



# 1<sup>st</sup> Symposium

## Shaping the Future of Immunology in Europe

**November 10th & 11th, 2022**

**Max Delbrück Center (MDC)  
Berlin-Buch • Germany**

## Final meeting report

For more information, visit <https://yefis-symposium.org>

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# About the Symposium

The yEFIS 1st Symposium: Shaping the Future of Immunology in Europe was held on November 10-11, 2022 at the Max Delbrück Center for Molecular Medicine in Berlin, Germany. The symposium was a smashing, with over 180 participants, a full two-day program and a budget of over 45,000 euros.

After two years of its creation, yEFIS counts more than 650 registered members and is building a European network for young immunologists (YIs), future leaders of the field in Europe. As we continue to grow, a big step that we decided to take on in 2021 was to organise our very first in-person symposium at the European level. The symposium was the first immunology conference organised by and for early career researchers (ECRs) in Europe, in close collaboration with the German Society of Immunology office. This meeting was a unique opportunity for yEFIS members to connect, network and promote their work in a friendly, collaborative and young environment.

Over two intense days, we heard the inspiring stories – both in science and in life – from 4 keynote speakers, and showcased the spectacular work of young immunologists from across Europe through oral and poster presentations. The concerns of early-career researchers beyond science were also placed in the spotlight at the symposium, with 5 fascinating workshops. Social and networking events were also on the agenda.

In order to support junior researchers and to ensure they all have the opportunity to attend our conference, the symposium was granted generous EFIS/EJI meeting support which allowed us to award 35 travel grants for participants based on submitted abstracts (for members of EFIS-affiliated societies only). In addition, the organising committee secured funding from various industry partners and sponsors, which allowed for an affordable conference fee (50 EUR for EFIS-affiliated society members/ 60 EUR for non-members).

As a fully volunteer-run event, the yEFIS 1st Symposium has brought together many young immunology researchers with a deep commitment to the future of immunology in Europe, and it has been a great joy to bring to fruition an effective and enjoyable platform for young immunologists to connect and thrive together.

# Organising committee

The organising committee, spanning various countries and time zones, includes 16 young researchers and is supported by the 'Young Immunologists' of the German society for Immunology (Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Immunologie e.V.) and the DGfI office.



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# Symposium attendance

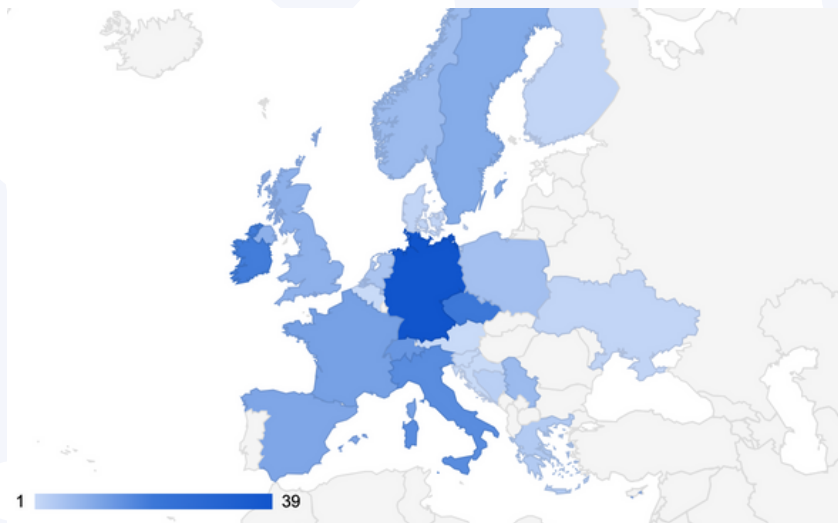
Attendance to the symposium was quite impressive. Over 180 participants registered to attend the yEFIS 1st symposium (in-person and online). With an on-site limit of 200 attendees (participants, organisers, speakers, invitees and catering staff included), the organisers had to close registration for in-person attendance earlier than expected and switch to registration for virtual attendance in the last weeks preceding the symposium.

More than 140 abstracts were submitted and evaluated. The reviewers, members of the yEFIS task force, evaluated these abstracts and selected 20 for oral presentations, 16 for flash talks and over 100 for poster presentations. The reviewers highlighted the impressive and high quality of the evaluated abstracts.

