung carcinoma with the proprietary optimized PSMAxCD3 bispecific antibody CC-1 – **Helmut Salih, Christian la Fougère**
- **FIMT/ImmT/MFMI – Functionally Instructed Molecular Therapies & Immunotherapy & Molecular and Functional Multiparametric Imaging**
 - Oncolytic viruses promote immune checkpoint inhibitors and TAA-Th1 cell based immune therapies – **Manfred Kneiling, Ulrich Lauer**

iFIT People

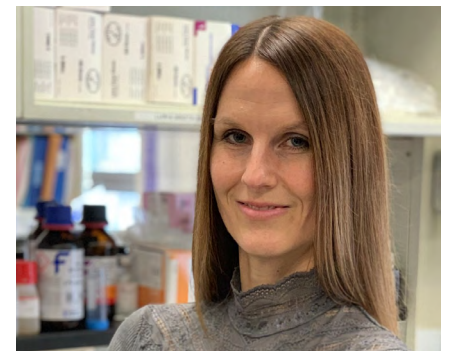
New Members

We would like to welcome **Judith Feucht** and **Josef Leibold** who have recently joined our iFIT Cluster of Excellence within the areas of "Immunotherapy", area B (Judith Feucht) and "Functionally Instructed Molecular Therapies", area A (Josef Leibold).

Judith Feucht studied **medicine here in Tübingen** and began working in the field of immunotherapy as a medical student. After completing the doctorate in 2011, she worked as a physician scientist at University Children's Hospital in Tübingen under direction of Prof. Rupert Handgretinger. In 2015, she joined the research team of Prof. Michel Sadelain - a pioneer in Chimeric Antigen Receptor (CAR) T cells - at the **Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York (USA)**. Her translational research focuses on **developing novel CAR designs to augment antitumor activity and**

on extending the application of CAR T cells beyond hematological malignancies by using innovative gene editing strategies, mechanistic studies in different mouse models and combined treatment strategies. She aims to advance immunotherapeutic approaches with CAR T cells through optimized T cell activation, improved recognition of target cells and alterations of the immunosuppressive tumor microenvironment. Her research has been supported by the Care-For-Rare Foundation, the DFG and was recently awarded with an ERC Starting Grant.

Judith Feucht



Judith Feucht

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For her scientific achievements, she also received the Erna Brunner Prize and the Kind-Philipp Prize.

Josef Leibold



Josef Leibold

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Josef Leibold has recently joined our Cluster as a Junior Professor for Functional Immunogenomics. He has studied **medicine in Tübingen** and his doctoral thesis focused on identifying novel markers for the isolation of antigen-specific T cells to treat viral infections in

immunosuppressed patients post stem cell transplantation. During his work as a physician scientist in the Department of Internal Medicine at the University Hospital Tübingen under direction of Prof. Malek, he joined the research group of Prof. Lars Zender and worked on the identification of novel therapeutic options for liver cancer. In 2015, he moved to **New York (USA) to join the laboratory of Prof. Scott Lowe at the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center** as a postdoctoral fellow. Here, his research focused on the **interplay between genetically defined tumors and their immune microenvironment**. His work shows that targeting genetic drivers of lung cancer cells induces senescence in the tumor cells and

re-sensitize them to immune-mediated clearance by natural killer (NK) cells. This strategy could also be harnessed in an independent study, in which he was involved in the development of Chimeric Antigen Receptor (CAR) T cells that recognize and clear senescent lung cancer cells. Finally, by using newly developed mouse models his work led to the identification of an actionable role of the WNT signaling pathway in prostate cancer metastasis.

For his scientific achievements, he was awarded a fellowship by the German Research Foundation (DFG) and named the Shulamit Katzman Fellow of the Alan and Sandra Gerry Metastasis and Tumor Ecosystem Center in New York.

Your iFIT Office Team

We have moved!



Eva Enzinger - Managing Director

The iFIT office location has changed but not its mission: we aim to provide you with as much support and guidance as we can. This office is dedicated to the iFIT Cluster of Excellence and happy to assist and support its members concerning all related administrative subjects such as human resources, funding and regulations.



