

REPORTS

r1 **RESPImmun PhD Program Congress 2023**



Intrinsic Activity is an online, open-access publication medium published by the Austrian Pharmacological Society (APHAR). The Journal welcomes contributions in the fields of Pharmacology, Pharmacotherapy and other fields in biomedicine.

Contributions may be of type meeting abstracts, research articles, position papers, commentaries or similar. For submission instructions and all other information regarding publication in the journal visit: www.IntrinsicActivity.org

Correspondence

Intrinsic Activity

c/o Otto Loewi Research Centre (Chair of Pharmacology)
Medical University of Graz
Universitätsplatz 4
8010 Graz, Austria
E-mail: info@intrinsicactivity.org
Website: www.IntrinsicActivity.org
ISSN: 2309-8503

Austrian Pharmacological Society

c/o Institute of Pharmacology
Centre for Physiology and Pharmacology
Medical University of Vienna
Währinger Straße 13a
1090 Wien, Austria
E-mail: office@aphar.at

Copyright, open access and permission to use

Articles are published under a Creative Commons license (Creative Commons, attribution, non-commercial), that allows reuse subject only to the use being non-commercial and the article being fully attributed.

The Publisher and Austrian Pharmacological Society retain the license that allows publishing of the articles in *Intrinsic Activity*, any derivative product or any other *Intrinsic Activity* product (present or future) and allows sub-licensing such rights and exploit all subsidiary rights.

Authors retain the license to use their articles for their own non-commercial purposes, specifically:

- Posting a pdf of their own article on their own personal or institutional website for which no charge for access is made.
- Making a reasonable number of copies for personal or non-commercial professional use. This includes the contributors' own teaching activities.
- Republishing part or all of the article in a book or publication edited by the author (except for multiple publications in the same book or publication).
- Using individual figures or tables in other publications published by a third party. Extracts of text other than individual phrases or sentences may also be used provided that these are identified as quotations along with giving the appropriate reference to the original publication.
- Using the article in a course pack or compilation (whether paper or electronic) in the author's institution. This does not apply if a commercial charge is made for the compilation or course.

Third parties (other than the Publisher, Austrian Pharmacological Society, or authors) may download, print or store articles published in the journal for their private or professional, non-commercial use. The use of articles published in the journal, or any artwork contained therein, for educational, non-commercial purposes is granted provided that the appropriate reference to the journal and original article is given.

Any commercial use of articles published in *Intrinsic Activity* requires the permission of the Publisher.

Disclaimer

The Publisher, the Austrian Pharmacological Society and Editor(s) cannot be held responsible for errors or any consequences arising from the use of information contained in this journal. The views and opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Publisher, Austrian Pharmacological Society or Editor(s). Neither does the publication of advertisements constitute any endorsement by the Publisher, Austrian Pharmacological Society or Editor(s) of the products advertised.

Intrinsic Activity, 2023; **11**(1)

CONGRESS REPORTS

r1 **RESPImmun PhD Program Congress 2023**

10 September 2023, Graz

Domenic Hofmann

published online: 11 December 2023

doi:[10.25006/IA.11.1-r1](https://doi.org/10.25006/IA.11.1-r1)



CONGRESS REPORT



RESPImmun PhD Program Congress 2023

10 October 2023, Graz

Domenic HOFMANN*

Section of Physiology and Pathophysiology, Otto Loewi Research Centre, Medical University of Graz, Austria

The second annual meeting of the PhD programme Immune Modulation in Respiratory Diseases *RESPImmun* [1] took place in the Aula of the MedCampus of the Medical University of Graz.

The opening and guest speakers

The congress was opened by Elke Heinrichs who welcomed all participants on behalf of Elke Kahr, the Mayor of Graz. The opening was completed by the programme speakers Grażyna Kwapiszewska and Ákos Heinemann. Grażyna Kwapiszewska praised the efforts of all *RESPImmun* members and especially also the scientific progress that has been made by the PhD students in the first two years since the start of the programme. Ákos Heinemann then introduced the guest speakers for the retreat. Norbert F. Voelkel from Virginia Commonwealth University, a leading researcher in pulmonary and vascular physiology and pathophysiology, and Bethany Moore, Chair of the Department of Microbiology and Immunology at the University of Michigan and an expert in the pathogenesis of various forms of pulmonary fibrosis, had travelled to Graz from the USA.

