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The University of Manchester

Lydia Becker Institute of
Immunology and Inflammation

NEWSLETTER

Issue 17 August 2026



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HARNESSING IMMUNE COMPLEXITY

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Director's Update

It has been another busy and exciting period for the Becker, with lots to celebrate across the Institute.

Congratulations to Richard Grencis on receiving the Per Brandtzaeg Distinguished Scientific Award and major funding successes for colleagues including Matt Hepworth, Sara Federici and the teams behind our new Immuno-Biotechnology (MImmBI) and Cancer Immunology (POLLINATE) networks. We're also very excited that Mahima Swamy will be joining us from August, further enhancing our reputation as a leading institute for barrier immunology research.



It is also fantastic to see so many achievements from our students and early-career researchers, alongside brilliant outreach, fundraising and community activity across the Becker (very proud to see my lab win special recognition for their fabulous outfits at the bar rally!).

On another note, I was also saddened to hear of the death of [Dame Bridget Ogilvie](#), a staunch supporter of immunology at Manchester who attended the launch of the Lydia Becker Institute. She epitomised inclusivity and research culture at a time when championing these values was not always widely embraced and her mentorship was second to none. Science would be much more pleasurable if we were only a bit like Bridget.

Professor Tracy Hussell

Bill Ford Food (BFF)

In honour of Professor Ford, the Bill Ford Chair of Cellular Immunology was created at the University. The role was recently held by Professor Werner Muller, prior to his retirement, and is currently held by Professor Richard Grencis. Bill Ford started the first immunology seminar series in Manchester and so it is fitting that our weekly lunchtime meeting for scientific discussions on anything immunological is named after him – Bill Ford Food (BFF). The group meet each Thursday for lunch at 1 pm in Room 4.005 in the AV Hill Building.

Previous discussions have ranged from what are the next emerging fields in immunology, global health opportunities in Manchester.

If any PIs would like to join, please contact Mr Ameur Bayar via ameur.bayar@manchester.ac.uk to be added to the list of BFF members.



The Lydia Becker Institute welcomes Professor Mahima Swamy to The University of Manchester



We're delighted to announce that **Professor Mahima Swamy** will be joining the Institute as a Professor of Immunology from August 1st, expanding the Becker's world-class expertise in Barrier Immunity. Her lab studies intestinal immunology, diet, infection, and immune-mediated bowel diseases (Coeliac and Crohn's). The group particularly focuses on intraepithelial lymphocytes (IEL), a poorly characterised class of T cells residing within the intestinal epithelium, and their communication with epithelial cells.

Mahima joins the Becker from The University of Dundee, where she is a Programme Leader in the MRC Protein Phosphorylation and Ubiquitylation Unit (MRC PPU). In 2016, Mahima established her own research group in the MRC PPU, supported from 2017 by a Wellcome Trust Sir Henry Dale Fellowship, and became an EMBO Young Investigator in 2022.

Originally from Bangalore, India, Mahima studied Biological Sciences and Biotechnology at BITS Pilani before completing her PhD at the Max-Planck Institute of Immunobiology in Freiburg, Germany, studying T-cell receptor biochemistry with Wolfgang Schamel. She then held postdoctoral positions with Adrian Hayday at CRUK's London Research Institute, researching intestinal immune surveillance, and with Doreen Cantrell at Dundee, uncovering roles for O-GlcNAc modification in T cell lymphomagenesis and development.

Mahima said: "I am very excited to be joining The University of Manchester and the Lydia Becker Institute. I have always appreciated the amazing immunology research that happens at the Becker and loved the collegiate and friendly atmosphere whenever I have visited. With the recent award of the MRC Centre of Research Excellence in Exosome Immunology to the University, I think this is a great time to be joining and to be able to contribute to the great mucosal barrier research going on here." Commenting on the appointment, Professor Tracy Hussell, Director of the Lydia Becker Institute said: "I am thrilled that Mahima will be joining the Lydia Becker Institute at Manchester. Her fantastic research on intestinal immunity is a natural fit with our focus on barrier tissues and their interaction with environmental stressors."

Congratulations

Professor Richard Grencis receives Per Brandtzaeg Distinguished Scientific Award from the Society for Mucosal Immunology



Richard Grencis recently received the Per Brandtzaeg Distinguished Scientific Award from the Society for Mucosal Immunology (SMI) in recognition of his achievements as a pioneer in mucosal immunology and parasite immunology. Throughout his career he has generated fundamental insights into the immunology and physiology of gastrointestinal helminth infection, including major contributions to understanding of type 2 immunity.

Richard's early work revealed Th2 responses as crucial for helminth clearance. This is now a central dogma of immunity but at the time completely changed understanding. He pioneered the use of helminths, including *Trichuris muris*, to disentangle the central mediators of type 2 immunity and host protection. He was amongst the first to elucidate roles for IL-33, IL-9 and IL-13, revealing new understanding of their downstream mechanisms, via mast cells, smooth muscle, epithelial circuits and goblet cells. His work brought helminth infection models to the attention of a global audience and led to them becoming commonly employed tools in immunology.

