

DBM PhD Scientific Retreat 2019

Progress and new approaches in
biomedical research



The **7th annual PhD retreat** this year led us to a beautiful location in **Schwarzenburg**, BR in the midst of the nature park Gantrisch. After an early departure from Basel everyone was positively surprised by an unlimited coffee break offer, including everything you could hope for. The first day was reserved for our guest speakers providing us with insight into their work. This year, we were grateful to have our four guests speak on:

- **Henk Stunnenberg** (Neijmegen, Netherlands) - Epigenetic regulation of transcription in stem cells and consequences of transcriptional misregulation in celiac disease
- **Jim Norman** (Glasgow, United Kingdom) – The molecular machinery of integrin transport and their contribution to invasive migration of cancer cells
- **Francesca Peri** (Zürich, Switzerland) – The mechanisms how microglia identify and remove dysfunctional neurons from the brain
- **Francesca Granucci** (Milan, Italy) - Dendritic cell maturation and their role in activating and controlling NK cell functions

We thank all the speakers again for taking the journey to meet us and for their openness for discussion.

In the evening, a combined Apéro and poster session was then the first chance for the students to show off their own research in a relaxing and engaging atmosphere. We concluded the program with a Pub Quiz (put together expertly by Daria), which inspired some not-so scientific discussions over beer and pool afterwards.

Day two then was a day fully focused on our own research, done at the different locations that comprise the DBM. In four sessions and another poster session in the afternoon our student speakers introduced us to their projects. We were very delighted by the high quality of the contributions (which resulted in a shared second place for poster presentations) and want to thank everyone for participating. The best posters and presentations were as always awarded an Innerstadt Voucher and of course, The Golden Pipette to show off to their co-workers back in Basel.

The winners this year were:

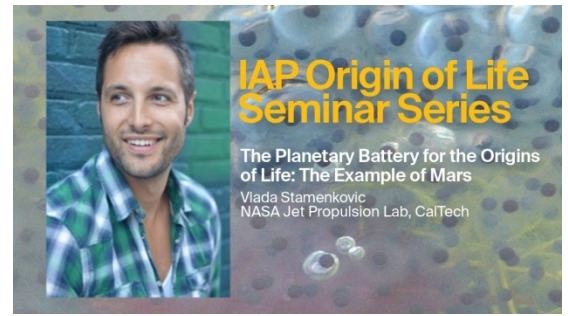
Poster

- 1st Nicole Kirchhammer
- 2nd Berna Kaya,
Grozdan Cvijetic,
Manuel Scheidmann

Presentations

- 1st Joana Amorim Freire
- 2nd Priska Auf der Mauer
- 3rd Marcel Trefny

The **Keynote speaker** this year was **Vlada Stamenkovic**, a former physics student at the ETH, who is currently working at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) for NASA in California, USA. He is leading a research group that develops probes to examine the subterranean areas on Mars, which potentially harbor environments that are permissive of simple life forms. Due to an unforeseen summoning by the NASA headquarters, he was not able to be there in person. We could, however, run the presentation via skype, nonetheless. The insights in what his work for NASA comprises, the amount of thought that has to go into planning a mission and what they have learned from their projects so far, was highly fascinating. The session was for sure something new for most of us and his way of presenting their work was exceptionally engaging and inspiring as well. We also want to thank him again for taking the time and for setting up the session with us.



With this we concluded the scientific program and gathered everyone for a bonfire to celebrate another successful retreat.

Before heading back to Basel, explored the surrounding a bit more and took everyone on a hike, leading us past many animals, crops and finally the old ruin of castle "Grasburg".

We, the PhD Club, want to say "thank you" to everyone who participated in making this retreat a great experience. A special thank you of course also goes to Nicole Schaeren-Wiemers, who we are lucky to support us during our studies and who is always enthusiastic about helping us with the activities we organize and especially the retreat.

We hope to see some of you again next year and look forward to the next retreat.

Your

DBM PhD Club