Wilfried Ellmeier joined from the Medical University of Vienna. He is an expert in epigenetic and transcriptional control mechanisms that regulate T-cell development and T-cell-mediated immunity. The list of guest speakers was completed by Hana Cernecka, an expert in drug development and life sciences with a strong interest in building teams across multiple therapeutic areas and modalities. She is currently the vice president Head of Innovate Inflammation & Immunology at biotech company Evotec in Hamburg, Germany.

Figure 1: Grażyna Kwapiszewska, Ákos Heinemann and guest speakers Wilfried Ellmeier, Bethany Moore, Norbert F. Voelkel and Hanna Cernecka.



Figure 2: The lunch break was opened by vice rector Birgit Hochenegger-Stoier from the Medical University of Graz.



The morning sessions

The opening session of the retreat was inaugurated by student speakers Gabriela Wojcik and Pamela Waked. In this session, the youngest *RESPImmun* students, namely Dušan Jeremić, Svetlana Pahernik, and Nemanja Radić, presented their doctoral projects.

The rest of the congress was then divided into four thematic sessions and each panel was introduced by one of the guest speakers.

Norbert Voelkel spoke about the origins of COPD research and its prospects. He was followed by postgraduate students Barsha Nayak, Alankrita Rani and Oleh Myronenko who presented the current state of their research in COPD.

The second panel was opened by Bethany Moore, who gave a presentation on the latest findings in the field of pulmonary fibrosis. Following her presentation, Gabriela Wojcik, Huyen Phan Thi Than, Pamela Waked and Rishi Rajesh gave insights into their latest findings.

Panel discussions about public engagement in science

After lunch, a panel discussion was held regarding the significance of public involvement in science. Medical University of Graz scientists Valentina Biasin and Simone Tischler conversed with patient advocate Claas Röhl (NF Kinder) about the advantages of including patients in fundamental research initiatives. The conclusion drawn was that science becomes more accessible when patients are directly involved in research projects. In addition, it was also argued that open innovation leads to scientific inquiries that are better aligned with the genuine requirements of patients. The round table was moderated by Geraldine Zenz from the Medical University of Graz.

*E-mail for correspondence: domenic.hofmann@medunigraz.at

Figure 3: Tejus Shinde presenting his work.



Best presentation awards

During the congress, the invited guest speakers were asked to vote for the three best presenters.

We would like to congratulate Bernhard Reiter (1st place) as well as Alankrita Rani and Rishi Rajesh (ex-aequo 2nd) to their great presentation!

Bernhard Reiter presented his project on "Immunoprofiling of secondary pulmonary hypertension in chronic lung diseases", Alankrita Rani gave an insight into her work on "Investigating anti-inflammatory properties of novel apolipoprotein mimetics in lung diseases" and Rishi Rajesh described his project on "Role of succinate in pulmonary fibrosis".

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all sponsors of this event: AstraZeneca, Stadt Graz and Land Steiermark.

Photo credits: Domenic Hofmann.

The afternoon sessions

After a coffee break, Hana Cernecka introduced the next panel. Her presentation focused on her own experience as a PhD graduate moving from academia to industry.

Following the presentation, Tejus Shinde, Sally Connolly, Katharina Schindlmaier, and Nejra Cosic shared their insights on their own PhD projects.

The congress concluded with a panel discussion on immunoregulatory responses. Wilfried Ellmeier gave a talk on recent developments in the field of immunology, followed by PhD students Ayu Syarif, Bernhard Reiter and Olaya Esparta Gonzalez presenting their PhD projects.

Reference

1. **The Doctoral Programme "Immune Modulation in Respiratory Diseases" (RESPImmun).**
<https://www.respimmun.at/> (last accessed: 06/12/2023)



Figure 4: The RESPImmun group.



Author Index

Hofmann, Domenic ... r1



INTRINSIC / ACTIVITY

WWW.INTRINSICACTIVITY.ORG

*AN ONLINE
OPEN-ACCESS
PUBLICATION
OF
THE AUSTRIAN
PHARMACOLOGICAL
SOCIETY (APHAR)*