Professor Matt Hepworth Awarded £1.4M BBSRC Grant

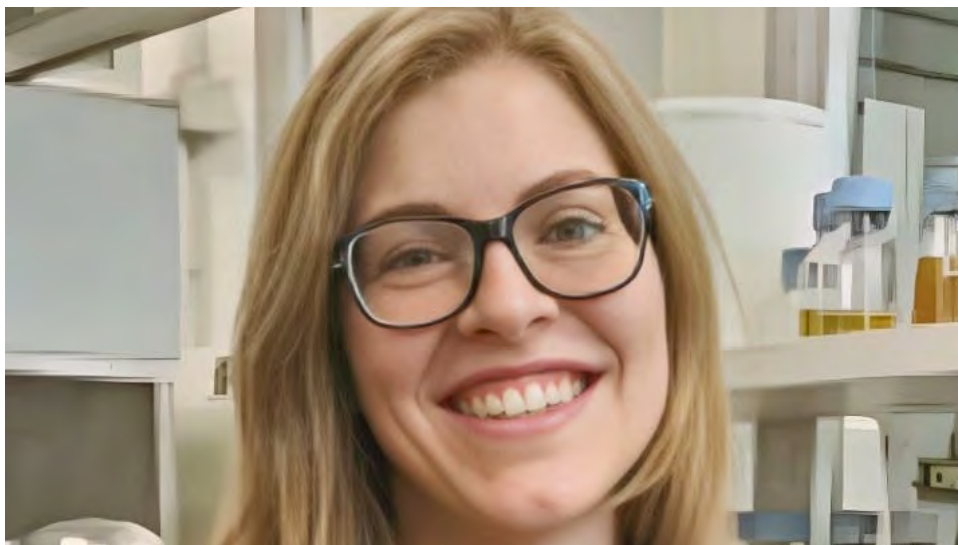


Matt Hepworth along with Co-Is Judi Allen and Doug Dyer have been awarded a BBSRC grant totalling **£1.4M**.

The project will focus on how crosstalk between innate lymphoid cells and the extracellular matrix influences tissue health.

Dr Sara Federici secures AMS Springboard Award for precision phage therapy research

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The Academy of Medical Sciences (AMS) has awarded a prestigious Springboard Award to [Sara Federici](#), supporting her work as an independent early-career researcher at The University of Manchester.

The AMS Springboard scheme provides up to £125,000 over two years alongside career support to help newly independent biomedical scientists launch their research careers and establish their own research programmes.

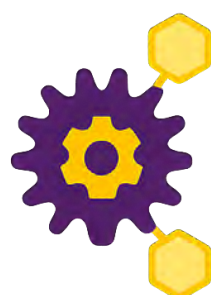
Sara's project sits at the interface of microbiology, immunology, and microbiome research. The work aims to contribute to the development of next-generation antimicrobial strategies to help tackle the global challenge of antimicrobial resistance – the ability of bacteria to survive and grow despite the presence of antibiotics.

Sara's research focuses on developing phage therapy as a precision approach to target bacteria involved in both infectious and non-communicable (non-infectious) diseases.

Bacteriophages, or phages, are viruses that naturally infect and kill specific bacteria. Because they target precise bacterial strains without harming beneficial microbes, they offer a promising alternative to traditional, broad-spectrum antibiotics. With the funding from this award, Sara will investigate how bacterial defence mechanisms influence the effectiveness of phages, using these insights to design more reliable and targeted phage-based treatments.

Sara said: "I'm thrilled to receive the AMS Springboard Award, which provides an exciting opportunity to establish my independent research programme. This funding will allow me to explore how we can harness phages to develop more precise and effective therapies, with the long-term aim of tackling antimicrobial resistance and improving treatment options for a wide range of diseases."

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MImmBI
Manchester Immuno-
Biotechnology Initiative

The Lydia Becker Institute of Immunology and Inflammation and the MRC CoRE in Exosome Immunology are partnering with the Manchester Institute of Biotechnology (MIB) to launch the Manchester Immuno-Biotechnology Initiative (MImmBI)

While Manchester hosts world-leading expertise across immunology, environmental health, and biotechnology, collaborative work connecting these specific domains has traditionally been fragmented. Supported by the Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health, MImmBI will create a shared innovation space across the three institutes to build collaborative networks driving future funding.

Led by **Jonathan Worboys**, the 12-month programme will bring together scientists from the Becker, MIB, and the MRC CoRE around three primary themes:

- **Synthetic Immunology & Molecular Sensing:** Engineering biological circuits and biosensors to track and direct immune responses in real time.
- **Non-Destructive Analysis of Pollutants and Metabolites:** Profiling how environmental pollutants and cellular metabolites interact with barrier immune tissues without destroying the sample.
- **Immunology-Focused Bioengineering:** Building physical platforms and microfluidic tools to mimic or control complex immune micro-environments.

Commenting on the new initiative Jonathan said: “Advances in biotechnology, bioengineering and synthetic biology are revolutionising how we do research. MImmBI will ensure immunology research in Manchester can employ these transformational advances and drive exciting innovations across our institutes.” Becker Director Tracy Hussell added: “Understanding and treating immune-mediated disease requires new approaches and new partnerships. MImmBI creates an exciting platform for researchers in Manchester to combine expertise in immunology, biotechnology and engineering, opening the door to innovative technologies and discoveries that will accelerate research and ultimately benefit patients.”

Anthony Green, MIB Director said: “I am excited about the opportunity to bring together researchers from across biotechnology and immunology to explore new ideas at the interface of our disciplines. Manchester has outstanding strengths in each of these areas, and MImmBI will create the connections and collaborations needed to develop innovative research programmes and future funding opportunities.”

Launching August 2026, the programme will feature cross-institute symposia and sandpit workshops. These sessions will allow immunologists to pitch biological and environmental questions directly to engineers and physical scientists, laying the groundwork for joint research agendas and future external funding bids.

