ASSCR 2026 Annual Meeting

DAY 1 — 16. 10. 2026

MORNING

08:30
Registration
Front desk open

10:00
Opening Remarks
Welcome by: Dirk STRUNK

10:05 - 11:20 (75 min)
Session 1
Topic: NEURAL STEM CELLS
Chairs: Christopher ESK, Nicole AMBERG
Main: Christopher ESK (UIBK): "Neural progenitors adjust their cell cycle and intercellular communication to ensure normal brain development" **30'**
Talk 2: Lisa GABLER-PAMER (MUW): "Hijacked developmental crosstalk: cell-cell communication networks in SHH-Medulloplastoma" **15'**
Talk 3: Lidija MILOJKOVIC (IMBA): "Inhibition of PPERK1/2 nuclear function is crucial for the maintenance of adult neural stem cell quiescence" **15'**
Talk 4: Ahmad SALTI (JKU Linz): "Multi-omic profiling of PRPF31-mutated retinal organoids reveals early gliosis and photoreceptor degeneration" **15'**

11:30 - 12:30
Keynote Lecture 1
Speaker: Ana MARTIN-VILLALBA (DKFZ)
Title: "Decoding Stemness: How the methylome defines neural stem cell identity"

12:30 - 14:00 (90 min)
Lunch
Networking

13:00 - 13:45 (45 min)
General Assembly & Elections
Chaired by: Dirk STRUNK

AFTERNOON

14:00 - 15:15 (75 min)
Session 2
Topic: STEM CELL FATE
Chairs: Georg BUSSLINGER, Martin LEEB
Main: Helmuth GEHART (ETH Zürich): "Mapping metastatic co-evolution – malignant plasticity in tumor and TME" **30'**
Talk 2: Michael OBERHUEMER (MPL): "Mapping genetic dependencies in human naive pluripotency" **15'**
Talk 3: Mattia PITASI (MPL): "Mapping the synergism network in the exit from naive pluripotency" **15'**
Talk 4: Martin WOLF (PMU): "Heparin augments extracellular vesicle yield by inhibiting reuptake in donor cells during cell propagation" **15'**

15:15 - 15:45
Coffee Break
Networking

15:45 - 17:00 (75 min)
Session 3
Topic: PHENOTYPE & DIFFERENTIATION
Chairs: Kristina STAPORNWONGKUL, Dirk STRUNK
Main: Boryana PETROVA (MUW): "Quantifying Metabolic Phenotypes from Cells to Complex Systems" **45'**
Talk 2: Sigmar STRICKER (KLU): "A novel aorta-associated developmental source of brown adipose tissue" **15'**
Talk 3: Sarah HOCHMANN (PMU): "Cell origin shapes skeletal stem cell potential" **15'**

17:00 - 18:00 (60 min)
Poster Viewing
Session open for discussion

18:00 - 22:00
Magic Social Event
Dinner / Networking reception

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DAY 2 — 17. 10. 2026

MORNING

09:00
🥐 **Light Breakfast**

09:30 - 10:15 (45 min)
🗣️ **Round Table**
Topic: THE FUTURE OF STEM CELL RESEARCH
Moderator: Nicole AMBERG
Established (x3): Elly TANAKA, Jürgen KNOBLICH, Markus HENGSTSCHLÄGER
Young experts (x3): Kristina STAPORNWONGKUL, Anne MILLER, Christopher ESK
Students (x3): Katharina WIENER, +2 tbd

10:15 - 10:45
☕ **Coffee Break**
Networking

10:45 - 11:45
🎤 **Keynote Lecture 2**
Speaker: WOLFRAM-HUBERTUS ZIMMERMANN
Title: "Tissue engineered heart repair from bench to bedside"

