Junge GfV

NEWSLETTER

Issue 1/22

Highlights

Upcoming events

29.3.-30.3.2022
ACHIEVE Academy, Munich

30.3.-2.4.2022
Annual Meeting of the Society of Virology, Munich

02.05.2022
jGfV virology lecture series - HEV

13.-14.5.2022
Clinical Virology Workshop, Würzburg

News

Dear fellows,

starting with this newsletter, we introduce the "How to.." section that will be supported by a professional coach in the future and will provide useful tips, tricks and recommendations for different aspects in science. Further, we highlight new initiatives (virtual virology lectures series, paper awards and lab rotation scholarships) the jGfV is implementing to support / acknowledge your research (see page 2 & 3).
Last but not least, we want to thank all the contributors of this issue.

Your newsletter team

Preface

We proudly present new jGfV initiatives from which you will surely benefit:

❖ jGfV's lecture series

The jGfV is starting a virtual virology lecture series, which will cover both molecular/cellular as well as clinical aspects of a specific virus. Our first lecture will be kicked off with Hepatitis E viruses.

May: **Hepatitis E** - *Prof. Dr. Eike Steinmann, Dr. Patrick Behrendt*
June: **Chikungunya** - *Prof. Dr. Christine Goffinet, Dr. Thomas Jänisch*
September: **Adenoviruses** - *Prof. Dr. Thomas Dobner, PD Dr. Albert Heim*

❖ jGfV's Best Season Paper award

With the support of the GfV, we implement the best season paper award. The best 3 papers of Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter will be awarded with 100 €. The following criteria apply:

1. The applicant must be a GfV member
2. The applicant is (shared) first author on the paper describing primary research
3. The paper has been accepted less than 6* months before the application deadline *(*may be adjusted)*
4. The paper has not been used in a previous application
5. Limit for application: max. 3 years after finishing PhD or 5 years after approbation (up to extra 18 months per child of taken parental leave are allowed) at the application deadline
6. Required is an active application with cover letter; copy of PhD certificate or approbation certificate if applicable; proof of parental leave times if applicable; and 1 publication; all as one merged PDF to jGfV@G-f-V.org
7. Deadlines: **1.3.2022** / 1.6.2022 / 1.9.2022 / 1.12.2022

❖ jGfV's lab rotation scholarships

With the support of the GfV, we also implement lab rotation scholarships. We suppport national and international lab rotations with 500 € and 1000 €, respectively. The following criteria apply:

1. The applicant must be a GfV member
2. The lab rotation should serve for the development of skills in the field of virology (and associated disciplines) and expose the applicant to different scientific environments; minimum duration 2 weeks
3. The applicants must be at least Master students or after the "Physikum"
4. Limit for application: max. 3 years after finishing PhD or 5 years after approbation (up to extra 18 months per child of taken parental leave are allowed) at the application deadline
5. Required is an active application including motivation letter (outlining the expected merit of the lab rotation for the applicant) & CV; letter of support from PI clearly stating that/explaining why there are no other possibilities for funding the lab rotation (especially graduate school programs open to the applicant), and stating that no other applications (e.g. DAAD, BiF, FEMS) are currently ongoing - if this is not clearly stated, applications can be returned one time to the applicant to update the letter of support; letter of acceptance from receiving host institute; all as one PDF file to jGfV@G-f-V.org
6. Rejected applications cannot be resubmitted, unless they were rejected solely because the letter of support did not provide a clear statement/explanation regarding other funding possibilities
7. Applicants can only be accepted for scholarship once per lifetime
8. Deadlines: **15.4.2022** / 15.10.2022

Awardees of both the best season papers and the lab rotation scholarship will be announced by the jGfV in the newsletter / on the homepage / at the annual meeting. A brief report of the lab rotations will be published in the jGfV newsletter.

❖ jGfV newsletter „How to…“section

With our new section „How to...“ we want to give you further support. We are happy that Dr. Silke Oehrlein-Karpi (https://www.kte-coaching.de/node/15) will answer your questions starting with the next issue. If you have questions regarding:

1. resilience / well-being
2. networking (especially now online)
3. supervision of students,

please email them asap to jGfV@G-f-V.org. We will collect and forward them to her. They will be answered in the upcoming issues. Thus, we highly encourage you to benefit from it!