Faculty Award Supports New Immunology-Cancer Collaboration Network



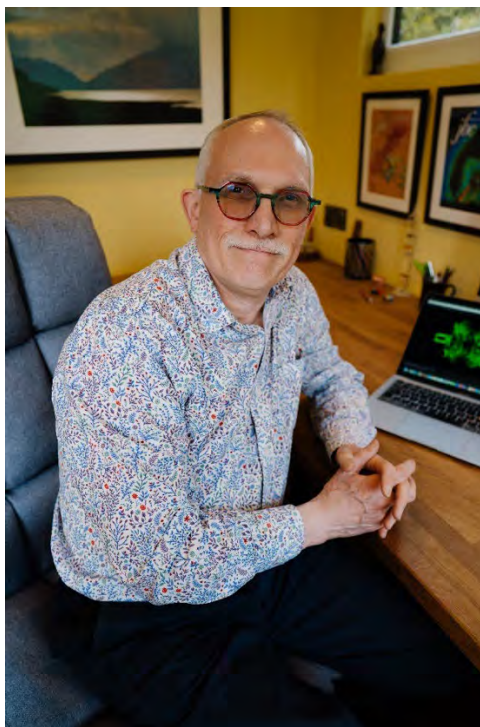
Congratulations to **Luke Roberts** and **Sara Valpione**, whose proposal POLLINATE (Promoting Opportunities, Links and Leadership in Immunology and National Biomarker Centre to Advance Team-science and Exploration) has been awarded £5,000 in support from the Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health.

The initiative will bring together early career researchers from the Lydia Becker Institute and the CRUK National Biomarker Centre through networking events, laboratory exchanges and clinical observation opportunities at The Christie. The programme aims to foster new collaborations, encourage cross-disciplinary thinking, and create opportunities for researchers to explore new techniques, develop innovative ideas and build future funding opportunities

The funding will support a year-long programme of activities designed to strengthen links between immunology, inflammation, cancer precision medicine and biomarker science, helping to seed the next generation of collaborative research projects.

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Funding Successes and Patent Recognition for the Day Lab



Congratulations to **Tony Day** and colleagues on a series of recent achievements. The group has secured two new awards, including funding from Upstream Genes valued at £282,945 to develop an AAV gene therapy for HGSNAT-associated Retinitis Pigmentosa, and a BBSRC ALERT Equipment Grant valued at £368,684 to enhance analysis of molecular binding events using Taylor Dispersion technology.

The team has also celebrated the publication of a US patent, CXC Receptor Ligands, published in the US on the 2nd of April 2026.

Dr Amy Dashwood awarded Bicentenary Early Career Research Fellowship

Congratulations to **Amy Dashwood** on being awarded a prestigious Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health Bicentenary Early Career Research Fellowship. The fellowship has been established to support exceptional early-career researchers with strong potential, providing them with the opportunity to develop into future leaders in bioscience, biomedical and health research. Amy will take up the fellowship in early 2027, marking an exciting next step in her research career.



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Holly Sedgwick and Dr Stephane Guillaume to represent early-career researchers at the BSI



The British Society for Immunology recently held its committee elections for 2026. Two Lydia Becker researchers have been elected to represent early career researchers in the Member Engagement Forum.

Stephane Guillaume will be serving as the Early Career Representative. Stephane is committed to inclusivity in research and co-founded the Pride@Babraham Network. He will be assisting the BSI in ensuring early-career researchers are heard and embedded into research culture.

Stephane said: “The BSI has always been a really warm and inclusive community that welcomed me when I first moved to the UK for my PhD; I’ve always been keen to be more involved with the BSI to help contribute to the positive culture. I’m especially keen to focus on diversity and inclusion across the BSI network, to help foster a more collaborative space for researchers at all career stages to connect through.”

Holly Sedgwick was elected to represent PhD students at the forum. Holly has been committed to championing immunology both within research and through public engagement. Within the BSI, Holly will be ensuring PhD students have a voice and receive inclusive, accessible support.

Holly said: “The BSI has supported me from my very first weeks as a PhD student, and I wanted to stand for election to give back to this incredibly welcoming community. Being elected means the world to me, and I now have the privilege to advocate for fellow students. I am excited to represent diverse student voices, foster a true sense of belonging, and ensure all PhD members feel supported and included.”

Commenting on their elections Tracy Hussell said: “As BSI president I am extremely proud of Holly and Stephane for their election by the membership to these prestigious roles. Both work in the group of Madhvi Menon and all contribute to the vibrancy of the Lydia Becker Institute”

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Dr Matthew Sinton Named IUIS 2025 Rising Star



Congratulations to [Matthew Sinton](#) who received the Pride in STEM 2026 Decadal Award for his commitment towards increasing the visibility of LGBTQIA+ scientists via his work as founder of [The STEM Village](#).

Team Becker raises money for MPS Society UK

Congratulations to **James Parkinson, Brian Chan, Sara Kirkham and Joshua Cox** from the Becker for completing the Great Manchester Run 10k held on Sunday 31st May and raising **£844** for MPS Society UK to support those with Mucopolysaccharidoses (MPS) Fabry and related lysosomal conditions in the UK.





Dr Amanda Ridley raises money for Cancer Research UK

Congratulations to **Amanda Ridley** who took part in the Cancer Research UK Race for Life Pretty Muddy 5k course in Victoria Park on the 28th June and helped to raise **£1,860** for Cancer Research UK's groundbreaking work.

Double Award Success for Dr Charles Earnshaw

Congratulations to **Charles Earnshaw**, NIHR Clinical Lecturer in Santiago Zelenay's Cancer Inflammation and Immunity Group, on receiving two prestigious awards. Charles was named the Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health Doctoral Academy Postgraduate Researcher of the Year for the School of Medical Sciences and was also awarded the Best Outstanding Output Excellence Award by the Manchester Doctoral College for the group's paper published in Cancer Discovery in February 2026.



