



❁ Welcome to the Summer Newsletter, FOCIS Members! ❁

We're excited to bring you the Summer Edition of our FOCIS Newsletter, a compilation of our community's latest happenings and milestones. We aim to keep you informed and celebrate the incredible work and achievements of our members.

Our recent annual meeting was a resounding success, thanks to your active participation and the invaluable insights shared. As we cherish these moments, let's also mark our calendars for the next annual meeting scheduled for 2025. Stay tuned for more details as we approach this exciting event!

In this issue, we delve into the inspiring world of our newest FOCIS FCE through an exclusive interview. Learn about their groundbreaking work and their impact on our industry. We're also thrilled to share updates from across the FCE community, illustrating the dynamic research projects underway and highlighting the achievements of our peers.

Thank you for your continued support and engagement. We hope this newsletter serves as a source of inspiration and a reminder of the difference we make together.

Wishing you a productive and enjoyable summer!

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FOCIS Announces New Board and Steering Committee Leadership



FOCIS proudly announces the 2024-2025 [Board of Directors and Steering Committee](#)!

The Board of Directors oversees the management, direction, and control of the Federation's business, policies, and affairs. The Officers and Executive Committee of the FOCIS Board of Directors include President Ignacio Anegon, MD, Nantes University; President-Elect Megan Levings, PhD, The University of British Columbia; Secretary/Treasurer William Robinson, MD, Stanford University; and Past President Megan Sykes, MD, Columbia University.

[Click here to read the full article >>](#)

2024-2025 Board of Directors & Steering Committee

FOCIS 2024 Annual Meeting Highlights

The FOCIS Annual Meeting continues to be THE meeting in translational immunology, and this year was no exception! FOCIS 2024 boasted nearly 800 attendees, over 300 abstracts, 49 speakers, 66 oral abstract presenters, three pre-meeting education courses, 12 Member Society Symposia, and 4 industry tutorial and partner programs.

Many thanks to the FOCIS 2024 Scientific Program Committee for their time and talent putting together a stellar lineup of topics and speakers!



[View the Program](#)

[Abstract Supplement](#)

Thank you FOCIS 2024 Sponsors!

We thank our [sponsors and exhibitors](#) for their incredible generosity and support of FOCIS 2024! We hope you spoke with these incredible companies in the exhibit hall, as they play a critical role in our success.

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CDI LABS



This activity was supported by an educational grant from Grifols



COPPER SPONSORS



Congratulations to the 2024 Annual Meeting Award Recipients!

Each year, FOCIS recognizes exceptional research with awards given during our annual meeting. See below some of our 2024 recipients. Congratulations on their achievements!

[Read about all our award recipients here>>](#)



C. Garrison Fathman Fellows Fund Award

Maaïke Suuring, PhD student (she/her), Marie-curie consortium INsTRuCT. *Human Tolerogenic Dendritic Cells Used in Clinic Regulate CD8+ T cell Population*



Clinical Immunology Award

Zhiliang Bai, PhD, Yale University. *Type-2 Functionality in Sustaining CAR T Cell Longevity Linked to 8-Year Leukemia Remission*

2024 Lupus Insight Prize Award Ceremony

In addition to our above winners, the Lupus Research Alliance hosted their Lupus Insight Prize during the FOCIS Annual Meeting.

The award winners were recognized for pioneering contributions to the field of car T cell therapies for lupus. Congratulations!



Marko Radic, PhD

University of Tennessee Health Science Center



Georg Schett, MD

Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg

Thank you to all the Member Society Symposia!

The Member Society Symposia at the FOCIS 2024 Annual Meeting offered a captivating deep dive into the cutting edge of immunological research. FOCIS 2024 held 12 symposia organized by FOCIS Member Societies and affiliate partner organizations.

Thank you to all who participated! [Learn more about FOCIS Member Societies here.](#)



Save the Date for FOCIS 2025!

The [FOCIS 2025 Annual Meeting](#) will be held June 24-27, 2025, at the Boston Marriott Copley Place, located in the heart of Boston's vibrant Back Bay neighborhood.

FOCIS began in May 2001 in Boston as a meeting to consolidate the field of clinical immunology as it reaches maturity and reflects the interdisciplinary nature now necessary for the investigation and treatment of immune-based diseases, asthma, immuno-oncology, acquired immunodeficiency, primary immunodeficiency, transplantation tolerance, immunodermatology, and others.



