

Highlights

Advice from the expert: “How to increase resilience”

Reports about workshops, lectures and award ceremonies

Interview with Dr. Sofia Urner, freelance writer

Upcoming events

09 November 2022
(virtual; 4:00 pm)

ECR Viromics Webinar Series

10 November 2022
(virtual; 5:00 pm)

jGfV virology lecture series: West Nile virus

17 November – 18 November 2022

ESCV Workshop on Next Generation Sequencing (NGS) in Clinical Virology
Antalya, Turkey

News

Dear fellows,

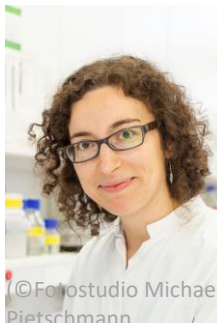
The jGfV board has experienced quite some changes (page 2), and the application process for the election of the new student representatives serving one year within the jGfV board is now open (page 34). Do not miss the chance to apply for our best season paper awards (page 28).

Last but not least, we want to thank all contributors of this issue.

Your newsletter team

Preface

We are experiencing a rather big change in the jGfV board - Hanna-Mari Baldauf and Asisa Volz have handed over their leadership of the immunobiology workshop to Daniel Sauter and Christine Dahlke. Eva Herker and Thomas Hoenen have also handed over their leadership of the cell biology workshop to Gabrielle Vieyres and Christian Sieben. And we have founded the provisional young PI virology faculty which consists of a group of dedicated young PIs led by Christina Karsten and Björn Meyer (more about that in the next issue). Due to the change of the GfV board, Hanna-Mari will still remain the spokesperson for one additional year. And Daniel, Gabrielle, Christian, Christina and Björn will now actively shape the jGfV as well – WELCOME ON BOARD!



And we also want to say farewell to Asisa, Eva and Thomas! Thank you very much for being there from the start, shaping the jGfV. We also want to thank you for your engagement, your time, your commitment and the fun we had during our board meetings.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR jGfV FALL PAPER 2022 AWARDEES

Annika Schnell

“HDAC inhibitors Panobinostat and Romidepsin enhance tax transcription in HTLV-1-infected cell lines and freshly isolated patients’ T-cells”
(Frontiers in Immunology, August 2022)



Julia Kazmierski

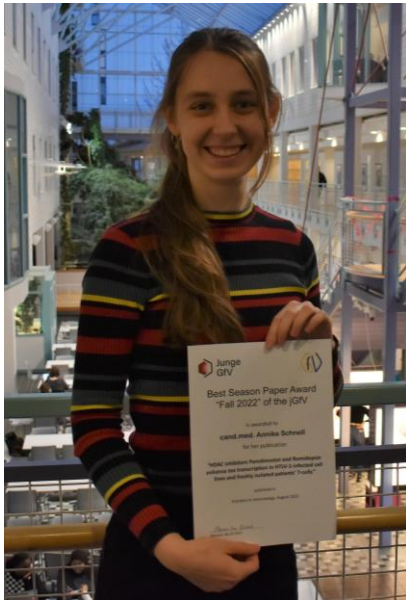
“Nonproductive exposure of PBMCs to SARS-CoV-2 induces cell-intrinsic innate immune responses”
(Molecular Systems Biology, July 2022)

Toni Luise Meister

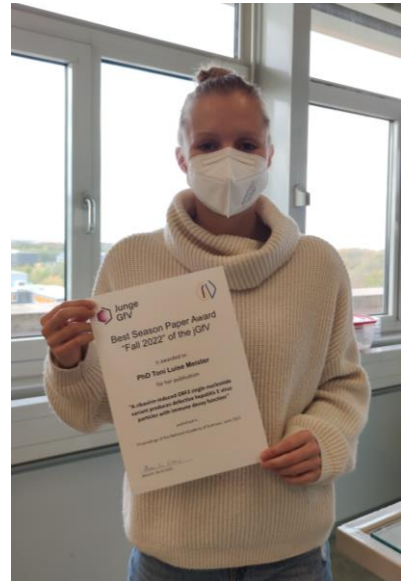
“A ribavirin-induced ORF2 single-nucleotide variant produces defective hepatitis E virus particles with immune decoy function”
(Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, June 2022)



Julia



Annika



Toni

Reports

jGfV virology lecture series

- Adenoviruses –

*Theo Dähne, Medical Center
University of Freiburg*

On the 27th of September, another lecture in the jGfV series on different viruses was held by Prof. Dr. Thomas Dobner (Hamburg) and PD Dr. Albert Heim (Hannover) giving us an in-depth look at adenovirus biology and clinical aspects. The event was hosted by PD Dr. Hanna-Mari Baldauf. 164 people signed up for the lecture.

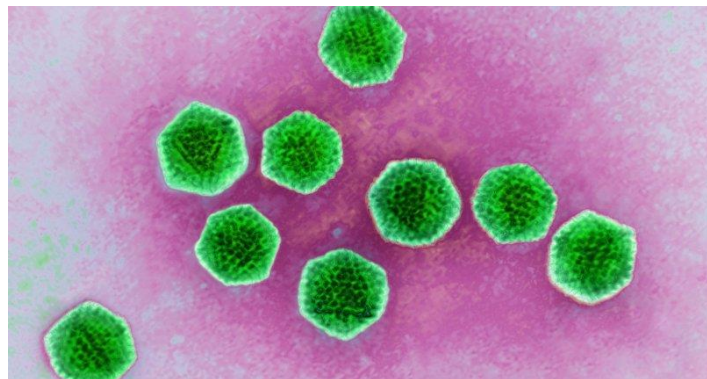
Prof. Dobner from the Leibniz-Institute of Virology in Hamburg presented in-depth insights into the replication cycle of adenoviruses in which a protein (instead of an oligonucleotide) functions as a primer for viral DNA replication. As of today, this is a unique feature in DNA viruses and poses a critical aspect of adenoviral replication because mutations or damage to this protein may result in the inability of the virus to replicate at all.

