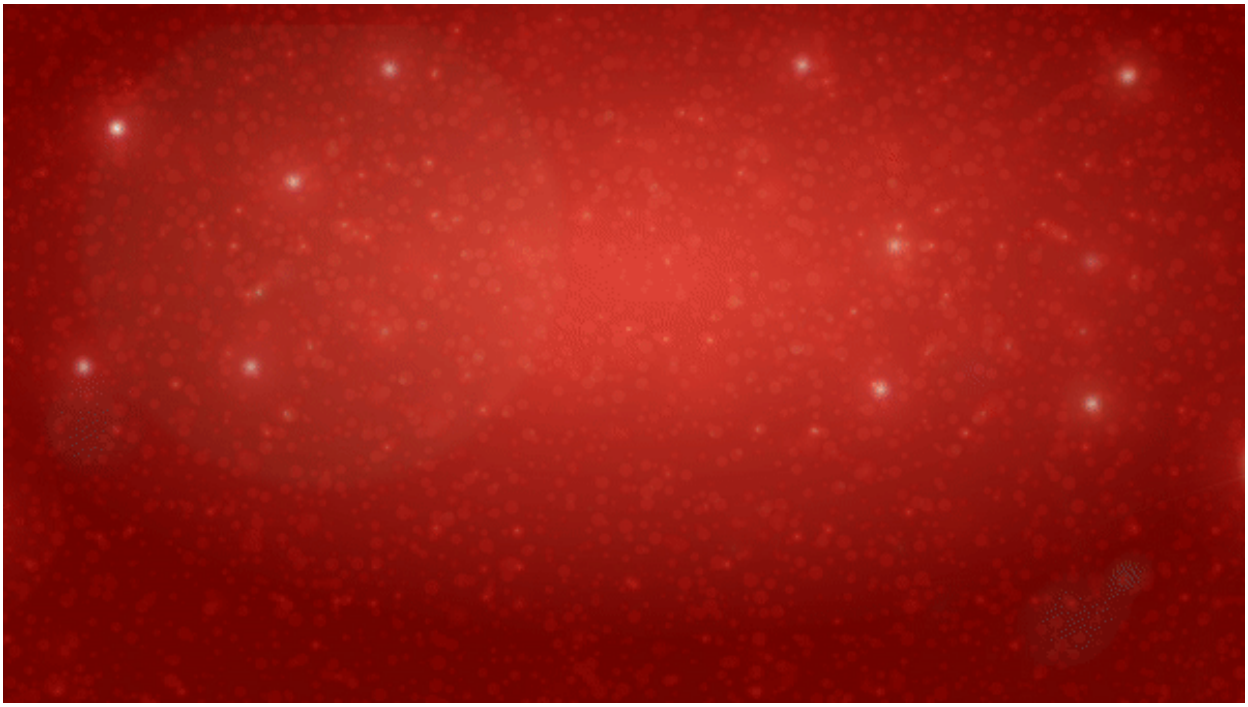


Newsletter #2 - December 2019

Dear LifeTime community,

The time has come for the next LifeTime newsletter.

In the past couple of months, LifeTimers have been active in many arenas and continued to grow a strong community. We have found new allies both in the public and private sectors (spanning multiple disciplines). They all share our vision to transform breakthrough discoveries into solutions that will improve the health of European citizens.

The biggest news of the past months certainly is the LifeTime call for action. It is a strong message to the European Council and European finance ministers about the importance to preserve or even increase investments in health research. As of the time this newsletter has been released, 500 individuals have signed our action and almost 60 organisations have joined in the call. And the

numbers are growing day by day.

Please, sign this call – if you haven't done so yet – and share it far and wide. Healthcare is one of the cornerstones for security, freedom, growth, and development. Hence, significant, coordinated and balanced European investment programs to release Horizon Europe's full potential are essential.

Let our voice be heard!

Nikolaus Rajewsky and Geneviève Almouzni
LifeTime coordinators

LifeTime call for action

Make EU health research count!

Academic and industry leaders supporting the LifeTime initiative, have called members of the European Union into action. They ask to preserve the existing Horizon Europe budget and put forward ten recommendations to strengthen EU health research.