[Registration, lodging, and abstract submission will open in late October 2025.](#)

FOCIS Membership News

FOCIS is pleased to welcome three new Member Societies, bringing us up to 66 members! [Visit our directory to view all FOCIS Member Societies.](#)



[International Eosinophil Society](#)



[Italian Network for Cancer Biotherapy and Immunotherapy](#)



[International Union of Immunological Societies](#)

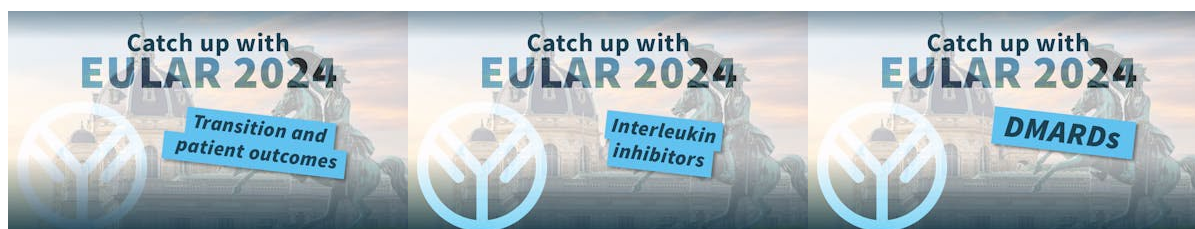
[Member Society Directory](#)

FOCIS Partner: Psoriasis and Psoriatic Arthritis Hub

Launched in 2022, the [PsOPsA Hub](#) brought to you by [Scientific Education Support \(SES\)](#) in partnership with FOCIS is an open-access online resource created in collaboration with FOCIS, dedicated to providing independent, balanced, credible, and up-to-date medical education on psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis.

Click below to view social media coverage at the European Alliance of Associations for Rheumatology (EULAR) 2024 Congress. Check out the social media coverage relating to transition, patient outcomes, and other key tweets.

- [Transition and Patient Outcomes](#)
- [Interleukin Inhibitors](#)
- [DMARDs](#)



New FOCIS Member Benefit



**RESEARCH AND EDUCATION
VIRTUAL SYMPOSIA**
SHARING YOUR RESEARCH
FOCIS

**TRANSLATIONAL
RESEARCH FROM THE
NEW CENTER FOR
HUMAN IMMUNOBIOLOGY**

ORGANIZED BY:



[Learn More & Registration Info](#)

Exciting News from the FOCIS FCE Community



Stay up to date with the latest news and updates from our FCEs!

FCE Spotlight Interview



Get to Know FCE Director Lucy Ochola, PhD, Centre for Advanced Clinical Immunology in Kenya CACIK

Take a moment to learn more about FCE Director Lucy Ochola. FOCIS interviewed Dr. Ochola about her career path, proudest achievements, and involvement with FOCIS. Read excerpts from that interview below or [listen to the full interview and read the transcript, here.](#)

How did you first get involved in immunology?

My first interaction with immunology was when I joined my PhD program. This was a joint research program between the Kenya Medical Research Institution-Wellcome Trust (KEMRI-WRTP) in Kenya and the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute in Basel, Switzerland. I was introduced to malaria, caused by the parasite *Plasmodium falciparum*. The amazing thing about this parasite is that it can actually exist and survive in red blood cells...

[Read the full article here>>](#)

Tell us about the research you're most proud of.

Over the last twenty-two years, I've been involved in research. I mentioned starting with malaria, but I moved into helminth infections (schistosomiasis), and these are basically worms that infest human beings. These parasites basically still plague the Sub-Saharan Africa and Kenya, in particular...