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Dr Maria Koufaki selected for prestigious international immunology programme and celebrates publication success

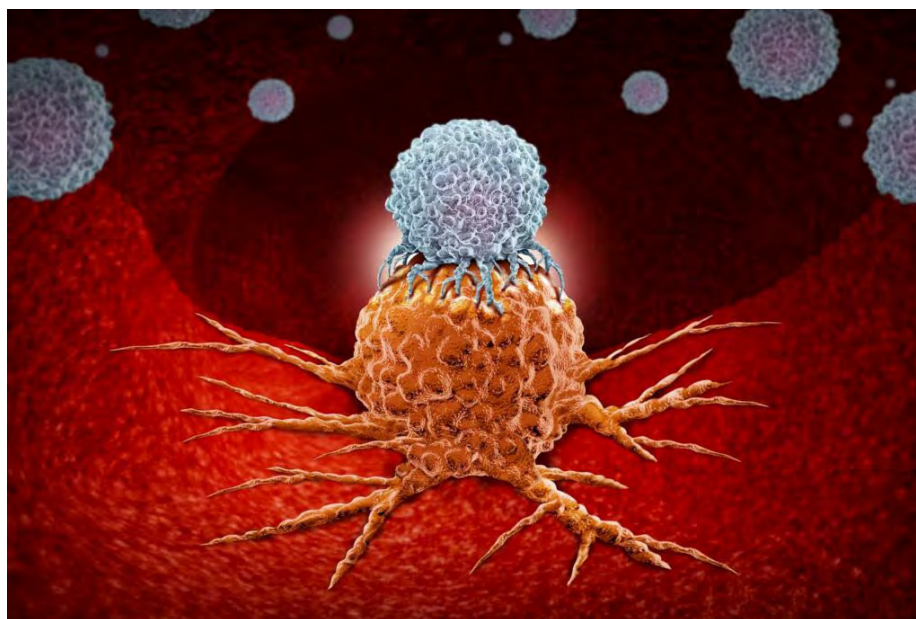


Congratulations to **Maria Koufaki** from Santiago Zelenay's Cancer Inflammation and Immunity Group, who has been selected to attend the highly competitive International School on Advanced Immunology in Japan this autumn. Jointly organised by IFRc and ImmunoSensation, the programme brings together 50 outstanding PhD students and early-career postdoctoral researchers from around the world.

Maria also recently received further good news, with a paper arising from her PhD research accepted for publication in *Immunity*. The article is expected to appear in the August issue. Following this success, Maria will continue her research career as a postdoctoral fellow at the Francis Crick Institute from September.

We congratulate Maria on these fantastic achievements and wish her every success for the next stage of her career.

Professor Sheena Cruickshank and Dr Jonathan Worboys write for *The Conversation*



Professor Sheena Cruickshank and Dr Jonathan Worboys' wrote a piece for *The Conversation*, "*Masked T-cell engagers: cancer immunotherapies for the future?*" – which received significant engagement and was translated into French. The piece was the fourth most-read article of the year by University of Manchester academics, with 74,000 reads across the US, France, UK, Canada and Australia, and was republished by ScienceAlert, SudOuest, Science et Vie, The Conversation France app and Medical Xpress. You can read their article [here](#)

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Congratulations – PhD and Undergraduate students

Congratulations to;

- **Holly Sedgwick, a PhD student in the Menon lab** was awarded 2nd place in the "Student of the Year: undertaking volunteering that benefits the wider community" category at this year's University of Manchester Volunteer of the Year Award.



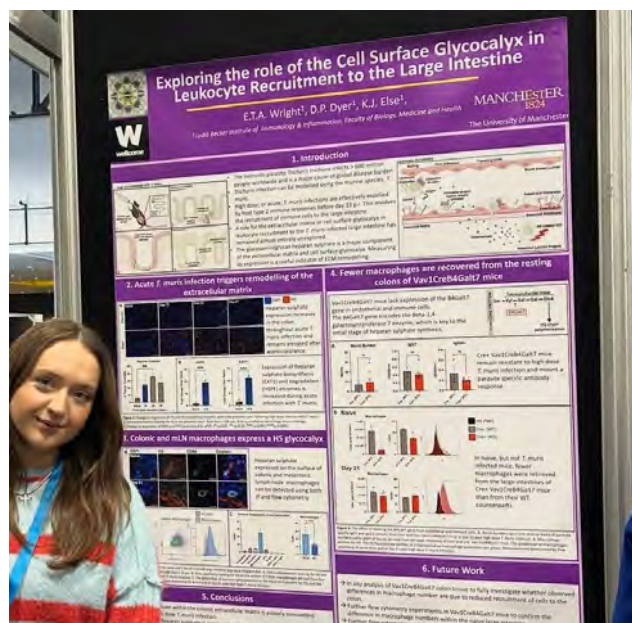
- **Holly** also won the University's Three-Minute Thesis (3MT) competition! Holly brilliantly communicated her research to secure the win and will now represent The University of Manchester at the Vitae National Finals. Best of luck to Holly at the finals!
- In addition, **Holly** also received a special £100 prize from the Lydia Becker Institute in recognition of her work in volunteering and public engagement. Professor Tracy Hussell said: "Holly's commitment and enthusiasm have been truly exceptional - consistently going above and beyond to support and champion public engagement, playing a vital role in strengthening the Becker's impact and helping to make our work more accessible to wider audiences."