Europe needs significant, coordinated and balanced investment programs to close the gap that the discontinuation of the FET-Flagship program has left in the European research funding landscape. Only long-term large-scale research initiatives have the potential to overcome the healthcare challenges facing Europe. They will integrate efforts within the public and private sector, create synergies and offer sustainable transformative solutions thereby releasing Horizon Europe's full potential to the benefit of our economy and citizens' health.

Read and sign the call

LifeTime events

First LifeTime meeting on Single Cell analysis held in Vienna

Members of the LifeTime initiative at IMBA – Institute of Molecular Biotechnology of the Austrian Academy of Sciences – hosted their first symposium in Austria on Single Cell Analysis in Biology and Medicine at the Vienna BioCenter.

Over 200 researchers working in the Single Cell field joined the organiser Jürgen Knoblich and representatives from the Austrian Ministry of Education, Science and Research (BMBWF) for the first Viennese meeting, where a strong emphasis was placed on networking and scientific exchange. With talks and coffee breaks providing the perfect framework, many fruitful discussions and dialogue between scientists were established. Nikolaus Rajewsky (MDC Berlin), one of the co-chairs of LifeTime, delivered a keynote on the principles of gene regulation and medical applications of Single Cell analyses.

Read more

LifeTime meets industry

On 31 October 2019, LifeTime partners together with the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA) organized a meeting which gathered 80 participants (50 from industry) including representatives from 38 companies across different sectors (multi-omics, single cell analysis, imaging, IT/data science, pharma/biotech and diagnostics) in Basel.

LifeTime partners introduced the LifeTime vision and presented the four Science & Technology work packages including their industry related goals and plans, followed by an overview of the accomplishments of the Innovative Medicine Initiative (IMI) and the current status of the next EU Health PPP (Innovative Health Initiative, IHI). 23 companies presented their interest in and ideas for LifeTime to other participants in an open and informal setting following an adaptation of the UnConference format in parallel sessions. Throughout the day it became clear that EFPIA, the new Partnership and the meeting attendees share the disease interception objective of LifeTime. The common goal is to tackle jointly with innovative industry/academia collaborations the grand challenge to (better) understand disease.

The event participants agreed to prepare and publish a declaration to call for significant, coordinated and balanced European investment programs covering the full innovation cycle including substantial funding for basic biomedical research with industry partners. This resulted in the LifeTime call for action.

Read and sign the call for action

LifeTime UnConference 2.0

After the successful Unconference in Barcelona in July, LifeTime organised the Unconference 2.0 in Montpellier on 7-8 November 2019.

The main objective of an Unconference is to reduce the usual emphasis on formal speeches and emphasize informal connections instead. Therefore, most of the sessions were devoted to presentations by the participants. The Unconference focused on important topics such as Single-cell Multi-omics, 3D Imaging, Data Science, Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning. The Keynote speakers included Ricardo Henriques (MRC LMCB, UK), Jean-Christophe Marine (VIB, BE), Anne C Rios (Princess Maxima Center for Pediatric Oncology, NL), Jean-Philippe Vert (Google AI, FR).

LifeTime mid-term meeting - a forum for exchange, networking and discussing innovative approaches

On Tuesday 15 October 2019 the LifeTime consortium gathered for the initiative's mid-term meeting in the heart of Paris, at the Institut Curie.

The LifeTime work package leaders presented the work conducted in the first six months and outlined the next steps and plans for future activities. The meeting featured scientific talks (Magda Bienko, Oliver Delattre, Jan Korbel, Patrik Verstreken) and a special lecture (Helmut Gerhart) focussing on the LifeTime core technologies.

Read more

Disease selection workshop

As part of the LifeTime Launchpad, multidisciplinary working groups representing different disease areas met for a two-day workshop on 16-17th October 2019 in Paris.

The aim of the workshop was to discuss the diseases previously identified by the working groups in the areas of autoimmunity, cancer, cardiovascular and metabolic diseases, infectious diseases and neurological and neuropsychiatric disorders where LifeTime's approach would have the greatest benefit for patients. The outcome of the discussions from the workshop was the identification of key medical challenges in each disease area where LifeTime could make important and much needed clinical impact. The experts recommended the inclusion of these challenges in the Roadmap.