Reports

5th GfV Workshop "SARS-CoV2"

Sriram Kumar, University Hospital Münster

The 5th GfV SARS-CoV2 workshop entitled 'SARS-CoV-2: Where are we now?' was organized on the 5th February 2022 online, dedicated to discuss the ongoing omicron experience. Prof. Ralf Bartenschlager from the University Hospital Heidelberg delivered the welcome note as the current President of the GfV Executive Board, and handed the forum to Jun. Prof. Stephanie Pfänder from the Ruhr University Bochum for moderating the first session.

The first talk by Prof. Volker Thiel from the University of Bern, Switzerland, entitled 'SARS-CoV-2: From Genotype to Phenotype' enlightened the attendees on their recent research that the S(D614G) variant has increased binding to human ACE2, increased replication in primary human airway epithelial cultures, as well as in a human ACE2 knock-in mouse model, and markedly increased replication and transmission in hamster and ferret models of SARS-CoV-2 infection. The talk provided a scientific explanation for the global prevalence of this variant among the currently-circulating SARS-CoV-2 strains, leading to intriguing questions on the further applications of the experimental models to investigate protease-resistant mutations and polymerase-resistant variants.

Having worked on RNA viruses and their molecular interaction with the innate antiviral defense systems for many years, Dr. Marco Binder from the German Cancer Research Center, Heidelberg delivered the second talk, discussing the current literature as well as their recent results on how SARS-COV2 strongly suppresses IFN response, and that a slight priming (e.g. through an inflammatory environment) tips the balance towards the host cell, thereby making the virus more sensitive to produced-IFNs. Dr. Binder also highlighted how the imbalance between SARS-CoV2 infection vs cell-intrinsic antiviral defense determines coarse of infection and progression of disease.

With the first two talks revolving around virus-fitness and antiviral defence, the third talk on 'Pathological T cell responses in severe COVID-19' by Prof. Birgit Sawitzki from the Berlin Institute of Health and Charité University Medicine, added an immunology perspective. Although severe COVID-19 is associated with dysfunctional immune response and unrestrained immunopathology, it still remains unknown whether T cells contribute to such disease pathologies. Dr. Sawitzki discussed her recent research that combined single-cell transcriptomics and single-cell proteomics alongside mechanistic studies, leading to the identification of highly activated CD16+ T cells with increased cytotoxic functions in severe COVID-19, supporting a pathological role of exacerbated cytotoxicity and complement activation in severe COVID-19.

Heading the Medical Virology Division at Stellenbosch University, South Africa, and coordinating the Network For Genomic Surveillance In South Africa (NGS-SA), Dr. Wolfgang Preiser shared the South African Omicron experience in the last talk of the first session, highlighting how improved surveillance strategies and increased sequencing efforts have led to the timely identification of the omicron variant, and how SA fortunately is well-equipped to continue this process: A central repository for management of data from NGS-SA public sector laboratories, close collaboration with private laboratories, the Provincial Health Data Centre of the Western Cape Province, and state-of-the-art modelling expertise.

After a short break, the workshop resumed with its second session, moderated by PD Dr. Thomas Hoenen from Friedrich-Loeffler-Institute, Greifswald. In line with the increasing concerns over the neutralization potency of vaccines against omicron variant, Dr. Marek Widera from the University Hospital Frankfurt delivered his first talk on the declining SARS-CoV-2 omicron neutralization efficacy after booster vaccination, highlighting that the neutralization efficiency of vaccine sera against omicron is 37x reduced in contrast to the delta variant, although high antibody titers still allow neutralization of omicron.

He added that T cell-mediated immunity could therefore represent an essential barrier to prevent progression to severe COVID-19 upon omicron infection.

These scientific talks were followed by a clinical talk on COVID-19 therapy by Prof. Stefan Kluge from the University Hospital Hamburg-Eppendorf, highlighting the approved options and current recommendations for the drug therapy for COVID19 in outpatient setting, as well as those for inpatient treatment, touching on the important elements of oxygenation, thrombosis, and dexamethasone administration as decisive elements for treating severe COVID-19 cases.