Prof. Dobner further elaborated on

two transforming proteins of Adenoviruses (E1A and 1B). E1A is a potent inductor of S-phase in cell cycle. Together with E1B, they work in concert to promote cell proliferation.

The talk was concluded with interesting information regarding adenoviral vectors and a Q&A session.

PD Dr. Heim is head of diagnostics at the Institute of Virology Medizinische Hochschule Hannover. He gave an overview about taxonomy of the seven human adenovirus species. He put special emphasis on the difference between genotype, serotype and the information that comes with the respective nomenclature.



<https://www.aerzteblatt.de/nachrichten/98753/Sieben-Kinder-sterben-nach-Adenovirus-Ausbruch-in-New-Jersey>

The next part of his presentation was about the organotropism of different human adenovirus species and the clinical aspects with a focus on pediatric immunosuppressed patients after hematological stem cell transplantation. These patients are particularly prone to develop severe adenoviral disease with historic high mortality rates of up to 5%. Therapeutic options are limited but early administration of cidofovir significantly decreased mortality of systemic adenovirus infection in stem cell transplant recipients.

PD Dr. Heim concluded his presentation with the role of NGS in diagnostics and its potential in outbreak situations. In an adenovirus outbreak on different medical wards over an extended period of time, NGS was able to demonstrate sequence identity among some of the isolates. The main point here was that since adenoviruses can remain genetically stable over many years sequence identity does not prove an infection chain – hence emphasizing the limitations of genomic phylogenetics with regards to the respective etiologic agent.

After these two outstanding talks, there was plenty of time for the young virologists for discussion.

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.



Interesse an der **klinischen und diagnostischen Virologie** als Naturwissenschaftler*in oder Veterinärmediziner*in?

Dann wäre das **Zertifikat für Medizinische Virologie und Infektionsprävention („Medizinische/r Fachvirologe/in)** der GfV vielleicht das Richtige?

VORTEILE

- Qualifikation zur technischen Leitung eines Labors der medizinischen Virologie
- ggf. medizinische Freigabe technisch validierter Ergebnisse der Virusdiagnostik

Weitere Informationen unter:

<https://g-f-v.org/zertifikat-fachvirologe/>

21st Immunobiology of viral infections Workshop report

Paula Cebollada Rica, Universitat Pompeu Fabra

After two years of restrictions due to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, we met again in person to celebrate the 21st Immunobiology of viral infections workshop. This time, the beautiful city of Bad Salzschlirf was selected to reunite the community of young virologists and go back again to the face-to-face networking that all of us have missed so much during these last years.

On the 21st September 2022, the workshop started with an ice-breaker game in order to get to know each other. It was definitely a nice way to start this three-day experience. Once the names and faces were more familiar, we got ready to start with the nice programme that the organizers, Hanna-Mari Baldauf and Asisa Volz had kindly prepared with enthusiasm.

The first keynote lecturer, Florence Margottin-Goguet from the Institut Cochin in Paris, delighted us with an incredible presentation about HUSH

and its important role in HIV infections. She nicely introduced the role of host restriction factors and how viruses developed strategies to overcome this immune threat. Focusing on HIV for example, Vpx has been shown to degrade host proteins such as SAMDH1 or TASOR. The latter is part of the HUSH complex which is in charge of silencing genes integrated into the heterochromatin region once transcription has started. This favors viral survival and needs to be further studied.

Right after, it was time for the first talks of the participants in a session entitled *Innate immunity to viral infections and beyond*. Nine great presentations covering different topics were held. Participants discussed about host restrictions factors suppressing HIV replication and how they are conserved among species, SARS-CoV-2 evasive mechanisms or a rabbit model under development for HIV research. Saskia Stenzel, from the Institute of Virology in Charité (Berlin), won the prize for the best talk in innate immunity thanks to the votes of the rest of the participants.



Saskia Stenzel from the Charité won the best „innate immunology and beyond“ talk.

The second day of the workshop was opened by the second keynote speaker, Wolfram Brune from the Leibniz Institute of Virology in Hamburg. Participants could attend a master class about different types of cell death and how viruses interfere with these well-known processes. The focus was on the capacity of HCMV to manipulate apoptosis, necroptosis and pyroptosis in its favor. He explained in detail the role of proteins such as UL36 or UL37 on the inhibition of apoptosis to avoid the effect on viral success.

The programme continued with the second session of talks by the participants, this time under the

title *Adaptive immunity to viral infections and beyond*. In this sessions, human and murine Cytomegaloviruses were the main focus. Their expression of FcγR or potential of viruses as vaccine vectors were broadly commented, and interesting questions were addressed to the presenters. In this case, Henning Jacobsen from the Helmholtz Center in Braunschweig was awarded for his presentation on MCMV as a vaccine vector.



Henning Jacobsen from the Helmholtz Center Braunschweig won the best „adaptive immunology and beyond“ talk

Christine Dahlke from the Medical Clinic & Policlinics of the UKE in Hamburg was the third keynote speaker.