12:30 - 13:30
🍽️ **Lunch Break**
Networking

AFTERNOON

13:30 - 15:00 (90 min)
🔭 **Session 4**
Topic: DATA SCIENCE
Chairs: Xinyi ZHANG, Christoph BOCK
Main: Xinyi ZHANG (AITHYRA): tbd!
30'
Talk 2: Luis MONTANO (MUW): "Directing stem cell
15' differentiation by chromatin state approximation"
Talk 3: Rodolphe POUPARDIN (PMU): EV-Zone: AI-powered
15' open tools for EV-checklist transparent reporting and literature mining in extracellular vesicle research"
Talk 4: Itxasne ANTUNEZ (PMU): "Single-cell profiling
15' identifies inflammatory kinase drivers of an osteoathritis-like chrondrocyte phenotype"

15:00 - 16:00 (60 min)
🔭 **Session 5**
Topic: STEM CELLS & CANCER
Chairs: Florian HALBRITTER, Sasha MENDJAN
Main: Florian HALBRITTER (CCRI): "Stem cell models for
30' pediatric cancers"
Talk 2: Manon RESSAIRE (CCRI): "3D modelling of
15' fusion-driven sarcomagenesis"
Talk 3: Martha ZYLKA (CCRI): "Patient-derived organoid
15' model of lung colonization reveals epithelial niche reprogramming by infiltrating bone sarcoma cells"

16:00 - 16:30
🏆 **Poster Awards & Farewell**
Closing remarks by: Dirk Strunk

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POSTERS

BRAIN

1. Nicole AMBERG (MUW): "Human brainstem organoids with pontine and medullary identity recapitulate the tempo and cell-type diversity of brainstem development in vitro"
2. Sara CAMPAGNOL (UIBK): "Stem cell-based disease modeling of calcium channelopathies using iPSC-derived 2D and 3D neural models"
3. Osvaldo A. MIRANDA ROMERO (ISTA): "Temporal uncoupling of radial glia lineage progression in cortical organoids"
4. Fabrizia PIPICELLI (ISTA): "Role of cell lineage in generating cell-type diversity in the developing neocortex"
5. Irene VARELA-MARTINEZ (ISTA): "Early fate diversification of radial glial progenitors during corticogenesis"
6. Ana VILLALBA REQUENA (ISTA): "Rptor/m TORC1 globally prevents cortical microcephaly and cell-autonomously promotes postnatal neuron survival in a cell type"

CANCER

1. Hana BERNHARDOVA (CCRI): "When fusion oncogenes meet the right cell: defining the developmental origins of Ewing sarcoma"
2. Lara DRAGOSLAVIC (CCRI): "Engineering cell-type-specific reporters for the human sympathoadrenal lineage"
3. Thomas ECKHARDT (CCRI): "Modelling Neuroblastoma initiation in human sympathoadrenal lineage organoids"
4. Lea ERJAVC (MUW): "NTRK3 as a mediator of neuronal differentiation in sonic hedgehog pathway-activated Medulloblastoma"
5. Johanna HALBERTSCHLAGER (CCRI): "Patient-derived iPSCs as an in vitro model for Wilms Tumor predisposition"
6. Timur KHUSYAINOV (MUW): "HPSC-derived skin organoids as a human model of melanoma progression"
7. Beate KRATSCHMANN (CCRI): "Dissecting pediatric cancer initiation mechanisms driven by germline mutations"
8. Katharina WIENER (CCRI): "Kidney organoid modelling of Wilms Tumor development"

STROMAL CELLS

1. Isabella FISCHER (IMC Krems): "Investigating the impact of TLR10 overexpression in ASC/TER1 cells under 2D and 3D conditions"
2. Vasileios GERAKOPOULOS (IMBA): "Mechanisms of early human limb development"
3. Michelle HUTH (MPL): "Gene cooperativity in the exit from naive pluripotency"
4. Christina KARNER (MUG): "Patient-matched tumour and iPSC models bridge anti-cancer efficacy and individual toxicity assessment"
5. Katarina LAZIC (PMU): "Maintenance of sirolimus levels after allogeneic stem cell transplantation in adults: a retrospective analysis of influencing factors"
6. Marjolein VAN WOLFSWINKEL (IMBA): "PEA15-mediated PPERK1/2 nuclear exclusion: a potential mechanism for maintaining neural stem cell quiescence"
7. Moritz BECKER (MPL): "A genome-wide CRISPR screen identifies regulators of human naive-to-formative pluripotency progression"