- **Argyro Olympitis**, a PhD student in the Couper lab, took part in University Challenge broadcast on Monday 20th July where Manchester faced off against students from Durham.

- **Emily Wright**, a PhD student in Else lab, was awarded a poster prize at the British Society for Matrix Biology Spring Meeting.



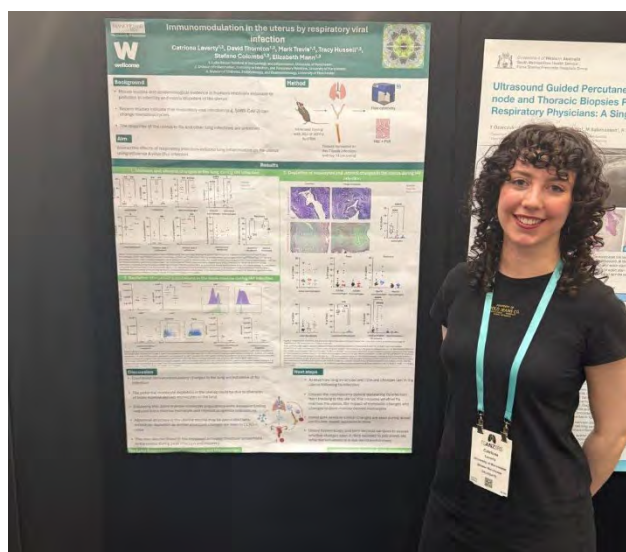
- **Oliver Wagstaff**, a PhD student in the Lopez-Castejon lab was awarded the prize for Best Poster at the 3rd European Purine meeting in Bordeaux held in July.

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- **Iashia Nabi**, a PhD student in the Dyer lab presented and won “Best Talk” at the British Society for Matrix Biology Spring Meeting.



- **Catriona Laverty**, a PhD student from the Mann lab was awarded ‘Best Poster’ at the Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand (TSANZ) Annual Scientific Meeting 2026 in Perth in the Occupational and Environmental Disease group.



Lung

- Congratulations to **Lucy Le Maistre** from the Worboys lab, who secured an MRC DTP studentship to do a project developing immuno-organoids in PDAC in the Worboys lab and alongside the Jørgensen group at the CRUK MI
- **Ethan Newman**, a MSci student with the Worboys lab, achieved a First-class honours degree and has now secured a PhD at King’s College London.
- **Anmoyul Mohon**, a PhD student with the Quintana lab went on Future Planet Capital’s life-science venture micro-internship (29 June to Friday 3 July)

Invited Seminars and Presentations



Trends in Parasitology

Juan Quintana was invited to participate in the ERC-funded ParaFrap Next generation in parasitology 2026: Connecting young parasitologists across Europe held in May in Montpellier (pictured above). Link to the manuscript highlighting the outcomes [here](#).

Juan Quintana was also invited to participate at the BSI Edinburgh Immunology Group (EIG) summer symposium held on the 11th of June.





Madhvi Menon was invited to speak at the Pint of Science 'Barriers, B Cells and Battle Plans: Your Immune System Unleashed' event at Cloudwater Brewery, Manchester - which aims to bring researchers to local pubs/cafes/spaces to share their scientific discoveries. The event organising team included **Emily Wright** (pictured below) from our WT ICD PhD Programme.

Judi Allen attended the IWISH-TALKS event held in Edinburgh in March and gave a talk entitled: "Finding joy in science: a life journey of unexpected discoveries"



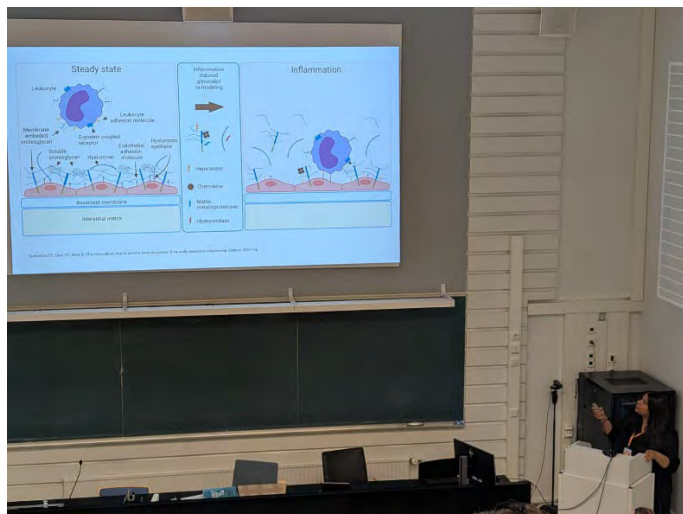
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From 27 to 29 April 2026, **Martie van Tongeren** and **Rufus Daw** from the MRC CoRE in Exposome Immunology attended The Global Exposome Summit in Sitges, Spain The Global Exposome Summit - 27-29 April, 2026. Sitges (Barcelona). Rufus presented a poster “The MRC CoRE in Exposome Immunology Mega-Omic Atlas: Mapping Exposome-Mediated Immune Dysregulation in Chronic Inflammatory Disease”.



Holly Sedgwick was invited to speak at the Pint of Science ‘The Exposome Strikes Back!’ event in Manchester.



Iashia Nabi presented a talk at Matrix Biology Europe 2026 in Oulu, Finland - on the endothelial glycocalyx in flu infection.

Anna Hains (pictured right, centre) attended and presented her work at the Keystone Symposia on Inflammation Resolution in Whistler



**1st IUIS
LEADERSHIP ACADEMY**

For Future Leaders in Immunology
October 25-28 2026 | Oaxaca, Mexico

Main Topics

- Effective communication
- Time management
- Fostering creativity
- Ethics in collaborations
- Grant writing
- Conflict management
- and many more...