[Read the full article here>>](#)

[Read or Listen to the Full Interview Here](#)

FOCIS Welcomes Two New FCEs



Clinical Immunology Centre of Higher Learning and Excellence, Stellenbosch University; *South Africa* Center for Immuno-monitoring and Translational Immunology (CAITI); *Argentina*

FCE Directory

FOCIS FCE News

FOCIS FCE: King's College London

Autoantigens are present in normal gut immune interactions

Jo Spencer, Lucia Montorsi, and Michael Pitcher located a B cell subtype in the normal gut that is otherwise known for its enrichment in the autoimmune disease lupus. When in the gut, these 'DN2' B cells interact with dendritic cells co-expressing the lupus autoantigens DNASE1L3 and C1q, adjacent to bacteria. The normal functions of DN2 B cells, DNASE1L3, and C1q in the gut are likely to relate to bacterial recognition, bacterial killing and disposal of bacterial debris including DNA. Failure of such a system could result in the persistence of bacterial DNA that could drive an autoimmune response. [Read the full article here!](#)

[Interested in the Spencer Research group? Click here to read more.](#)

Article | [Open access](#) | Published: 14 May 2024

Double-negative B cells and DNASE1L3 colocalise with microbiota in gut-associated lymphoid tissue

[Lucia Montorsi](#), [Michael J. Pitcher](#), [Yuan Zhao](#), [Chiara Dionisi](#), [Alicia Demontj](#), [Thomas J. Tull](#), [Pawan Dhami](#), [Richard J. Ellis](#), [Cynthia Bishop](#), [Jeremy D. Sanderson](#), [Sahil Jain](#), [David D'Cruz](#), [Deena L. Gibbons](#), [Thomas H. Winkler](#), [Mats Remark](#), [Francesca D. Ciccarelli](#) & [Jo Spencer](#)

[Nature Communications](#) **15**, Article number: 4051 (2024) | [Cite this article](#)

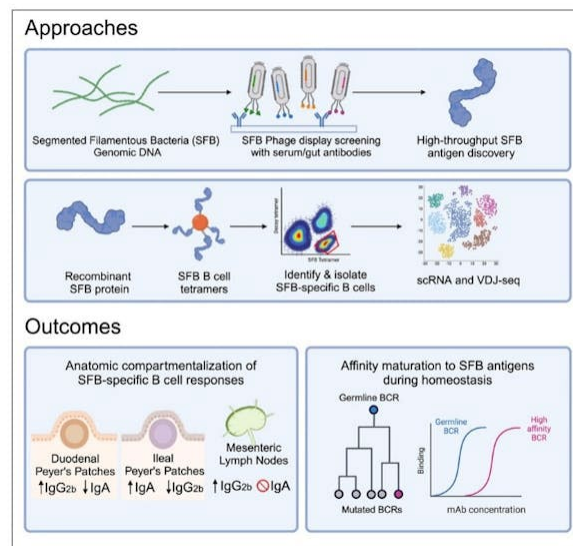
FOCIS FCE: Benaroya Research Institute

A Recent Publication From Benaroya Research Institute: “Antigen-Level Resolution of Commensal-Specific B Cell Responses Can Be Enabled by Phage Display Screening Coupled With B Cell Tetramers”

A research team led by BRI scientists Sheenam Verma, PhD, and Oliver Harrison, DPhil, combined phage display with B cell tetramers to identify commensal microbe-specific B cells. Phage display was used to identify microbial antigens targeted by serum and intestinal antibodies, while the B cell tetramers were used to study antigen-specific B cells that interact with the gastrointestinal tract microbiome. This is the first-time researchers have been able to identify antigens from bacteria in the gut microbiome and then study, at the cellular level, the B cells that regulate the gut's tolerance and interaction with these commensal bacteria. “Our approach holds promise for uncovering mechanisms underlying immune responses to dysbiosis, offering insights that could be important for the treatment of inflammatory, immune-mediated, and autoimmune disorders,” says Dr. Verma.

Check out the links below

- [View the full publication in Immunity here.](#)
- [Learn more about the Harrison Lab at Benaroya Research Institute here.](#)
- [Learn more about Sheenam Verma, PhD.](#)
- [Learn more about Oliver Harrison, DPhil.](#)