Celebrating LifeTime science at Berlin Science Week

From 1 to 10 November 2019, the Berlin Science Week connected science communities with the public. Researchers from the Max Delbrück Center for Molecular Medicine (MDC) involved in LifeTime contributed to this international festival. Here are some impressions.

Read more

LifeTime at the ANRS conference

Geneviève Almouzni was recently invited to the ANRS (France Recherche

Nord&Sud Sida-HIV Hépatites) conference "On HIV and hepatitis: what are the new challenges?". The meeting took place on the 26th of November at Institut Pasteur in Paris.

LifeTime co-chair presented the initiative and its potential to answer some of the open questions that are still making the treatment of HIV and HBV a medical and societal challenge. The current therapeutic options put these two viral diseases in the category of chronic diseases, with lifelong effects, including the continuous need for medication and the possible occurrence of subsequent life-threatening conditions. The core technologies of LifeTime can be essential for the full characterization of these diseases, as well as vaccine/drug development. The experts demonstrated their interest in the application of LifeTime's strategies to different infectious diseases, highlighting the broad potential of our vision to impact multiple therapeutic areas. The conference had 450 participants and included oral presentations from specialists, as well as round table discussions. (Photo credit: Vincent Baillais)

Upcoming LifeTime events

11-12 June 2020 LifeTime Conference 2.0

Berlin, Germany

Following its great success in May 2019, LifeTime will again bring together leading European experts in the field of Single-Cell analysis, Machine Learning and organoids to discuss trends, opportunities and challenges. Over 600 participants and high-level, international speakers will attend the LifeTime Conference 2.0.
The LifeTime 2.0 conference is the perfect opportunity for companies to network and discuss with leading experts in the field, showcase their products and initiate sales leads and build partnerships with a highly qualified scientific community.

Sponsors package

19-20 November 2020

Emerging technologies in Single Cell research

Leuven, Belgium

Organized by VIB & LifeTime

Read more

LifeTime in the news

Single-cell analysis of the earliest cell fate decisions in development

(Babraham Institute press release)

Single-cell multi-omics analysis is also likely to deliver significant impacts for human healthcare in future years. A pan-European research initiative, LifeTime, is bringing together life science experts with leaders in the pharma, clinical medicine and technology industries to map how innovation and cutting-edge technologies (including single-cell multi-omics methods) can be united to revolutionise healthcare.

Read more

The revolution that came from the cell (To Vima – Greece)

Researchers in Germany are studying cells one by one with a depth that was unthinkable just a few years ago. Computer-aided integration of information produced into operating models opens the way for tomorrow's medicine.

Read more

LifeTime: research for the precision medicine of the future – an example of successful multilateral cooperation (Sanofi Deutschland Newsletter)

Research for a better understanding of the origin and development of diseases in the human body. A guest article on the LifeTime initiative by Professor Geneviève Almouzni.

Read more

World's leading journalists learn about LifeTime

Journalists from top-tier media outlets from the European Union and the United States were introduced to the LifeTime Initiative at Institut Curie in Paris, during a visit organised by the National Press Foundation and Fondation Ipsen.

The 25 journalists who visited Institut Curie cover science topics for media organisations such as the BBC, The Boston Globe, CNN, Guardian, National Geographic, The New York Times, and Science.

The journalists had the chance to interact with the scientists involved in LifeTime, and learn about LifeTime's mission, the core technologies and the expected outcome of our large-scale initiative. The presentation from researchers at Institut Curie focused on single-cell sequencing, the use of personalised disease models (organoids) and artificial intelligence. The meeting was an opportunity for journalists to understand how scientists apply these technologies in the lab and in the clinic.

After the meeting, the journalists have the necessary background to communicate LifeTime science to the public. For scientists, the meeting was an opportunity to present newly published scientific information and to provide tools to journalists for covering science topics.