Contact tracing and mathematical modeling are instrumental and indispensable in characterizing the outbreak epidemiology of epidemics and pandemics; the third talk on the 'Epidemiological modelling of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic' by Prof. Lars Kaderali from the University Medicine Greifswald reinforces this fact. Dr. Kaderali spoke on the mathematical simulations of SARS-CoV-2 transmission in Germany using standard epidemiological models, and the successive construction of a web interface that enables us to overlay model simulations with current data from the German federal states and selected other countries, which could provide short-term predictions for hospital capacity planning.

The final talk of the workshop was delivered by Dr. Roy Gulick, chief of the Division of Infectious Diseases at NewYork Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center, discussing the US Omicron experience, identifying the first omicron case in San Francisco in Dec 2021, their firsthand experience managing the rapidly increasing cases in NYC, and the lessons learned from the concurrent reports of SA and Europe, leading to the earlier conclusion of omicron being more transmissible than the other SARS-CoV2 VOCs.

The workshop concluded with an interactive discussion moderated by Prof. Bartenschlager, in which the current challenges were acknowledged: the privacy policies regarding open access to clinical data being a deterrent of drawing population-level conclusions, and the existing difficulties in sharing

data between different countries, leading to an incomplete snapshot of the global infection-vs-population trend.

The chairs, speakers and attendees acknowledge Dr. Katrin Woll from the University of Heidelberg and her team for having coordinated and organized yet-another phase of this workshop series, leaving the virology community to look forward to the upcoming phases.

If you have attended a jGfV-related workshop / conference / seminar and want to write a report about it, please email to jGfV@G-f-V.org.

Stepping stone to a career in Virology

Career workshop for doctoral students and postdoctoral fellows

On the 29th and 30th of March 2022 the third ACHIEVE Spring School of the Society for Virology (GfV) will take place in Munich, Germany. This year's theme is "PREPARED" and the two-day workshop will feature seminars focussing on methods in virology, communication/networking, career options and funding opportunities. We will have experts talking about the “behind the scenes” of their path to an academic or industry career, lively discussions and tips from professionals. We will feature state-of-the-art methodologies presented from experts in their field. We will answer questions such as: How do you write a good grant? Where can I obtain financial support? And we will highlight the power of networking and being “visible”. Did you ever struggle to explain your research/project to non-experts? No longer, participate in our science slam and communicate your science excitement to your peers.

The programme aims at doctoral students from the fields of medicine, veterinary medicine or life sciences and at postdoctoral fellows. Places are limited to ensure optimal interaction between participants and guest speakers.

The participation of the students in the ACHIEVE Spring School is financed by a scholarship, which includes the costs for accommodation and meals. An application consists of a curriculum vitae and a letter of motivation (maximum one page). Applications can now be sent by e-mail to achieve@g-f-v.org .

Deadline for applications has been extended until March 7th, 2022.

We receive support from Roche & DZIF academy.

GfV-Arbeitskreis

„Klinisch-Virologische Forschung"

15. WORKSHOP

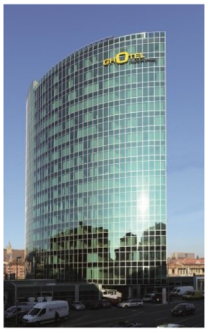
13./14. Mai 2022 in Würzburg

Herzliche Einladung an alle an klinischer Virologie Interessierten innerhalb und außerhalb der GfV.
Beiträge sind zu jedem Aspekt der klinischen Virologie willkommen. Auch „Work in progress" ist erwünscht und insbesondere Bachelor-, Master-Studenten und Doktoranden sind herzlich eingeladen. Sofern es der Zeitrahmen erlaubt, sollen alle angemeldeten Beiträge als Vortrag (10 – 15 min) präsentiert werden.
Neben den Vortragspräsentationen stehen wie immer die intensive Diskussion und informellen Gespräche (Kooperationsmöglichkeiten, Methoden- und Erfahrungs-austausch etc.) im Vordergrund. Für „spontane" Präsentationen, Diskussion von vorläufigen Ergebnissen, Fallberichten etc. steht eine „offene" Session zur Verfügung.