Confirmed Faculty

- Christina Termini-Fred Hutch Cancer Center
- Juan Quintana-The University of Manchester
- Mónica Guzman-Weill Cornell Medicine
- Anne Hahn-The University of Melbourne
- Oliver Bogler-Night Science
- Lee-Hwa Tai-University of Sherbrooke
- Matthew Stinton-The University of Manchester
- Eva Salinas Miralles-Universidad Autónoma de Aguascalientes
- Marlon Bruncck-Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México
- Fior Angel Pérez Sánchez y Edna Marlene Martínez
- Hernández-Red Mexicana de Investigadoras Indígenas

Selected participants enjoy a full scholarship for the course, including accommodation and food

Build lifelong connections, immerse yourself in the rich culture of Oaxaca during one of its most vibrant seasons, and learn from world-leading experts in immunology and scientific leadership.

Apply now!
closing July 30th
23pm CT

Questions?
junior-community@iuis.org
alacijuniorcommunity@gmail.com

Matthew Sinton and **Juan Quintana** will participate at the upcoming 1st IUIS Leadership Academy for Future Leaders in Immunology in Mexico in October.

Events

British Science Week 2026 at Manchester Museum



British Science Week is a nationwide celebration of STEM and marks a brilliant opportunity for outreach. On 9 and 10 March, Manchester Museum became a hub of fascinating research. Over 100 researchers from diverse disciplines set up stalls to bring the science out of the lab and inspire a new generation of scientists.

Over 20 Lydia Becker researchers did their part in disseminating some fantastic science. At the Becker stall, our famous Splat the Virus and Neutralise the Virus games made an appearance. Students had a great time getting some energy out, batting and throwing our virus plushies. Our volunteers made great use of these games to lead the way into some fun discussions around the immune system and how it fights off viral infections.

Team Mucus brought parasites and literal buckets of slime to demonstrate the essential research on parasitic infections and bodily defences. Volunteers turned squeals of disgust into curiosity and thoughtful conversations on a global health issue.

Across the two days, over 1,000 school students made their way through the stalls, getting an opportunity to connect with researchers and get hands-on with brilliant activities. Our researchers recognise this incredible opportunity to inspire growing minds and have a lot of fun along the way.

“Volunteering at the BSW Becker stand was a blast, as it is every year! It was wonderful to see young students learning about infections, the immune system, and vaccines through games like Splat the Virus, Spin the Wheel, and Neutralise the Virus. I was especially proud when most of the students could answer my little quiz at the end of the games, and some future scientists even asked excellent questions. I also felt a real sense of personal growth throughout the experience – it was incredibly rewarding.” – **Mang Xu, PhD student**

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"I had a fantastic time volunteering at the Lydia Becker stand during BSW alongside the other volunteers. As always, Splat the Virus was a huge hit, along with the revamped Spin the Wheel and Neutralise the Virus. It was great chatting with the students about the different types of immune cells and how they protect the body, and I loved having the chance to make complex science a bit more accessible (and hopefully spark a few future immunologists along the way)." – **Holly Sedgwick, PhD student.**

MRC CoRE in Exposome Immunology AI in Immunology Workshop



On Wednesday 6th May the MRC CoRE in Exposome Immunology held it's AI in Immunology Workshop, co-hosted by the Becker and Geoffrey Jefferson Brain Research Centre, which showcased recent advances in computational immunology and the application of AI. Held as a one-day hybrid event, it featured keynote talks, short presentations, workshops, and round-table Q&A with speakers and experts which encouraged further discussion.

Topics included AI-driven gene regulation, generative AI in biology, single-cell and spatial omics, and the use of large language models to support lab research and data analysis.

The event garnered positive feedback from participants and drew strong engagement, with 315 online registrations and 88 in-person sign-ups.

Talk recordings are available to watch [here](#).

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Splatting viruses and building immunity: the Becker at the Universally Manchester Festival Science Fair



On Saturday 13 June, the Lydia Becker Institute brought the world of immunology out of the lab and into the community by taking part in The University of Manchester's Community Fair at University Place, part of the [Universally Manchester Festival](#). This vibrant, annual event opens the University's doors to celebrate research, culture, and community collaboration in a completely free, family-friendly space.

This year's festival was incredibly lively, welcoming over 2,700 visitors from our local neighbourhoods and beyond. It provided an excellent opportunity for people of all ages to connect directly with researchers, staff, and community partners to explore the science shaping our world.

Under our banner Breathe, Build, and Battle: The Science of Immunity, we hosted an interactive stand designed to show how the human body detects and destroys infections. Using hands-on games – including a virus-splatting challenge named Splat the Virus! an immune cell spinning wheel, and white blood cell target practice – our team demonstrated the critical role immune cells play in clearing viruses and maintaining lung health. It was a fantastic opportunity for our researchers to translate their daily research into accessible, real-world concepts for an enthusiastic public audience.

We'd like to send a big thank you to our brilliant team of volunteers who represented the Becker so brilliantly and made it all happen:

- Aleina Alex
- Fariha Khanom
- Ilse Mendoza Trujillo
- Lydia Thompson
- Mang Xu
- Erin-Claire Pallott

Failing Forward: Academia in focus

Failing Forward: Academia in Focus, Wednesday 10 June

On Wednesday 10th June the Becker, Researcher Development Team and SBS Social Responsibility jointly organised a panel event entitled '**Failing Forward: Academia in focus**'. The panel included Dr Gloria Lopez-Castejon, Dr Joan Chang and Professor Matthias Trost who discussed strategies to cope with paper and grant rejections that form the mainstay of an academic career and discussed how they managed academic rejection to become more resilient. Tips included mindfulness, avoiding comparisons with peers, positive self-talk and gardening as ways to maintain wellbeing in the face of rejection.