She presented impressive data on a novel MERS vaccine candidate based on a MVA vector encoding for the S protein of MERS. With her results, Christine definitely convinced the audience that the two-shot vaccine candidate elicits a good humoral and cellular response. These results were even improved after a third dose of the vaccine, and deeper details on innate immune responses were shared and lively discussed by the audience.

By the end of the session, participants discussed in a teamwork activity how we all experience science in our daily routine. No matter of our research line, all of us had in common a lot of thoughts about science and it was comforting to share them. A career talk with the keynote speakers closed the second day, and it was very enriching to ask and exchange feelings about life in science with the lecturers because of their experienced careers. After that, we enjoyed a very nice BBQ with delicious food and drinks. We could definitely get to know each other better, and it was for sure an evening to remember!

The third and last day of the workshop started with a very innovative format consisting of six elevator pitches. The presenters had 90 seconds to present their work. Although it was a challenge to present in this very short time and to breathe at the same time, all the participants succeeded! Lara Jeworowski from the Institute of Virology in Charité (Berlin) and her elevator pitch about the relationship between viral kinetics and humoral responses in SARS-CoV-2 were the winners in this category.



Lara Jeworowski from the Charité won the best „elevator pitch“ talk

Last but not least we had the presentation from our excellent and fourth keynote speaker directly from New York, Florian Krammer.

As you may know, he is an expert in flu and he held a talk on humoral immune responses to influenza virus hemagglutinin and neuraminidase. Although current vaccines mainly target HA as immunogen, Florian convinced us that NA has a great potential as an immunogen since its antigenic drift is slower and discorant compared to HA. Soon, a vaccine based on a recombinant NA tetramer will enter clinical trials. There is no doubt it will be a key player in overcoming the weak points of the current influenza vaccine regimen.

We are also excited to announce that Christine Dahlke and Daniel Sauter were chosen to be the next Immunobiology workshop organizers for the coming three years. We are very happy and looking forward to next year's workshop with you as organizers! We wish you all the luck and energy for this new experience!

Finally, we want to finish this report expressing our huge gratitude to Hanna-Mari Baldauf and Asisa Volz for the nice workshop they organized with tons of effort and love. We appreciate all the time you invested and do not have any doubt that it was a really enriching experience to all participants. Our acknowledgement also to all the presenters for sharing their science with the rest and being always open to keep learning and making this community bigger. Thanks also to all the sponsors that made this 21st workshop possible.



Christine Dahlke, Wolfram Brune and Florence Margottin-Goguet in a Q&A session with the participants.



The participants enjoyed the coffee breaks in the sun



The organizers Asisa and Hanna-Mari together with the keynote speakers Christine, Florian, Florence and Wolfram after the BBQ



Participants of the 21st workshop Immunobiology of viral infections in Bad Salzschlirf.

Online-Weiterbildungszirkel

des jGfV-Arbeitskreises

„Klinisch-virologische Forschung“

Inhalt und Ziele

- Vorträge zu Themen der diagnostischen und klinischen Virologie
- Einblick in die verschiedenen universitären und außeruniversitären Tätigkeitsfelder
- Diskussionen zu aktuellen Themen
- Vernetzung unter jungen klinischen Virologinnen und Virologen
- Vorbereitung auf die Facharztprüfung

Wer:

Alle Ärztinnen/Ärzte und Fachvirologinnen/Fachvirologen in Weiterbildung (und auch darüber hinaus)

Wann:

Jeden ersten Mittwoch des Monats um 9:00 Uhr

Wo:

Online-Veranstaltung (Zoom)

Wie:

Formlose E-Mail an viro-weiterbildung@lists.lrz.de für die Aufnahme in den E-Mail-Verteiler des Weiterbildungszirkels

Weitere Infos unter:

<https://clinviro.g-f-v.org/>

20th Cell Biology of viral infections Workshop report

*Eva Herker, Philipps-University
Marburg*

*Thomas Hoenen, Federal Research
Institute of Animal Health, Insel
Riems*

From October 12th to 14th 2022, the 20th Workshop “Cell Biology of Viral Infection” of the German Society of Virology (GfV) took place in the Schöntal Monastery near Würzburg. This year’s special focus was “Organoids”, represented by four keynote speakers from Germany, the U.K., Italy, and Spain, who highlighted different aspects of this topic, ranging from the history of organoid research and the

development of various organoid systems, their use for studying diseases, and particularly also viral infections, all the way to cutting-edge biofabrication techniques.

In total, the workshop had 39 on-site participants, among which were 30 students and postdocs. They actively participated in the workshop in 26 oral presentations in four sessions on Virus Entry, Replication and Morphogenesis, Virus Host Interactions, and Organoids.

As in last years, there was ample discussion in the sessions, with a very active participation particularly of the younger attendees.



Group photo with 2022 workshop participants in front of the main building of the Cistercian Monastery Schöntal.

Similarly, there was plenty of opportunity for networking at lunch and dinner gatherings, as well as at the well-attended social events.

The scientific program of the workshop started with a keynote lecture from Dr. Elena Martinez Fraiz from the Institute of Bioengineering of Catalonia in Spain. She spoke about the development and application of novel artificial matrices that mimic tissue micro and nanofeatures for use as biomimetics in *in vitro* assays. In particular, this encompassed biofabrication technologies such as bioprinting to develop complex *in vitro* models for small intestinal epithelium.