Anmeldung:
Anmeldung mit oder ohne Abstract bitte **bis zum 01.04.22** per email an:
Annemarie.Berger@em.uni-frankfurt.de

Abstracts:
Abstract in Englisch oder Deutsch, mit Titel, Autoren (bitte präsentierenden Autor unterstreichen), Institutionen. Schriftart Arial, Größe 11. Maximal 1 DIN A4-Seite.
Bitte bis 22.04.22 per email an annemarie.berger@em.uni-frankfurt.de.
Das detaillierte Programm wird Ende April per email an alle Teilnehmer versandt.

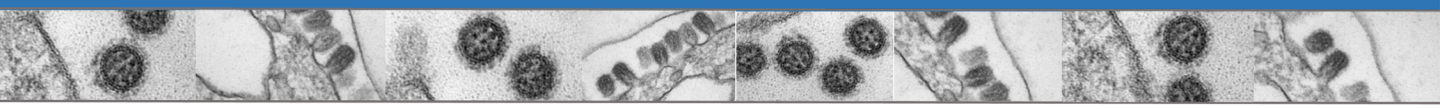
Teilnahmegebühr:
Die Teilnahmegebühr beträgt 60 € für GfV-Mitglieder, 80 € für Nicht-Mitglieder.
Sie ist vor Ort zu zahlen und schließt ein Abend- und ein Mittagessen mit ein. Für Teilnehmer ohne abgeschlossenes Studium, die einen Vortrag präsentieren, wird voraussichtlich eine finanzielle Unterstützung möglich sein. Bitte erfragen.



Unterkunft und Anreise:
Ein Zimmerkontingent (115,- € / Nacht) für den Workshop ist im GHOTEL hotel & living, Schweinfurter Straße 3, 97080 Würzburg bis zum **01.04.22** unter dem Stichwort „Virologie" reserviert.
Infos unter www.ghotel.de, wuerzburg@ghotel.de.
Das Hotel liegt in der Nähe des Würzburger Hauptbahnhofes.

Auskunft:
Annemarie Berger, annemarie.berger@em.uni-frankfurt.de Tel. 069/63014303
Tina Ganzenmüller, tina.ganzenmueller@med.uni-tuebingen.de Tel. 07071/2980279

SAVE THE DATE



Junge GfV

1st workshop of the GfV study group ‚One Health and Zoonotic Viruses'

July 2022, 27th to 29th – Goslar (Germany)

Virus Species Determinants and Transmission

Keynote Speakers

- **Seema S. Lakdawala**, University of Pittsburgh, USA
- **Stefan Pöhlmann**, German Primate Center, Göttingen, Germany
- **Björn Meyer**, Otto-von-Guericke-University Magdeburg, Germany
- **Nicole Tischler**, Fundación Ciencia & Vida, Santiago, Chile

JOACHIM HERZ STIFTUNG

Chairs: Gisa Gerold (University of Veterinary Medicine Hannover, Foundation) and Yvonne Börgeling (University of Münster)

Registration: gfv-onehealth@mail.de

https://www.g-f-v.org/

How to write academic papers

With this new section, we thought to give practical tips on aspects that might be important throughout your personal career path. Most of us have probably taken part in soft skill courses – often those handouts get lost in a cupboard or even forgotten, but sometimes they can be useful too. In order to share knowledge, we now highlight a specific aspect in this new section and are even more happy to welcome Dr. Silke Oehrlein-Karpi who, as a professional coach, is willing to share in future her knowledge with you (https://www.kte-coaching.de/).

Today's "How to…." section is about ***academic writing***. For the newbies it might to be hard to get started. So here are some ideas, which might be also useful to more experienced ones:

❖ What are the steps you need to consider for academic writing?