BIRTHDAY INITIATIVE
BEYOND RESEARCH:
LESSONS FROM AN OVERCOMER
An inspiring event series sharing real-life research journeys, challenges, lessons, and the mindset behind global impact.

IGNITE YOUR CURIOSITY | OVERCOME CHALLENGES | CREATE GLOBAL IMPACT

CONFIRMED SPEAKERS:
Professor Richard Grecis (Professor of Immunopathology, University of Manchester)
Professor Rachel Lennon (Professor of Nephrology, University of Manchester)
Dr Erin-Claire Pallott (Research Communication Officer, University of Manchester)
Charles Gyasi, MSc, MPhil (PhD Researcher, University of Manchester)

DATES: 17-19 JUNE 2026 (3-DAY SERIES)
FORMAT: ONLINE (LIVE SESSIONS)
AUDIENCE: STUDENTS, ASPIRING RESEARCHERS & PROFESSIONALS IN GHANA, THE UK AND BEYOND
A SPECIAL EVENT: IN CELEBRATION OF IMPACT, INSPIRATION & PURPOSE

TO REGISTER: PLEASE USE THE LINK:
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Let's connect and inspire the next generation of researchers. | Charles Gyasi | @CharlesGyasi | charles.gyasi@manchester.ac.uk

Beyond Research: Lessons From an Overcomer

PhD student **Charles Gyasi** from the Grecis lab organised and hosted an online event series from the 17th – 19th June with Professor Richard Grecis, Professor Rachel Lennon and Dr Erin-Claire Pallott where they shared their real-life research journeys, challenges and lessons.

A common theme was that successful careers in research are built not only on scientific excellence, but also on mentorship, collaboration, resilience, curiosity and kindness.

Speakers also encouraged researchers to embrace lifelong learning, prioritise health and wellbeing, use emerging technologies such as AI thoughtfully, and remember to recognise how far they have come.

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Becker Bar Rally



The annual Becker Institute Bar Rally held on Wednesday 29th July was a resounding success, bringing together staff and students for an afternoon of fun, teamwork and friendly competition. The event featured everything from conga lines and chanting to creative challenges and impressive team spirit, making it a memorable day for all involved.



Congratulations go to the Dyer group for securing this year's victory, while the Hussell/Knight group earned special recognition for their standout outfits.

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The organising Menon group thanked everyone for embracing the event with enthusiasm and helping to create another fantastic social occasion that showcased the unique community spirit of the Becker.



Farewell to Dr Erin-Claire Pallott – Science Communications Officer

[Dr Erin-Claire Pallott](#) joined the Becker as a Science Communication Officer in October 2025 as part of the Wellcome Trust ICD PhD Programme's transition funding scheme and during her time with us Erin delivered several training sessions to pass on what she has learned and help researchers sharpen their storytelling, build confidence, and bring their science to any stage.



DIIIRM Postdoc Away Day 2026



Erin supported a huge range of activities during her time with us, from school outreach and work-experience programmes to public events, talks and engagement stands at British Science Week and the Universally Manchester Fair. She also supported researchers with presentations, grant feedback and mock interviews, helped with internal communications and blog content, and developed resources to make engagement activities easier and more effective. Behind the scenes, Erin also contributed to planning, risk assessments and professional development activities across the Becker.

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Lydia Becker Institute Manager Ameur Bayar said: “A huge thank you to Erin for all her support as our Science Communications Officer. It has been a real pleasure working with her and benefiting from her contributions to so many initiatives across the Becker. We wish her every success in whatever comes next, and I have no doubt she will excel at whatever she turns her hand to.”



Upcoming Seminars, Meetings and Events

MRC CoRE in Exposome Immunology MOXIE Annual Conference – 24th September



**MRC Centre of Research
Excellence in Exposome
Immunology**

On Thursday 24th of September the MRC CoRE in Exposome Immunology will be holding their inaugural MOXIE Annual Conference.

More details to follow - please contact alexandria.blundell-joyce@manchester.ac.uk for further information.

Greater Manchester Immunology Group Seminar Series 2026 - 2027

The 26/27 seminar series is currently being planned. A list of upcoming speakers will be circulated in due course.

Please contact Andy Greenhalgh andrew.greenhalgh@manchester.ac.uk or the DIIIRM PS Team diiirm@manchester.ac.uk if you would like to be added to the MIG seminar mailing list.

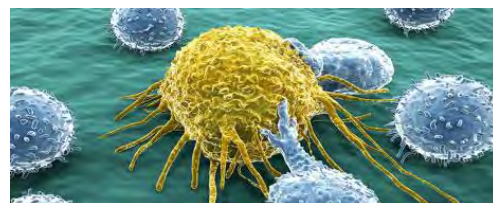
MION Network

The Manchester Immuno-Oncology Network (MION) fosters interactions between Clinicians and Scientists with an interest in immuno-oncology within Manchester, with an aim to bring people together to maximise collaborations and provide educational opportunities.

MION hosts quarterly interactive workshops covering topics such as:

- T cell immuno-oncology
- Pre-clinical models
- Immuno-oncology biomarkers
- Moving from pre-clinical data to clinical trial development

If you would like to join the Network and hear about our future events and opportunities for collaboration please email the-christie.Mcr-IOnetwork@nhs.net.