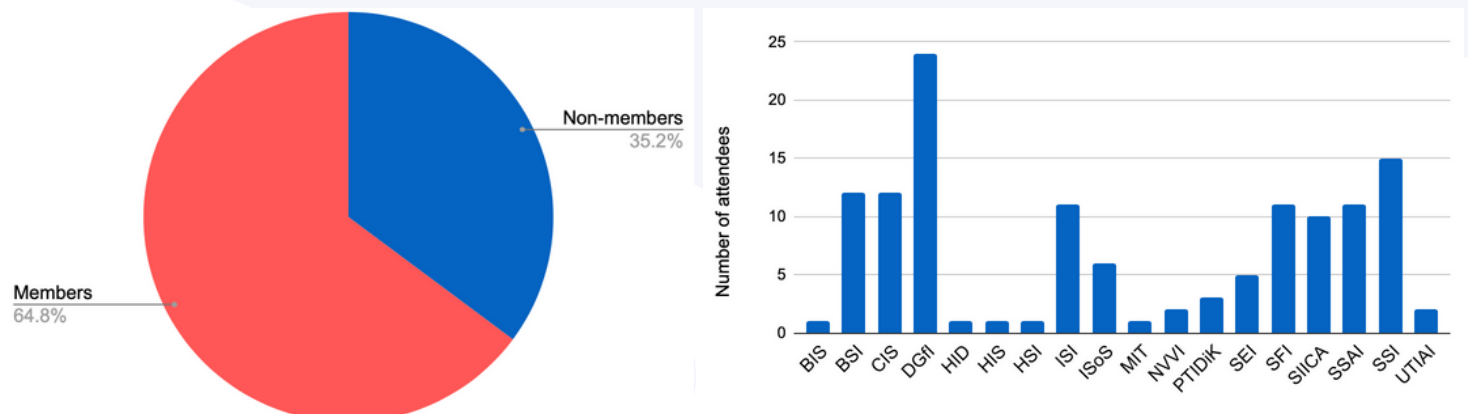
Attendees joined from all over Europe (and Algeria, Mexico and USA), with the highest attendance being from Germany, followed by Czech Republic and Ireland.

64.8% of attendees were members of EFIS-affiliated societies.

## Number of attendees per European country



## Membership of attendees to EFIS-affiliated societies

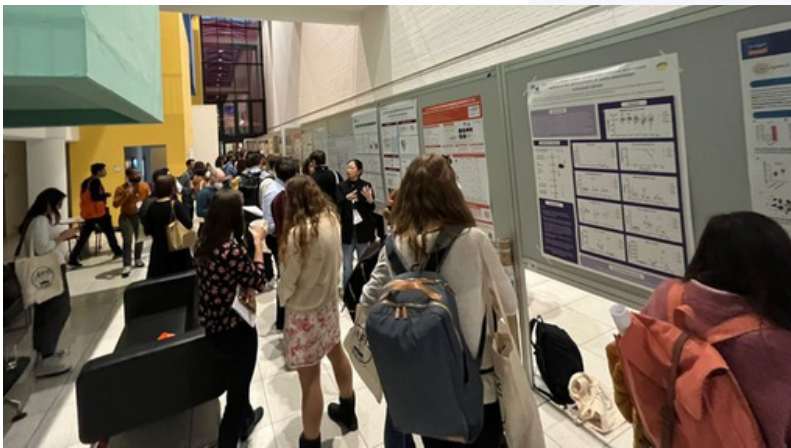


# Scientific program

The scientific program of the conference included an inspiring opening speech from EFIS president, Prof. Federica Sallusto, as well as 4 keynote lectures from world-class immunologists – Dr. Christian Schwartz, Prof. Carolyn King, Prof. Kingston Mills and Prof. Petra Bacher – 5 scientific sessions of oral presentations from young researchers, 2 flash talk sessions and 2 poster sessions.

## Sessions

There were a total of 20 oral presentations, 16 flash talks and over 100 posters, given exclusively by young researchers. With the generous support of our sponsors, the most excellent of these presentations were celebrated with 3 awards for Best Poster, 2 for Best Oral Presentation, and one for Best Flash Talk.



Finally, among the young immunologists, and selected based on the quality of their submitted abstracts and their membership to an EFIS-affiliated society, 35 participants were awarded an EFIS/EJI travel grant to attend the conference.

During the entire process of abstract selection and travel grant recipient selection, the organisers ensured that gender balance and country/society representation were respected.



## Keynote lectures

The invited speakers gave insightful and inspiring lectures to the young researchers attending the conference. These presentations were given by five established and renowned scientists, opening up discussion on fascinating topics in immunology and providing practical advice to the participants at a crucial time in their careers.