The second keynote lecture was given by Dr. Laura Pellegrini from the MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology at the University of Cambridge, U.K. Dr. Pellegrini is a senior postdoctoral research fellow in the group of Madeline Lancaster, and recently was awarded a grant by the Wellcome Trust Foundation to start her own research group on organoids. As such she not only gave a fascinating talk on cerebral and choroid plexus organoids and their use to study neuroinvasion, but also served as an example for a

young scientist at the stage of becoming an independent group leader, which of course was of great interest to the young virologists present at the workshop.

Dr. Veronica Krenn gave then a second lecture on cerebral organoids, complementing Dr. Pellegrini's talk. She recently transitioned from being a Marie Skłodowska-Curie postdoctoral fellow in the Knoblich laboratory at the Institute of Molecular Biotechnology in Vienna to being a principal investigator at the Department of Biotechnology and Biosciences of the University of Milan-Bicocca. The focus of this talk was on stem cell-derived 3D organoid cultures to develop human models for infectious diseases, and the study of the impact of viral infections and immunity on neural stem cell proliferation and brain development.

Finally, while unable to attend in person, Dr. Meritxell Huch from the Max Planck Institute of Molecular Cell Biology and Genetics in Dresden gave the last keynote lecture, highlighting the development of organoid research over time, and providing some

background on her own work of developing liver and pancreas organoids.

This represented an excellent example how organoids can serve as tools for studying complex cell biological processes.

These keynote lectures were complemented by excellent presentations from all participants, covering a diverse range of topics and viruses. Like in the past years, at the end of the workshop all participants voted on the best oral presentation given by a young virologist, either student or junior postdoc. Silvia Albertini from the laboratory of Nicole Fischer at the University Medical Center Hamburg-Eppendorf, who had given a presentation on the development of skin organoids, was selected for the best oral presentation prize.

This year also marked the end of the term of Dr. Eva Herker (Philipps-University Marburg) and Dr. Thomas Hoenen (Friedrich-Loeffler-Institut) as chairs of the working group “Cell Biology of Viral Infections” of the young GfV (jGfV), and thus also as organizers of this workshop. As successors, the participants voted for Dr. Gabrielle Vieyres from the

Leibniz Institute for Virology in Hamburg and Dr. Christian Sieben from the Helmholtz Centre for Infection Research in Braunschweig. They are already in the process of planning the 21st annual workshop, which will take place from October 18th to 20th at the Schöntal Monastery. More information and updates can be found on the workshop’s website

<https://cellviro.g-f-v.org>.

Finally, the organizers would like to thank the German Society for Virology (GfV), the German Society for Cell Biology (DGZ), and the companies ReBlikon and Singleron for their support. The workshop would not have been possible without their generous contributions!



Silvia Albertini, the winner of the prize for the best oral presentation of the 2022 workshop, together with the organizers Eva Herker and Thomas Hoenen.

Max von Pettenkofer award ceremony

Christopher Dächert, Max von Pettenkofer Institute, LMU Munich

The Pettenkofer Foundation awards an annual prize worth 5000 € for outstanding and innovative work in the field of hygiene, medical microbiology or virology. The award is named after Max von Pettenkofer (* 1818 in Lichtenheim near Neuburg an der Donau; † 1901 in Munich), the first hygienist in Germany and first director of the Max von Pettenkofer Institute.

This year, Prof. Dr. Cynthia Sharma (Institute for Molecular Infection Biology, IMIB) and Prof. Dr. Chase Beisel (Helmholtz-Institute for RNA-based Infection Research, HIRI) from Würzburg shared the Pettenkofer award for developing a method to simultaneously and sensitively detect different RNAs in patient samples using CRISPR/Cas9. Their findings were published 2021 in Science: „*Noncanonical crRNAs derived from host transcripts enable multiplexable RNA detection by Cas9*“ (PMID: [33906967](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33906967/)). The award ceremony took place in the big

conference hall (Großer Sitzungssaal) of the new town hall at the Marienplatz in Munich – a scenary that lived up to the occasion and prestige of this award.

After greetings from Nathalie Lepper, chair of the board of trustees of the Pettenkofer Foundation, and Prof. Dr. Oliver Keppler, chair of the virology department at the Max von Pettenkofer Institute, the ensemble *Vincent Eberle Quintett* got the audience in the right mood with their modern jazz.

In his laudatory speech, Prof. Dr. Oliver Keppler not only focused on the scientific excellence and innovativeness of the two awardess, but also on the cooperation and collaboration that made this award-winning success possible.





Left - Großer Sitzungssaal taken from the gallery; right – Vincent Eberle Quintett

This was followed by a very elegant and entertaining introduction into the scientific topic given by Prof. Dr. Veit Hornung from the Gene Center of the LMU Munich, who also picked up CRISPR laypeople and everyone else and built a basis for the lecture given by the awardees. In a highly exciting joined lecture, Prof. Sharma and Prof. Beisel then presented their groundbreaking work on Cas9 and the newly

discovered non-canonical crispr RNAs (ncrRNAs), derived from cellular RNAs. These ncrRNAs pair with the Cas9 associated trans-activating crispr RNA (tracrRNA), which could be redesigned to so-called reprogrammed tracrRNAs (Rptrs, pronounced „Raptors“) for example for diagnostic purposes. Individual Rptrs could be used in a multiplex assay to detect at least five different viral RNAs in patient samples with the same specificity and sensitivity as qPCRs.