- First of all you need to develop a clear research question and plan the content as well as the time. Next you need to do literature search, read, make excerpts and evaluate. Then, you accumulate, document and interpret the data in the literature. This "generating" phase is followed by an organizing phase where you need to develop the outline for your research question (story board).
- The next phase is already the translating phase where you translate your ideas according to structure into written language and write your first draft. Don't bother about style, grammar or spelling!
- The final phase is the review phase where your review and edit the draft. Did you miss anything? Is the language ok regarding spelling, grammar and style? Did you add already footnotes, quotations or supporting documents?
- When you get stuck – think about where you are: did you know the structure of your work? Do you have all the data and know what it means? Are you at a place to bother about grammar or spelling?

Just start writing quickly and stop procrastinating!

- What is the basic structure of academic writing? Use these questions as a guideline:

- What is my work about ? (Research question)
- Why is it important to answer that question? (Relevance)
- Who has done what bout the topic so far? (State of research)
- What did I do? (Methods)
- What did I find out? (Results)
- How does my work relate to the state of research? (Discussion)
- How does it answer my research question? (Summary/Abstract)

→ Use this as a mnemonic:

I ntroduction
M aterials and Methods
R esults
A nd
D iscussion

- The first impression is always your abstract – so this should be really polished and catchy. It will let the reader decide to continue reading or not. Typically, the abstract is short, you always write it in past tense and don't cite references or use abbreviations. You should clearly state the principal objectives and scope of the investigation. It briefly summarizes the methods employed and the main results. The abstract ends always with a principal conclusion.
- The introduction refers to results already published, which you write in present tense (existing knowledge!). You briefly review the literature to give the reader an orientation and state principle results and conclusions. Remember: You do not have to keep the reader in suspense!
- The Materials and Methods part is written in past tense. Here, you describe the (general) methods used so that another person is able to reproduce your experiments. Stay consistent in presentation – endeavor to list methods in the same order as they appear in the results section and use the same appropriate terms for the same item throughout the whole text.
- The results part is written in past tense. Here, be selective – what does the reader need to know in order to understand your argument? Write it in a logical order and reserve extensive interpretation for the "discussion".

- ❖ In the discussion / conclusion part you are allowed to write in mixed tenses – the current findings in past tense, the findings of earlier work in present tense. Keep it crisp and answer the question how do your findings contribute to the field!
- ❖ As last point regarding writing / style – Think about what makes a sentence/ text easy to read?

- bring into focus the expectations of the reader

→ avoid subject-verb separations,

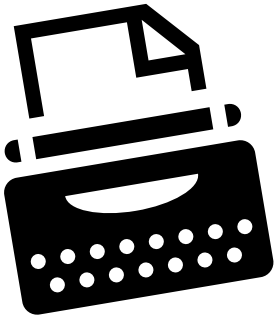
- check for topic and stress position
- use signaling and signposting
- use clear and easy syntax

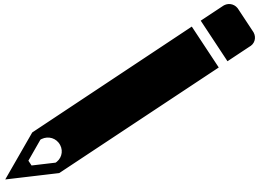
→ articulate the action (use verbs instead of nouns; use active voice instead of passive voice)

→ keep it short, simple and specific

→ don't split infinitives

→ watch your expression and your syntax





Happy writing!

Job posts & Advertisements

In this section, we will post any job vacancies or workshops / conferences. If you are getting aware of any advertisements, please email to jGfV@G-f-V.org or post them on SLACK.

Conferences / Workshops / Seminars

11 March 2022 (virtual at 2pm)
VIRAL-Symposium: "Investigation of the role of T cells in SARS-CoV-2 infection of non-human primates" (Kim Hasenkrug) and "NK cell immune modulation by SARS-CoV-2" (Wiebke Moskorz)
https://viral-nrw.de/registrierung/

21 March – 25 March 2022
International Conference on Antiviral Research (ICAR)
Seattle, WA, USA
https://www.isar-icar.com/abstracts

24 March – 25 March 2022 (virtual)
International Virus Bioinformatics Meeting 2022
https://evbc.uni-jena.de/events/vibiom2022/

27 March – 29 March 2022 (virtual)
INTERNATIONAL CYTOMEGALOVIRUS WORKSHOP
https://www.cmv2022.org/public-session/

29 March – 30 March 2022
ACHIEVE Academy
Munich, Germany
https://g-f-v.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/2022_StACV22_Ankuendigung_ext_En-final.pdf (extended application deadline: **07.03.2022**)