Inês Paixão -
Assistant to the Executive Board

The iFIT Office has moved!
We are now based in the Uni-Kliniken Tal in the very same building that will soon host all new iFIT research groups:
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Welcome! New Members @ the iFIT Office

Steven Pohl has recently joined the iFIT Office as a Communication Specialist. In parallel he is also consultant for the Faculty of Medicine at Tübingen University. He has a B.A. in Communication Management from University of Osnabrück and a M.A. in Organizational Communication from University of Greifswald.

Steven gained working experience at University of Stralsund where he was in charge of the marketing concepts and social media. He is originally from Wolfsburg (Germany) and as a German-American he is looking forward to increase also the international visibility of our Cluster and the Faculty of Medicine.



Steven Pohl -
Communication Specialist



Christine Günther -
Head of Accounting & Controlling

Christine Günther has a diploma in Economics and has been working in administrative and financial matters since then. She attended large-scale research projects as a controller e.g. in companies like Daimler and EnBW. Before moving to Baden-Württemberg, Christine had studied in Leipzig and worked in Erfurt. In 2015 she joined the University

Hospital of Tübingen and started supporting the CEO of the Children's Hospital department, then the Medical Hospital department's CEO and was in the meanwhile the contact person for the IMVIII. She has officially joined iFIT in March 2020 and supports the Cluster on all financial matters, purchasing, human resources and further administration.

Former iFIT Members

With all our best wishes for their future career and thanks for the work and dedication for the iFIT Cluster of Excellence, we say good buy to:

- **Ana Garcia-Saez** - former coordinator for iFIT area A - has accepted a W3 professorship and department head position at University of Cologne (Germany)
- **Eva Brauchle** - former iFIT Associate Investigator from area A and iFIT representative for equal opportunities - has accepted a researcher position at Boehringer Ingelheim, Biberach (Germany)
- **Patrick Schlegel** - former iFIT Associate Investigator from area B - has accepted a full professorship at University of Sydney (Australia)



iFIT Events & Announcements

Upcoming Events

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL
s m t w t f s 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	s m t w t f s 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28	s m t w t f s 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	s m t w t f s 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30
MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST
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SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
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Lunch & Learn Sessions

to be held virtually at noon!

- **February 26th:** Saskia Biskup, CeGaT
- **March 26th:** Markus Löffler, IFIZ, Dept. of General, Visceral and Transplant Surgery and Dept. of Clinical Pharmacology
- **April 30th:** Christoph Trautwein, Dept. of Preclinical Imaging & Radiopharmacy
- **May 28th:** Juliane Walz, Dept. of Medicine - CCU Translational Immunology and Dr. Margarete Fischer-Bosch IKP Stuttgart, Robert Bosch Center for Tumor Diseases Stuttgart

Planned for 2021/22

date to be announced!

- 2021: iFIT Women Symposium
- Summer/Fall 2021: iFIT Retreat
- Fall 2022: iFIT International Conference

Seminar Series

to be held virtually at 17.00h!

- **June 14th:** Hideyuki Saya, Keio University, Tokio (Japan)
- **June 28th:** Stefani Spranger, MIT in Cambridge (USA)
- **November 8th:** Sarah Bohndiek, Cambridge University (UK)

We are working on...

New iFIT Website

We are looking forward to share with you the first insights on our brand-new website structure which will be integrated within the University Hospital website. Our new website will provide general information about the Cluster, the main three research areas, senior scientists and contact links. Furthermore, there will be a download section to provide access to documents, forms and other announcements as well as a news panel. Another section will deal with job offers connected with the cluster.

iFIT Bylaws

For the convenience of our members, the iFIT Office is assembling useful information within one document: **the iFIT ByLaws**. In this handbook, standard operation procedures (SOPs) are defined. The official ByLaws will be shared soon by email to all members. The defined procedures within the iFIT ByLaws are binding.