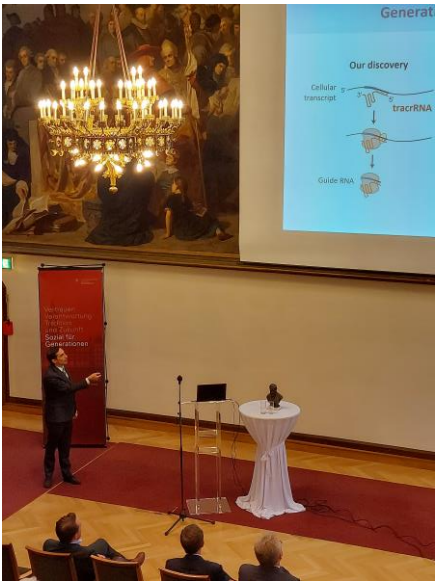
Left – Nathalie Leppert, middle – Prof. Keppler; right – Prof. Hornung

The scientists named their newly developed method LEOPARD (*leveraging engineered tracrRNAs and on-target DNAs for parallel RNA detection*) – to stay in the predator scheme. LEOPARD thus supplements the current diagnostic tools based on Cas12 and Cas13 and allows future applications, i.e. screening of viral sequences, cancer-associated mutations or bacterial resistance genes. I highly recommend reading the original publication. After the official ceremony, a small get-together in a relaxed atmosphere enabled also a personal conversation with the

awardees. We have fond memories of the event in the beautiful premises of the new town hall with inspiring jazz music and are looking forward to the award ceremony next year, which will again focus on microbiology.



Top – Prof. Cynthia Sharma, left – Prof. Chase Beisel, right – official award ceremony



...have a balanced life in academia



Dr. Neela Enke
Biologist, Trainer &
Coach

Dr Neela Enke holds a doctorate in Biology and has over 10 years experience as a researcher and team leader in several European research institutions. She is a coach for research and administrative staff, professors, team leaders and teams.

Ha, this is a good question and there is no easy answer to it! For we are talking about individualized solutions to a structural problem:

First of all, being a scientist is a profession where there will always be more work than you can actually do. And a lot of the questions and tasks are genuinely exciting and worth your while!

Second, there is an enormous pressure to perform in science, which also implies that overtime is normalized. A load of overtime hours is seen as expressing your high level of commitment. Research as a part-time job 'doesn't work at all' or at most for people with children, but even then only temporarily. Such beliefs do abound in the academic system, and many scientists have internalized them in the course of their careers.

Third, maintaining life balance is closely linked to the issue of self-worth. On the one hand, we establish self-worth through 'being useful' or 'being needed'. On the other hand, it's about deep (organizational) cultural beliefs, norms, and attitudes about productivity, pleasure, and laziness. When are people 'valuable' to a society? How much 'enjoyment' is appropriate?

Fourth, establishing a work life balance is touching existential fears and realities, e. g. about

As a trainer she offers workshops on career development in research, leadership, as well as diversity and conflict management. She is a trained mediator with a focus on conflicts in research organisations.

employment or contract renewal – for internationals, this often also affects their residence status. Especially for PhD candidates/post docs who are highly dependent on their supervisors the room for negotiations seems to be tiny.

Fifth, developments in information technology have further blurred the boundaries between private and professional life and created the expectation of permanent availability and accessibility. Tools of this Working World 4.0, such as the home office, allow more room for individual work arrangements and flexibility. However, they also require a significantly higher degree of self-control.

I think it is high time that we as a society should investigate our beliefs on „productivity” and that the academic institutions in Germany have a responsibility for the well-being of their employees (especially now, that we see an increase in burn out, depression and other (mental) health problems – not only in society in general but also in Academia - due to Corona and the other global and regional crises). That said, here we will focus on you as an individual taking responsibility for your life and well-being to create your 'life balance'. The following strategies will help you:

Get your priorities straight and make a plan

First of all, you have to think about what your priorities in your life are: professional AND personal AND in regard to your values. How does the PhD/postdoc project fit in with these? What else is important? How high is the price you are willing to pay?

And how do you want your work day to look like: highly structured or with freedom to idle about? These priorities are highly individual and you can translate them into plans, if you find that helpful (→ Planning and Time Management might be a good topic for another time!). So, YOUR priorities should be YOUR compass for the decisions you make in order to balance YOUR life.

Be realistic and create your own schedule

We often connect a well-balanced life with regular working hours. This is not a bad idea per se. Rhythm, rituals and fixed times have been shown to support a good life balance. However, depending on your research regular working hours may be out of the question. Your tasks might actually require you to come in at the weekend. Or there are nights/weekends you work through because you want to finish a presentation or a paper. This is not a problem if it only happens now and then and you find other time to relax. It only becomes dangerous if this is 'normalized'. Thus, it might help to track your working hours for a month to figure out, how 'normal' it is for you to have completely boundless working hours.

Balancing Energy

Instead on purely focusing on how much time you spend working or not working, it might be useful to also look at what gives you energy and what takes energy away from you. Certain things may give you a lot of pleasure at work and others that drain you in your private life. The trick is to identify energy sources and energy sinks and to reduce the latter. Of course, you may always have to cope with energy sinks, but make sure, that before and after you also do things that replenish your energy.

Identify your 'wriggle room'

Resilience studies show that it is important to discriminate between things that you can actually change and those where this is (currently) impossible and to accept that as a fact of life. Focusing your energy and actions on what is in your own hand will give you agency, whereas running against the same wall over and over will very likely drain you. (If you want to change 'the system' anyway, organize yourselves in groups and start political campaigns – which I personally would find great!).