30 March – 02 April 2022 (hybrid)
Annual Meeting of the Society for Virology (GfV)
Munich, Germany
https://www.virology-meeting.de/

04 April – 08 April 2022
EMBO Workshop – Pathogen Immunity and Signaling
Saint-Malo, France
https://meetings.embo.org/event/21-signaling

27 April – 28 April 2022 (hybrid)
One Health Conference 2022
Greifswald, Germany
https://evis.events/event/181/

02 May 2022 (virtual; 4:30 pm)
First jGfV Lecture on Hepatitis E Virus
more information will follow

08 May – 11 May 2022 - postponed
Annual European Congress of Virology
Gdansk, Poland

09 May – 13 May 2022
Annual Meeting of the European Society for Pediatric Infectious Diseases
https://espidmeeting.org/

13 May – 14 May 2022
15th Workshop "Clinical Virology"
Würzburg, Germany
https://g-f-v.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Einladung_AK_Klinische-Virologie_2022.pdf

23 May – 23 May 2022 (hybrid)
Retroviruses
Cold Spring Harbor, NY, USA
https://meetings.cshl.edu/meetings.aspx?meet=RETRO&year=22

30 May – 31 May 2022
"VIRAL HEPATITIS AND BEYOND: FROM BASIC SCIENCE TO CURE"
Freiburg, Germany
http://www.trr179.de/en/news/conference/

June 2022 (virtual)
Second jGfV Lecture on Chikungunya virus
more information will follow

23 June – 24 June 2022
Junior Scientist Zoonoses Meeting 2022
Hanover, Germany
https://www.zoonosen.net/junior-scientist-zoonoses-meeting-2022

11 July – 12 July 2022
DZIF-Symposium for translational bacteriophage research
Frankfurt, Germany
https://www.dzif.de/de/event/bakteriophagen-wissenschaft-und-klinischer-anwendung

27 July – 29 July 2022
1st Workshop "One Health and Zoonotic Viruses"
Goslar, Germany
https://g-f-v.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/One_Health_workshop_Juli_2022.pdf

19 August – 23 August 2022 (virtual)
DGHM Facharztrepetitorium
https://www.dghm.org/facharztrepetitorium/

September 2022 (virtual)
Third jGfV Lecture on Adenoviruses
more information will follow

21 September – 23 September 2022
21st Workshop "Immunobiology of viral infections"
Bad Salzschlirf, Germany
more information will follow
https://immunviro.g-f-v.org/

05 October – 07 October 2022
Zoonoses 2022 - International Symposium on Zoonoses Research by the German Research Platform on Zoonoses
Berlin, Germany
https://www.zoonosen.net/en/save-date-zoonoses-2022-international-symposium-zoonoses-research

Open positions

PhD Position
Laboratory of Prof. Dr. Mario Schelhaas, University of Münster
Application Deadline: 15 March 2022
https://g-f-v.org/job/institute-of-cellular-virology-wwu-muenster-wwu-muenster-42-phd-position-in-molecular-virology-and-cell-biology/

Research Fellow Position
Laboratory of Uli Schwarz-Linek, University of St Andrews
Application deadline: 18 March 2022
https://www.vacancies.st-andrews.ac.uk/Vacancies/W/3650/0/330784/889/research-fellow-ar2646gb

PhD Position
Friedrich-Loeffler-Institute, Greifswald
Application Deadline: 27 February 2022
https://www.fli.de/en/career/vacancies/vacancy/wiss-mitarbeiterin-wiss-mitarbeiter-m-w-d-doktorandin-doktorand-im-institut-fuer-virusdiagnostik/

PhD Position
Laboratory of Dr. Stephanie Jung, University Hospital Bonn
Application Deadline: 28 February 2022
https://g-f-v.org/job/university-of-bonn-bonn-42-promotionsstelle-in-der-infektionsforschung/