Looking Back at...

iFIT Seminars, Lunch & Learn Series

The year 2020 brought us the unexpected COVID-19 pandemic along with the new Health and Safety guidelines and restrictions that have imposed the re-organization of events and talks. Amongst others, also the **iFIT Women Symposium** formerly scheduled for March 2020 had to be postponed to 2021. Nevertheless, we had the pleasure to host our **monthly iFIT Seminar Series** and **iFIT Lunch & Learn Sessions**: state-of-the-art science and scientific methodologies were presented by national and international speakers.

Special THANKS to:

- **Thomas Reiner** from the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, New York (USA)
- **Mark Pagel** from UT MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston (USA)
- **Nabil Djouder** from the Centro Nacional de Investigaciones Oncológicas CNIO, Madrid (Spain)



In January 2020 **THOMAS REINER** presented a talk on *“Development of PARP imaging agents”* within the scope of an **iFIT Seminar**.

The **Reiner Lab** research program revolves around the development, validation and translation of novel imaging agents. One of their key focus areas is the development of a quantitative small molecule imaging platform for PARP1/2. He has presented preclinical and human data for the compounds PARPi-FL and [¹⁸F]PARPi and has explored further clinical uses.

BETTINA WEIGELIN presented her talk on *“Seeing is believing - the contribution of intravital microscopy to our understanding of tumor immunology”* within the scope of the **iFIT Lunch & Learn Session** in February 2020.

The talk summarized the basic principles of multiphoton microscopy, addressed challenges and remaining frontiers of in vivo imaging and highlighted how intravital microscopy provides mechanistic insight which can change long-held views in cell biology.



iFIT Workshops 2020

A big THANKS goes out to all participants of the **iFIT Workshops** for their flexibility to adapt to the **digital format**. The following workshops were organized in 2020 and will also be offered in 2021 - do not miss to join:

Fundamentals of Scientific Writing

Derek Victor-Handley

This workshop covers key aspects for **writing research articles** and other forms of science communication. It is led by **Derek Victor-Handley**, a freelance science writer, editor and consultant who works with corporate and academic clients to improve the **clarity of communications**. The workshop helps participants finding their voice and **refine their writing and presentation styles**, ensuring they always get their message across. So far four editions were organized, attended by 47 participants.

"This has been an absolutely enlightening course as I have never realized the importance of writing up until now. Writing is the way to communicate our scientific message, and therefore, we must do it well. All of the content in the course was relevant and I've particularly appreciated Derek's clear and concise presentations and warm delivery. He was relaxed, extremely informative, patient, and considerate. All of the lectures were engaging and easy to follow. Looking forward to the advanced course!"

Marta Vuozzo, PhD student at WSIC

Advanced Scientific Writing

Derek Victor-Handley

Great scientific communication goes **beyond dryly presenting the facts**. When the author brings their own voice and insights to their writing or presentations, they can achieve a greater connection with their audience. This workshop looks at the **intersection between science communication and voice**, helping participants to build a stronger understanding of the tools they can use to make their writing the best it can be. It also delves deeper into the **writing style** for a review article, a thesis and a medical case study. 12 participants attended the first edition.

FEEDBACK

"Derek Handley goes out of his way to explain and teach people in all stages of their career using his broad expertise in language, editing and scientific writing. The deep understanding of peer review processes and scientific writing I gained in his courses will definitely benefit me beyond my PhD"

Sophie Stotz, PhD student at WSIC

Excellence in Scientific Communication & Career Skills

Paul Charlton

This is a highly customised, individual skills **coaching program developing the habits and mindset for career success in scientific research & industry**.

It focuses on developing habits and mindset for career success by approaching topics such as **public speaking, assertive communication, time & priority management, meeting management, emotional intelligence, behavioral management & cross-cultural competency, networking & self-marketing**.

It is a year-long course, currently 12 participants are enrolled.

"The workshop provides a well-balanced mixture of tools not only for improvement of presentation skills but also for professional thinking, self-awareness and perception of others. It is a great opportunity to reflect on your own skills and discover possibilities of improvement, aided by a great coach. Even in times of restrictions and re-scheduling to online meetings, Paul still managed to make the sessions interesting and cooperative."

Armin Rabsteyn, PostDoc at University Children's Hospital