An example: If your supervisor/PI gives you too many tasks and you feel treated unfairly, this may well be true. Nevertheless, to wait for your supervisor/PI to change on their own is a strategy that will only frustrate you. What you can do e. g. is giving feedback on what you find doable and what is not realistically doable.

Saying NO

Saying 'no' – a key strategy for maintaining balance – is often linked to disappointing your own, social and/or job role-specific expectations. Ask yourself: *"When do I personally find it difficult (or easy) to disappoint expectations and why?"* What personal beliefs (such as *"If I say 'no,' I might be perceived as selfish/not collegial/incapable/I'll miss an important project"*) sound familiar you? Critically investigate your beliefs whether they are actually relevant/realistic in the current situation. It helps to give yourself time to think about this. Consciously dealing with your beliefs can enable you to evaluate requests more objectively in relation to your goals and priorities. Two thoughts may be helpful: First, in a hierarchical system, saying "NO" (or at least not "YES" immediately)

might enhance your visibility and your acceptance as 'one of them' to a greater degree than saying "YES" all the time to what is often taken for granted, since this latter behavior leaves you invisible (even if that seems counter-intuitive). And second, think about what you are freeing space for if you say "NO".

Last but not least: The burnout warning signs

Stress is not the same as stress: we can be stressed as a part of life, but it also can become chronic and pathological: the burnout syndrome. Signs can be: you are more afraid than usual; you are constantly short tempered with people that you value; you are feeling guilty; you cannot sleep; you are confused and unable to concentrate; you are often ill; you feel drained; your motivation has evaporated. **IMPORTANT:** Burnout can present in many ways – if you recognize symptoms, consult a specialist without delay, only they can diagnose.

If you have topics for the „how to“ section we have not yet touched, please email to jGfV@GfV.org.

The European Virus Bioinformatics Center

The European Virus Bioinformatics Center is a network of experts in virology and bioinformatics who join forces to solidify the exchange of ideas, initiate scientific cooperation between bioinformaticians and virologists, and increase the international visibility of virus bioinformatics. In addition, we promote young scientists and advance the teaching of virus bioinformatics. We are publishing a [monthly newsletter](#) (subscription is open to everyone), informing e.g. about recent research results, upcoming events, and job vacancies. We are organizing an annual [conference on virus bioinformatics](#), as well as several [monthly lecture series](#) and workshops.

We are curating a list of [bioinformatics tools](#) to be applied in virology. We implement [collaborative, jointly funded projects](#) on bioinformatics and virology that achieve more than the sum of their parts. And we are regularly editing [special issues on virus bioinformatics](#) in different scientific journals. If you think that the aims and services of the EVBC could also support your research, we would be delighted if you are interested in [joining](#) and enriching our community. A detailed overview of our work can be found on the [EVBC website](#).

Job posts & Advertisements

Conferences / Workshops / Seminars

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

[09 November 2022 \(virtual; 4:00 pm\)](#)

ECR Viromics Webinar Series

Introduction to MuDoGeR – a pipeline to automatically recover and analyse (viral) genomes from metagenomes

<https://forms.gle/BhS82uJLYnastA4p9>

[10 November 2022 \(virtual; 5:00 pm\)](#)

jGfV virology lecture series:

West Nile virus – from a molecular to a clinical point of views by

Dr. Pietro Scaturro & Prof. Dr. Jonas Schmidt-Chanasit

https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMs cuihrD0qHNTey6kTH62C3rK_TP9VKPk7

[17 November – 18 November 2022](#)

ESCV Workshop on Next Generation Sequencing (NGS) in Clinical Virology

Antalya, Turkey

https://escv.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/final-programme_turkey_ngs-escv.pdf

[28 November 2022 \(virtual; 6:00 pm\)](#)

European Virus Bioinformatics Center lecture series - Viruses in silico

Computational Tools for Deeper Mining of Viromes and Bacteriophage Genomes

<https://evbc.uni-jena.de/events/viruses-in-silico/>

07 December – 09 December 2022

3rd Symposium of the Geneva Centre
for Emerging Viral Diseases

“Covid-19 and beyond”

Geneva, Switzerland

<https://www.unige.ch/emerging-virus-symposium/>

15 December – 16 December 2022

(virtual)

16th International Conference on
Influenza

Rome, Italy

<https://waset.org/influenza-conference-in-december-2022-in-rome>

22 January – 27 January 2023

2023 Physical Virology Conference

GRC Viruses at Multiple Levels of
Complexity

Luca, Italy

<https://www.grc.org/physical-virology-conference/2023/>

25 January 2023 (virtual; 5:00 pm)

jGfV virology lecture series:

Poxviruses – from a molecular to a
clinical point of view by

Prof. Asisa Volz & Prof. Andreas

Nitsche

19 February – 22 February 2023

Conference on Retroviruses and
Opportunistic Infections (CROI)

Seattle, Washington

<https://www.croiconference.org/>

27 March – 28 March 2023

ACHIEVE workshop “ViReady - Kick-
Start Your Career in Virology” for
young virologists

Ulm, Germany

<https://achieve.g-f-v.org/gfv-workshop/>

28 March – 31 March 2023

Annual Meeting of the Society of
Virology (GfV)