Junior Group Leader Position
University of Tübingen
Application Deadline: 29 March 2022
https://www.nature.com/naturecareers/job/research-group-leader-mfd-start-your-own-group-at-the-faculty-of-medicine-in-tubingen-university-of-tubingen-uni-tubingen-753455

W3 Professor Position
MHH Hannover
Application deadline: 28 February 2022
https://g-f-v.org/job/universitaetsprofessur-fuer-virologie/

Principal Investigator Position
Institut Cochin, Cochin Hospital
Application Deadline: 31 March 2022
https://www.institutcochin.fr/institute/news/institut-cochin-recruits-a-scientist-wishing-to-establish-his-her-independent-team

PhD student Position
Laboratory of Prof. Dr. Oliver T. Keppler, LMU Munich, Germany
Application Deadline: 31 March 2022
https://www.jobvector.de/jobs-stellenangebote/biologie-life-sciences/wissenschaftliche-r-mitarbeiter-in/phd-student-biology-hiv-research-immune-system-166937/

Post-doc Position
Laboratory of Prof. Dr. Oliver T. Keppler, LMU Munich, Germany
Application Deadline: 31 March 2022
https://www.jobvector.de/jobs-stellenangebote/biologie-life-sciences/wissenschaftliche-r-mitarbeiter-in/postdoc-biology-virology-hiv-molecular-biology-166938/

Head of viral vector production
CEVEC Pharmaceuticals GmbH, Cologne, Germany
https://www.jobvector.de/jobs-stellenangebote/biologie-life-sciences/forschung-entwicklung/cell-biologist-biochemist-virologist-teamleader-viral-vector-production-167165/

Supervisor Virology and Cell Culture
Charles River Laboratories Germany GmbH, Erkrath, Germany
https://www.jobvector.de/jobs-stellenangebote/biologie-life-sciences/forschung-entwicklung/biologist-biochemist-biotechnologist-supervisor-virology-cell-culture-167425/

16 PhD Positions
University of Münster
Application Deadline: 11 April 2022
www.cim-imprs.de

Assistant or Associate Professor Position
Department of Immunobiology, Yale School of Medicine
Application Deadline: 01 November 2022
https://apply.interfolio.com/99554

Funding / Awards

Best “Paper of the Season” award for early career virologists - by the young Society for Virology Germany (jGfV)
First application deadline: 01 March 2022 (Every third month)
For information see p. 2

10 travel grants of the GfV for the attendance of the annual meeting 2022 in Munich
Application deadline: 07 March 2022

- for GfV member only
- The applications must be addressed to the Treasurer of the GfV:

Prof. Dr. Klaus Überla
Treasurer of the GfV
Universitätsklinikum Erlangen
Virologisches Institut
Schlossgarten 4
91054 Erlangen

-send submission by **email** to **renate.hott@uk-erlangen.de** including the following as one pdf file:

- Short application letter with the postal address (institution) of the applicant
- The abstract submitted to the conference and the conference registration invoice
- The confirmation of acceptance as an oral or poster presentation

Graduate Student Funding Opportunities – compiled by the Johns Hopkins University https://research.jhu.edu/rdt/funding-opportunities/graduate/

Interview with Prof. Protzer

Prof. Protzer
Head of Virology,
Technical University
Munich

Prof. Protzer completed her medical studies at the University of Erlangen in 1988 and, after completing her residency in internal medicine in Frankfurt and Mainz, began working as a postdoctoral fellow in Heidelberg in the laboratory of Prof. Heinz Schaller in 1996 on the hepatitis B virus until 2000. After establishing her own research group in Heidelberg from 2000 to 2002, she began working as a junior research group leader in Cologne, where she also obtained her specialist qualification in microbiology, virology and infectious disease epidemiology in 2005.