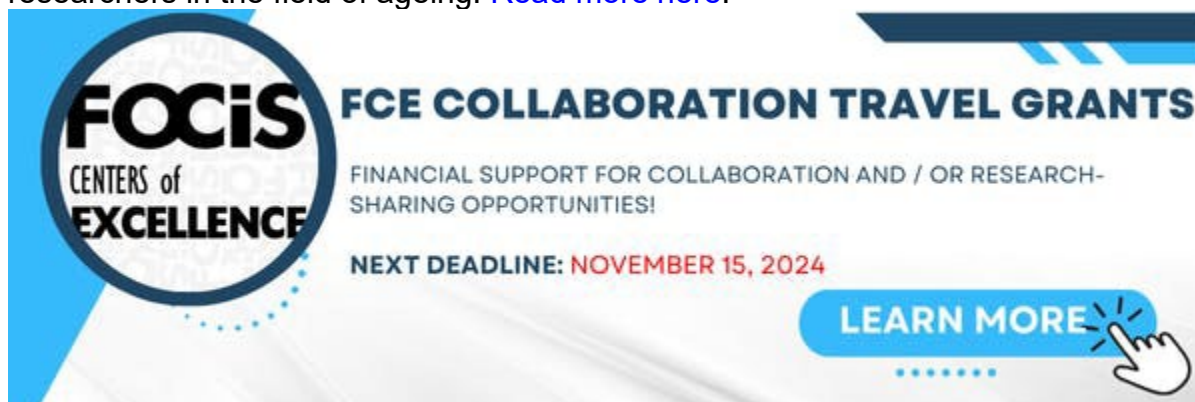
FOCIS FCE:

UCL Institute of Immunity and Transplantation

New Marie-Curie doctoral research training network “UnderstandiNg frailty tOWards a future of healthy ageiNg (UNION)” at FCE UCL Institute of Immunity and Transplantation

The FCE UCL Institute of Immunity and Transplantation (IIT) is excited to announce being part of the Marie-Curie Doctorate Network on UnderstandiNg frailty tOWards a future of healthy ageiNg (UNION), a multi-partner joint doctoral research training network with the overall aims of educating 17 Early-Stage Researchers (13 funded by EU and 4 by UKRI), advancing the current understanding of frailty, and providing innovative solutions on how a healthier ageing can be achieved. UNION is a highly prestigious Doctoral Network supported by the EuGMS and EAMA focusing for the first time on frailty as a major component of ill health in old age. UNION brings

together world leaders in a range of relevant disciplines (frailty, ageing biology and ageing medicine, inflammation, immunosenescence, immunometabolism, stem cell biology) with state-of-the art technologies including mass spectrometry metabolomics, advanced imaging, artificial intelligence, CRISPR-CAS9 libraries, SPECTRA 35-colour flow cytometry, global and conditional knockout mice. Top institutions in Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden, and UK, including the FCE UCL IIT, will enable this technological excellence to be applied from bench- to bedside through unique longitudinal human ageing and frailty cohorts, longitudinal assessment of age-related multimorbidity in animal models and innovative multidimensional frailty indices in humans. Together, this integrated activity will provide the highest quality training and research environment to future leader researchers in the field of ageing. [Read more here.](#)



FOCIS Highlights in *Science Immunology*

Science Immunology



FOCIS publishes exceptional and interesting immunological research articles in every [Science Immunology](#) issue. The free articles are published under the 'Editors' Choice' article category. Browse and read the recent Editors' Choice articles linked below.

Science Immunology is a monthly, online-only, peer-reviewed research journal designed to facilitate understanding of the immune system by showcasing innovative advances in the expanding field of immunology. It draws from studies in all organisms and model systems, including humans.

Editor's Choice Articles

VOLUME 9 | ISSUE 95 | MAY 2024

[The Benjamin Button effect on stem cells: Reversing the clock on aging immunity](#)

BY LUCIANA CONDE, CAROLINA LUCUS

Antibody-based therapy depletes myeloid-biased hematopoietic stem cells (my-HSCs) to rejuvenate the immune system and improve immune responses in aged mice.

Everlasting first impressions in B cells

BY SOYEON KIM, JONATHAN S. MALTZMAN

Initial imprinting by type 1 interferons shapes memory B cell generation in chronic viral infection.

VOLUME 9 | ISSUE 96 | JUN 2024

Hide-&-Go-PhiP-Seq: Finding an elusive predictive MS biomarker

BY ANNABEL WALLACE, KEVIN C. O'CONNOR

Whole-proteome autoantibody profiling reveals an immunological signature that predates the clinical onset of multiple sclerosis.

The aMPPE differentiation potential of TH2 cells in human allergy

BY SINDHURA SIDDAPUREDDY, STEPHANIE EISENBARTH

Single-cell studies of human tissues reveal a stemlike TH2 subset as progenitors of key effectors in chronic type 2 inflammation.