Ulm, Germany

04 May – 07 May 2023

8th European Congress of Virology
2023

Gdańsk, Poland

<https://www.eusv-congress.eu/index.php?id=1930>

05 May – 06 May 2023

16th Workshop “Clinical Virological
Research”

Würzburg, Germany

<https://clinviro.g-f-v.org/registration-abstracts/>

11 May – 13 May 2023

31. BÄMI-Frühjahrstagung

Göttingen, Germany

<https://www.baemi.de/?page=Veranstaltung>

31 May – 02 June 2023 (hybrid)

Novel Concepts in Innate Immunity

Tübingen, Germany

<https://innate-immunity-conference.de/>

19 June – 23 June 2023

25th International KSHV Conference

Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

<https://ksvirus.org/>

Open positions

PhD Position

Research team of Prof. Dr. Ralf Bartenschlager

Department of Infectious Diseases, Molecular Virology, Heidelberg University Hospital, Germany

<https://karriere.klinikum.uni-heidelberg.de/index.php?ac=jobad&id=16940>

PhD Position

Viral Zoonoses – One Health

Leibniz Institute of Virology (LIV), Hamburg, Germany

<https://www.nature.com/naturecare>

[ers/job/phd-student-position-viral-zoonoses-one-health-leibniz-institute-of-virology-liv-764967](https://www.nature.com/naturecare)

PhD Position

Research Group Mosquito-virus-host interaction

Bernhard Nocht Institute for Tropical Medicine, Hamburg, Germany

<https://jobs.bnitm.de/PhD-Student-mfd-65-EG-13-TV-AVH-Group-Mosquito-virus-host--eng-j256.html>

Postdoctoral and PhD Position

Lab of Prof. Dr. Lars Dölken

Institute for Virology and Immunobiology, University Hospital of Würzburg, Germany

https://www.graduateschools.uni-wuerzburg.de/fileadmin/43030100/2022/Stellenausschreibung_Doelken_HSV-1_2022-10.pdf

Postdoctoral Position

Research team of Prof. Dr. Ralf Bartenschlager

Department of Infectious Diseases, Molecular Virology, Heidelberg University Hospital, Germany

<https://karriere.klinikum.uni-heidelberg.de/index.php?ac=jobad&id=16933>

Postdoctoral Position

Fellow in Pandemic Virus Research
Leibniz Institute of Virology (LIV),
Hamburg, Germany

<https://www.nature.com/naturecareers/job/postdoctoral-fellow-in-pandemic-virus-research-leibniz-institute-of-virology-liv-765018>

Postdoctoral Position

Translational Viral Immunity
University of Cologne, Cologne,
Germany

<https://www.nature.com/naturecareers/job/postdoctoral-research-position-in-translational-viral-immunity-fmx-university-of-cologne-764063>

Postdoctoral Position / Senior Scientist

Emerging and Re-emerging Infectious diseases

Institute of Tropical Medicine (ITM),
University Hospital Tübingen,
Germany

https://www.stepstone.de/stellenangebote--Senior-Postdoctoral-position-Senior-Scientist-Research-Associate-in-the-field-of-Emerging-and-Re-emerging-Infectious-diseases-f-m-d-Tuebingen-Universitaetsklinikum-Tuebingen--8846349-inline.html?rltr=4_4_25_seorl_m_0

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Education assistant for medical specialist in microbiology, virology and infectious disease epidemiology
Labor Berlin – Campus Virchow-Klinikum (CVK)
Berlin, Germany

<https://www.laborberlin.com/karriere/detail/weiterbildungsassistent-facharzt-mikrobiologie-hygiene/14942/#jobs>

Funding / Awards

Best “Paper of the Season” award for early career virologists - by the young Society for Virology Germany (jGfV) Application deadline: 01 December 2022

<https://g-f-v.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/jGfV-awards-and-scholarships.pdf>

MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-msca-2022-pf-01-01>

Useful Webpages

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

<https://research.jhu.edu/rdt/funding-opportunities/graduate/>

<https://www.nature.com/naturecareers/jobs/search?text=virology&location>

<https://careers.cell.com/searchjobs/?Keywords=virology&radialtown=&LocationId=&RadialLocation=20>

<https://www.jobvector.de/stellensuche/?keyword=virologie&sort=score&pn=1>

<https://www.dfg.de/>

<https://g-f-v.org/>

<https://fems-microbiology.org/>

Interview with Dr. Sofia Urner



Dr. Sofia Urner,
Freelance scientific and
medical writer

Dr. Sofia Urner obtained her PhD from Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf (Germany) in 2018. During her PhD, she studied basic cardiovascular biology and spent six months at the University of Virginia (Charlottesville, USA). She then worked as a postdoctoral researcher at the German Diabetes Centre in Düsseldorf, where she established a new research group for Diabetic Nephropathy and worked at Monash University (Melbourne, Australia) for five months as part of a research collaboration.

Interviewers:

Sriram Kumar, PhD Student, Institute of Virology, Munster

Philipp Ostermann, PhD Student, Institute of Virology, Dusseldorf

QUESTIONS:

1. How does a *typical* work day in your job look like?

A. On a typical workday, I spend most of my time working on running projects. This includes literature research, writing, editing, revising, or translating scientific and medical content. Some daily working time is dedicated to communicating with current and potential customers (having online meetings, responding to emails, or sending out proposals) and administrative work (bookkeeping, writing invoices, or marketing work). However, one day never feels like the other, and the daily routine can shift, for example, when approaching a project deadline or when there is a day without active project work.