### Opening Speech: Prof. Federica Sallusto, EFIS president

#### Dr. Christian Schwartz

Institute of Clinical Microbiology, Immunology and Hygiene  
Universitätsklinikum Erlangen, Germany

*Innate instruction for adaptive immunity during type 2 inflammation*



#### Prof. Dr. Carolyn King

Department of Biomedicine University of Basel, Switzerland

*CD4 T Cells Sans Frontières: division of labor in the lung*

#### Prof. Kingston Mills

Trinity Biomedical Sciences Institute, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland

*The two faces of IL-17 and IL-17-producing T cells - protective immunity against infection and immunopathology in autoimmune diseases*



#### Prof. Dr. Petra Bacher

Institute of Immunology Kiel University, Germany

*Regulation of tolerance & inflammation by human antigen-specific T helper cells*



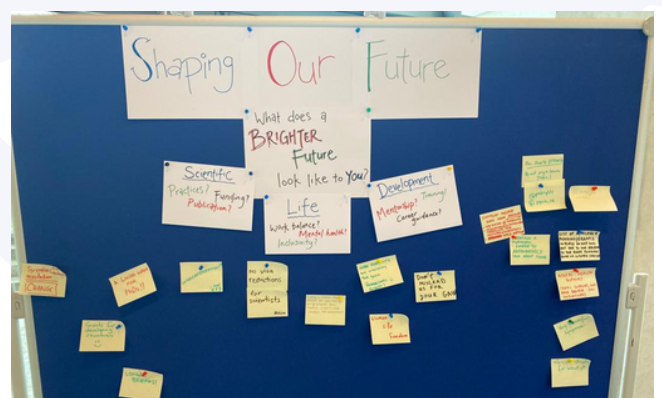
# Workshops

The scientific program was complemented with 5 workshops covering a range of topics tailored for ECRs:

- An Editor's Guide to Scientific Publishing: Peer Review and You, with EJI (Dr. Nadja Bakocevic)
- Diverging Career Paths and the Diversity of Success (panel discussion)
- Communicating Your Science to the World (Dr. Elodie Chabrol)
- Crafting Your Professional Narrative - Increasing Your Visibility (Dr. Inês Perpétuo)
- Mental Health & Well-being in Research (Dr. Brian Cahill)



In line with the theme of the Symposium, 'Shaping the Future of Immunology in Europe', participants were invited to share their thoughts about the future of immunology and academic research, culminating in a meaningful roundtable discussion with fellow early-career societies: ESID Juniors, EMEUNET, Young EHA, and EAACI JM.



# Social & Networking events

After more than two years of virtual meetings, the social aspect of the Symposium ranked high in importance, kicking off with a pre-conference self-guided tour of Berlin's most iconic sights and wrapping up with a pizza night and a trivia contest. A networking hour following the career development workshop offered participants the opportunity to converse further with workshop panellists, gaining more personal insight into diverse career paths.





# Conclusion & Survey results

## Satisfaction survey and results

In order to improve the overall organisation and content of the symposium, we asked the participants, speakers and sponsors of the yEFIS 1st symposium to answer a few questions about the quality of the different events and presentations they attended.

The participants rated their overall experience at the conference with a mean score of 8.6 out of 10. Although the conference program was intense, participants enjoyed the science as well as the workshops and networking events.

100% of participants said they would advise friends or colleagues to attend and 97% said they would attend the next yEFIS symposium. 70% of the participants indicated the main reason for attending the symposium was networking.

## Conclusion

The two days of the yEFIS 1st symposium were a major milestone for yEFIS. As a network, we gained visibility within the European community as well as internationally. As young immunologists, we started important and interesting discussions around our careers and the future of immunology, and this was only the start.

After 10 months of creative and challenging work from all volunteers, and with special thanks to the support of all of our institutional and private partners, the conference days were a real success. We wish to thank each and every one of you for making this 1st edition of the yEFIS symposium a unique and successful event.

We look forward to renewing this event!



# Acknowledgements

The success of the symposium relied on the hard work of its organising committee - young immunologists who volunteered to make this very first yEFIS Symposium a reality. This conference required well-coordinated teamwork but would not have been possible without the support of many people, institutions and sponsors who believed in us and agreed to join us in this adventure.

We thank the scientists of the yEFIS task force who anonymously graded and selected the best abstracts for the conference, as well as those who attended the sessions to evaluate the participants' talks and posters. By challenging the young researchers' work, they were the warrants and witnesses of the conference's quality.

Alongside the EFIS/EJI meeting support, the conference organisation was funded by private partners, many of them attending the conference and sharing their insights and latest innovations with the participants. Moreover, the organisation of this symposium wouldn't have been possible without the support of the German Society of Immunology (DGfI).

We here acknowledge all of our partners for the yEFIS 1st Symposium, with our sincere gratitude:



# Sponsors

## Meeting support

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