Becker Profiles

Find out more about the fantastic Research Fellows, Postdocs, Research Assistants, Technicians and PhD students affiliated with the Lydia Becker Institute by taking a look at our [‘Becker Profiles’](#) series.

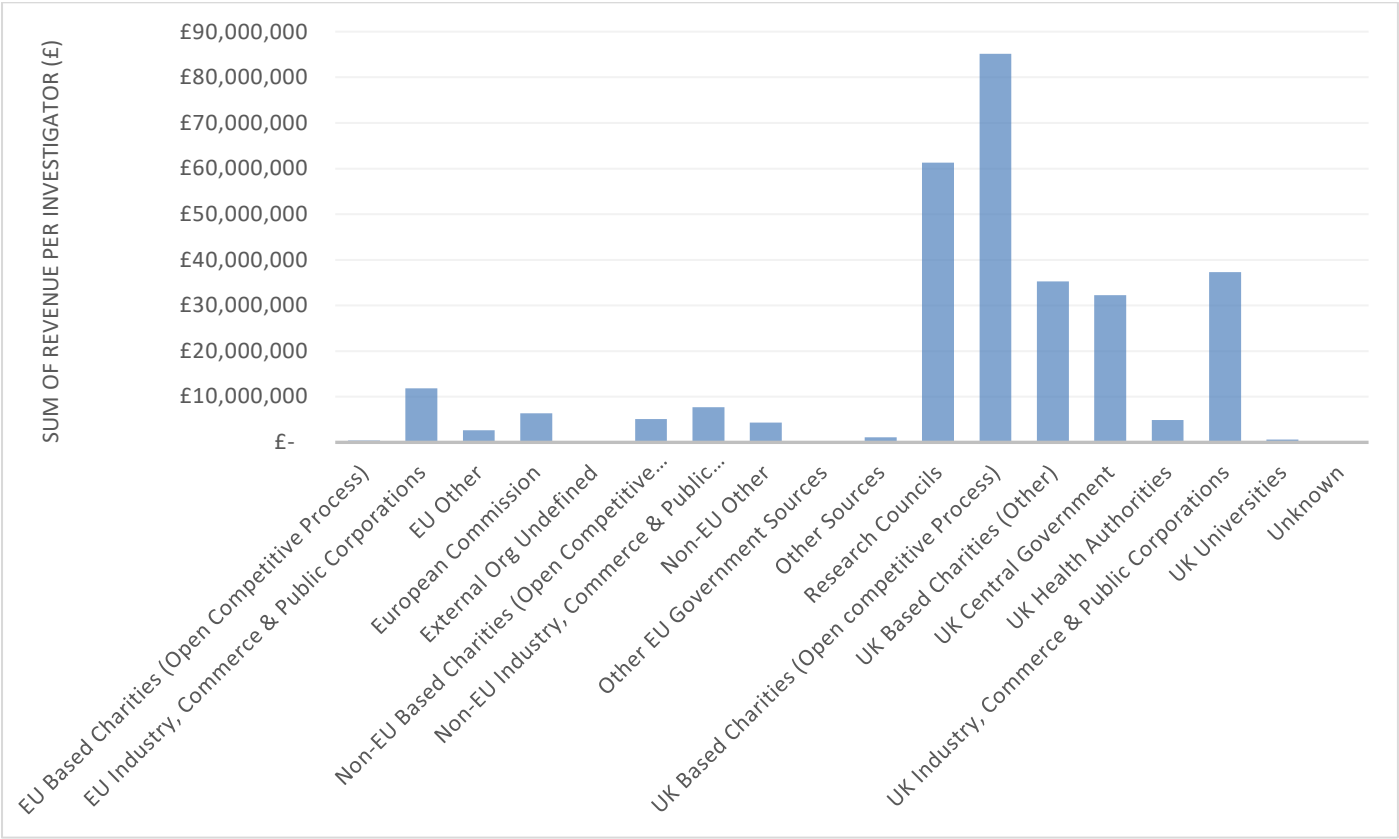
Our [latest profile](#) is with **Argyro Olympitis**, a Wellcome Trust ICD PhD student with the Couper lab.

Photos: [Brian Chan](#)



Grants

Since its launch, PIs affiliated with the Lydia Becker Institute have secured more than £296M in grant funding



Newsletter

Publications

Selected publications from Lydia Becker Institute affiliated researchers

January 2026

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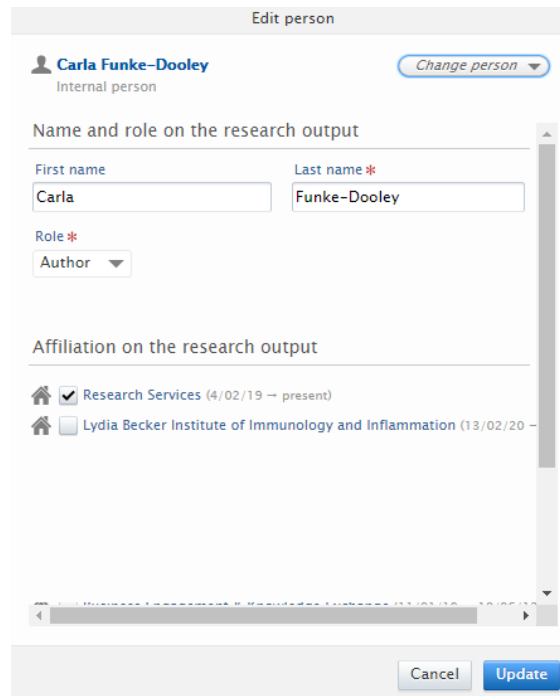
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