Interviewers:
Sriram Kumar, PhD Student, Institute of Virology, Munster
Philipp Ostermann, PhD Student, Institute of Virology, Dusseldorf

Questions:

1. **At what point during your medical training did you decide to pursue a career in (basic) research?**

A. *Although I had a hard time to decide whether to study medicine or biochemistry in the beginning, I didn't go straight into science. When I had finished my university education I was required to work as "Arzt im Praktikum" for 18 months to obtain my full approbation as a medical doctor. During that time, we had to work at least 60 hours a week for very small money – less that a PhD candidate earns nowadays and even less than the cleaning women did earn at that time. However, as this already counted for a specialist training and as I liked being a doctor and helping other humans very much, I decided to continue practicing medicine but also look for options to join a scientific group. At the university hospital in Mainz, I finally got the opportunity to work on the molecular biology of HBV and characterizing HBV variants in different patient cohorts. That was 3 years after having finished my medical education and 3 more years to go for a board exam Internal Medicine.*

Since 2007, she has worked as a professor of virology as head of the Institutes of Virology at Helmholtz Zentrum München and Technische Universität München. She is member of various research advisory boards and committees such as the Heinrich Pette Institute, Hamburg, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, and the German Liver Foundation.
Prof. Protzer has been awarded with the German Center for Infection Research (DZIF) Prize for Translational Infection Research in 2021 for the discovery that the immune system does not have sufficient immune functionality in a chronic HBV infection. This led to the development of the therapeutic vaccine TherVacB.

So, I continued doing research and practicing medicine for that time. When I had finally passed my board exam, I decided to join Heinz Schaller's lab in Heidelberg where I did a postdoc and after 2 more years had obtained my own third-party funding and could start my own small research group.

2. How do you see the chances to pursue a career in academia today and how is it different from what you have experienced?

A. *The chances to pursue a career in academia today are much better than they were at the time when I was in that situation. Simply because there are fewer young people at the same age to compete with and because there is more research funding in particular for young research groups. Therefore, I would really like to encourage everybody who likes doing science to pursue a scientific career. Working in science it is a phantastic job! There is no other job where you can work on what you are interested in without somebody else telling you what to do – and contribute to asking and answering the important questions we all have.*

3. What are the most challenging aspects about being a researcher in your position and what do you think are important soft skills students should therefore develop while pursuing an academic career?

A. *The most challenging thing is time management. And keeping a healthy work-life balance. That does not mean that one has to restrict work to 40 or something hours. To be successful you have to be able to push things forward if needed. But time is limited. So you have to focus yourself on what is most important at a given time point and do not jump onto everything that comes by.*

4. You were recently awarded the DZIF Prize for Translational Infection Research for your work on hepatitis B virus. How did you find your research niche in virology in the first place?

A. *When I was working as an "Arzt im Praktikum" after I had finished my university education, treating patients with chronic viral hepatitis with interferon was introduced. I found that idea fascination – to stimulate the immune system and by that expulse a persistent virus out of someone's body. Thus, I wanted to understand the interaction between a virus and the immune system better to improve that approach. That is what has driven me all the time and finally was the basis to develop novel immune therapies for chronic hepatitis B.*

5. If you could change one thing in the current scientific system (e.g. Peer-Review, Funding, Policies, etc.), what would it be and how would you implement that change?

A. *First, I think that allowing people to do science without the pressure of following certain programs is very important. So, I would always put aside enough money to allow that. Second, I think step innovation is most likely to result from interdisciplinary work. So, thinking across the border of your discipline is very important and such projects must be encouraged – even when they sometimes may sound a little crazy. Third, I think the public and the taxpayer who finance our science have the right to learn about what we are doing. So, I would implement a specific training block in scientific communication into any university program and honor good and easily understandable communication of scientific results.*

6. After a stressful day in the lab/office, what do you like to do in your free time?

A. *I like to be outside and I like to exercise. So that is what I try to do whenever I have some spare time. And I like to sit at a leisure dinner with my family or friends and just talk.*

Thank you very much, Prof. Protzer, for this interview!

Announcement

Are you interested in joining the jGfV board as an official member?

You will be electing two official representatives among you (students to PostDocs/physicians in training) after the annual GfV meeting in Munich! Candidates will present themselves during our jGfV session at the annual virology meeting (https://www.virology-meeting.de/)

If you are interested, then please send your short CV and a letter of motivation until **28th of February** to jGfV@G-f-V.org.

Are you attending the annual meeting of the Society for Virology (virtual / on-site)? Then join us:

IMPRESSUM

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