News from partners

Prof. Ido Amit is the recipient of the Sanofi – Institut Pasteur 2019 Junior Award

Ido Amit, professor at the Weizmann Institute of Science – Rehovot, Israel is awarded for his breakthrough single-cell studies elucidating the diversity of the immune cell types which revolutionised our view in basic immunology and immunotherapy research.
Each year, the Sanofi – Institut Pasteur 2019 Junior Award honours two scientists, whose outstanding research in the life sciences is contributing to progress in global public health, specifically in the following fields: immunology and microbiology & infection.

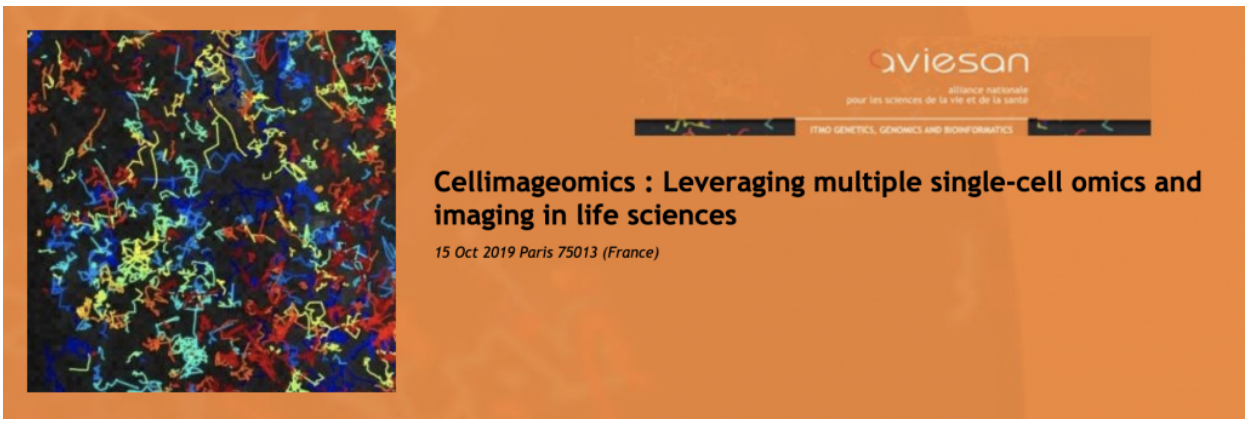
New Publication: Single Cell Analysis in Research and Medicine

The Interdisciplinary Research Group (IAG) 'Gene Technology Report' at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities (BBAW)* has published the report "SINGLE-CELL ANALYSIS IN RESEARCH AND MEDICINE".

The new brochure provides an overview of the new possibilities of single-cell analysis from the viewpoint of developmental biology, biomedicine, and bioinformatics, but also addresses possible social implications and consequences. The brochure has been compiled with the support of Single Cell Omics Germany and several SCOG partners are among the renowned experts contributing to this report.

Read the report

Leveraging multiple Single-Cell omics and imaging in life sciences



As part of the LifeTime initiative, the Aviesan Genetics, Genomics, and Bioinformatics institute (ITMO GGB) organized on Tuesday, 15 October 2019, a one-day workshop devoted to advances in single-cell omics and imaging technologies.

The goal of the conference was to focus on combinatorial approaches, i.e. multiple omics and/or imaging-based, and the perspectives they are opening in life sciences. The workshop focused on every aspect of single-cell analyses from (epi)genomic, transcriptomic and proteomic approaches to computational and imaging strategies.

The conference provided opportunities to get up-to-date with the most recent data and technologies in the field. This meeting provided a unique forum to bring together a broad group of scientists with expert knowledge in single-cell technologies and broad analyses at each individual cell.

Read more

Join the LifeTime community

The call for academic institutions to become Associated Partners is still open and interested organisations can become members of the LifeTime Consortium by following the application process.

There is no deadline and, in principle, it is possible to join the consortium at any time.

Apply now

Companies and private sector organisations can join the LifeTime community as industry supporters.

Currently, 80 companies from multiple sectors support the initiative.

Join us

We wish you a very Happy Holiday season and a peaceful and prosperous New Year.

The LifeTime Office is closed from 23 December to 6 January.