VOLUME 9 | ISSUE 97 | JUL 2024

A CHip off the old block

BY GIUSY DELLA GATTA, ASHA PILLAI

Lineage-specific effects of upstream promoters affect ST2 expression and effector function in TH1 cells.

Abstract.

Histone demethylation tones down leukemia through innate immunity

BY ANDRE MONTELEONE, GABRIEL K. GRIFFIN

Histone demethylation by PHF8 initiates innate immune signaling in acute myeloid leukemia, elucidating a novel therapeutic strategy.

VOLUME 9 | ISSUE 98 | AUG 2024

Enough already: T cell inflammation and SARS-CoV-2 virus persist in Long Covid

BY RACHAEL A. CLARK

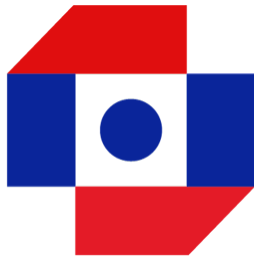
Virus and T cell inflammation persist in the tissues of patients with Long Covid.

The yeast also rises! PD-L1 dampens inflammation linked to fungal infections

BY SULTAN ALSALEM, SHIV PILLAI

Programmed death-ligand 1 interacts with fungal ribosomal Rpl20b in phagosomes and induces interleukin-10 secretion.

FOCIS Upcoming Community Events



IL-2 2024
PARIS

The Promise of Interleukin-2 Therapy

Wednesday, September 4, 2024 – Saturday, September 7, 2024
International Conference Center at Sorbonne University

[Click here to learn more.](#)



TTS2024 **ISTANBUL TURKEY**
September 22-25

The 30th International Congress of The Transplantation Society

Sunday, September 22, 2024 – Wednesday, September 25, 2024
The Istanbul Congress Center (ICC), Istanbul, Turkey.

[Click here to learn more.](#)



Inserm
La science pour la santé
From science to health



2nd Symposium of FOCIS Center of Excellence PAN'THER

Autoimmunity and cellular immunotherapy of cancer

Autoimmunity and cellular immunotherapy of cancer

Thursday, September 26, 2024 - Bâtiment Stewart – UFR Santé – Rouen, France

[Click here to learn more.](#)



Breakthrough T1D Funding Opportunity: RFA: Accelerating clinical trials evaluating disease-modifying therapies for T1D

Deadline: Thursday, October 10, 2024

View the RFA document [here](https://www.breakthrought1d.org/explore-research/funding-opportunities/) or learn more here:

<https://www.breakthrought1d.org/explore-research/funding-opportunities/>.



21st Biennial Meeting of the European Society for Immunodeficiencies

Wednesday, October 16, 2024 – Saturday, October 19, 2024

Marseille Chanot Exhibition and Convention Centre, Marseille, France

[Click here to learn more.](#)



The Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer's 39th Annual Meeting and Pre-Conference Programs (SITC 2024)

Wednesday, November 6 – Sunday, November 10, 2024

Houston, Texas or Virtually

Advance the science and discover the latest breakthroughs while networking with international leaders at SITC 2024.

- **Keynote Presentation**

“Origin of Differentiation of Stem-like CD8 T cells in Chronic Infection and Cancer”

Rafi Ahmed, PhD, FAIO – Emory University School of Medicine

- **Richard V. Smalley Memorial Award & Lectureship**

“The Era of Cancer Vaccines Has Arrived”

Elizabeth M. Jaffee, MD, FAIO, FAACR, FACP, FAAAS – Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center, Johns Hopkins University

Learn more: <https://www.sitcancer.org/2024/home>



[T Cells in the Brain 2025 \(TCB2025\)](#)

Thursday, January 9 - Friday, January 10, 2025
Roy and Diana Vagelos Education Center, New York, USA

[Click here to learn more.](#)



19th International Congress of Immunology
[August 17-22, 2025 | Vienna Austria](#)

supported by  Austrian Society for
Allergy and Immunology

[IUIS 2025 - 19th International Congress of Immunology](#)

Sunday, August 17 - Friday, August 22, 2025
Vienna, Austria

[Click here to learn more.](#)

FOCIS Related Events

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