2. When and how was your first contact with the job as a Freelance Scientific and Medical Writer? – How did you decide you want to pursue this career path?

A. I started looking for alternative career paths for scientists when I realised that the typical academic career was likely not for me, even though I have always loved science, especially scientific writing.

She recently followed her passion for scientific writing and became a Freelance Scientific and Medical Writer.

I found out about the profession of scientific and medical writing by simply googling. The job description resonated with me, particularly the freelance option. I reached out to an experienced medical writer to get more information, became a member of the European Medical Writers Association (EMWA), learned a lot about this job, and decided to start my own freelance scientific and medical writing business.

3. What do you like most about your job? – How is this perhaps different from your previous position as a postdoctoral researcher?

A. As a postdoctoral researcher, I have always liked the actual writing of research papers, review articles, or grant proposals. Now, I am doing this full-time, except that I am not writing about my own research. What I love most about my job is that I get to learn so much by being involved in very different scientific projects and medical topics. I also appreciate the fact that projects now come with a fixed deadline by which my work must be done. This can be stressful sometimes, but completing projects on the other hand is immensely satisfying. In fact, this is one of the most significant differences from research, where projects typically last several years and often have no stringent timeline. Besides the actual writing, I mainly enjoy the freedom and flexibility of being a freelancer. I can choose the projects I want to work on, create my own timeline, and work from anywhere I like.

While I can imagine that this is not for everyone, I also embrace the unpredictability that comes with freelancing. There is always room for surprises on the next day, such as an upcoming exciting project or meeting interesting new people.

4. What skills do you think are necessary to be able to work as a Freelance Scientific and Medical Writer? – Have you taken any classes or workshops to prepare for this position?

A. Most scientific or medical writers have a PhD or an equivalent degree, such as MD or PharmD, and I think this is key because of the skills you acquire during a doctoral program. These include the ability to understand scientific data quickly and interpret them correctly, extract relevant information from scientific documents, perform extensive literature searches, organise yourself, pay attention to detail, and finally, writing skills (being able to write in a structured, clear, and grammatically correct way). Besides general skills, many customers seek the expertise of a specialist with knowledge of specific medical topics. However, your PhD topic usually does not limit you to writing only about it since you have all the basic

scientific knowledge and skills mentioned above to get into a new topic quickly. Also, specific personality skills are essential if you want to work as a freelancer; you should be comfortable with responsibility, extremely organised, and happy to work alone while being highly collaborative.

5. What are the first steps you have to take if you want to pursue a career as Freelance Scientific and Medical Writer?

A. The most important for a career as a freelance scientific and medical writer is extensive writing experience, which you will need to demonstrate to every potential customer. Therefore, you should have a CV representing your writing experience and/or writing samples. If you have worked in research for years already (mainly as a postdoctoral researcher), you likely have authored several scientific publications, written ethical approvals, and applied for grants. This should stand out in your CV. If you lack significant writing experience, starting as an employed medical writer in a medical communications agency may be an option.

This would allow you to gain lots of writing experience on various scientific and medical documents. You should also get familiar with the different types of medical writing, e.g., regulatory medical writing versus medical communications, and clarify what kind of service you would like to offer. Getting in touch with medical writers and establishing your network is supportive. For example, becoming a member of EMWA and joining one of their conferences proved extremely useful to me. Finally, being a freelancer means running your own business. Therefore, you should acquire basic business skills, such as tax, invoicing, and legal knowledge.

6. Could you please give us some examples of specific tasks for which you were hired? - What kind of firms and companies usually hire a Freelance Scientific and Medical Writer?

A. Most of the time, I write articles for websites or journals that are mainly directed toward an expert audience, such as medical doctors and scientists (but sometimes also to a lay audience, such as patients). I also create, revise, and translate content for conferences (i.e.,

presentations, posters, or abstracts). Moreover, I get involved with creating and editing content for medical education and information material about (new) pharmaceutical or medical products. I get most of my work through scientific and medical communications agencies that often have pharmaceutical companies as end customers. However, I also work directly with companies in the healthcare industry and with customers from academic institutions.

7. Is there any exchange between Freelance Scientific and Medical Writers? – Are there annual meetings or regular workshops?

A. Yes. Both EMWA and the American Medical Writers Association (AMWA) offer options for freelance medical writers to connect. The EMWA conference takes place twice a year and has its own section for freelance networking, in which freelance writers can exchange thoughts, ask for other opinions on certain topics, or just enjoy being connected to like-minded colleagues.

There are also regular online workshops, in which questions can be addressed towards more experienced scientific and medical writers.

Thank you very much, Dr. Sofia Urner, for this interview!

Announcement

❖ We are looking for **YOU!**

Are you a **young virologist** (student to 3rd yr PostDoc / physician in training) and interested in actively shaping the jGfV, contributing your own ideas and making decisions? Then apply for **joining the jGfV board** as an official student representative member for one year!

We meet online every month and distribute our to-do's in smaller teams such as the newsletter team, the virtual virology lecture team, etc.

If you are interested, please send your short CV and a letter of motivation to jGfV@G-f-V.org by **28th of February 2023**. You will have the opportunity to introduce yourself during the jGfV session at the annual meeting of the Society for Virology in Ulm 2023. Afterwards, an online election of the candidates will take place.

❖ Don't forget to register for our next jGfV virology lecture series

https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMscuihrD0qHNTey6kTH62C3rK_TP9VKPk7

IMPRESSUM

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