



Amsterdam Rheumatology Center for Autoimmune Diseases

It has been a while ago since the ARCAID Newsletter came out, and a lot has happened since then. After finally being able to meet face-to-face in a meeting in October 2021 (see below), we again had to retreat in a partial lockdown in December-Feb 2022, but luckily the situation improved again after that and our fellows are able to travel to conferences as well. See below an update on the meetings, the questionnaire, some info on secondments and some practical announcements.

ARCAID Hybrid meeting October 25th 2021



October 25th 2021, at the AMC, the ARCAID PIs and fellows met live in Lecture Hall 4 at the Amsterdam UMC, location AMC. All the fellows shortly presented their progress, and in

the afternoon, we had 3 guest lectures; two on the core facilities at the AMC (imaging and genomics) and one by Prof. dr. Mario Zeiss from Erlangen, Germany. Furthermore, we shortly discussed the results of the questionnaire that was sent to the fellows in June.

During the first break we also finally gave Andrew his long-earned prize for the best video during the Online meeting in May, where all our fellows prepared a 2-3 minutes video to explain their project.



ARCAID mid-term check

January 18th, we had the (online) mid-term check for the project, where Giulia Frazzei (ESR1), Agner Parra (ESR2), Aoife O'Byrne (ESR5), Ana Merino Vico (ESR7), Eva Phillipon (ESR8), Ihsan Hammoura (ESR9), Daria Balashova (ESR12), Elham Sadat Mirfazeli (ESR14), Chiara Geyer (ESR16) and Andrew Morrison (ESR20) gave presentations, which were very well received. There was also the coordinator report and a restricted session of the project officer with the fellows. It was good to hear that besides the difficult COVID-19 start of the project and some well-known (English language and HR) problems, they were in general quite happy with the project and the opportunities the network offers. This all

translated in a very positive judgement from our project officer, Daniela Radu. Thanks to all of you!

New ARCAID fellow

As our ESR6 fellow, Roozbeh Sanae, left the program, we advertised the position again to find a replacement, and luckily, we succeeded to find a new, promising, enthusiastic researcher who will introduce herself below. Welcome to the project Marina!

Marina Jiménez Martínez (ESR6)

Two months have now passed since I first set a foot in Amsterdam. After a long period looking for a PhD project that was both exciting and challenging, I stumbled across the announcement that one of the vacancies in the ARCAID program was once again available. And how lucky I was from that moment on!

The first time I became really interested in immunology was during my BSc degree, and from that moment on I knew that I wanted to focus my scientific career in that field of research. The ESR6 project about the role of Mesenchymal Stromal Cells (MSCs) in the development of Rheumatoid Arthritis seemed then to be a perfect match to me. Thus, after a few pleasant interviews with my now-supervisor and colleagues, I already felt that I would fit perfectly in the group and the project, and I guess I can now say that I was right.



The first weeks before officially starting the project helped me to get to know better the streets of what was going to be my new home for the next four years, as well as to discover the curiosities and beautiful places that the Netherlands has to offer. The tulip season was definitely the best moment to start this experience!

In general, these two months have been full of strong emotions, mostly of them positives but also some bureaucratic frustrations as expected when moving to a new place. I could not be more thankful for the surprisingly nice weather and for having the opportunity to live the full experience of this city after the last lockdown.

From the scientific side, it is also great to get back to normality and work together with my colleagues in the lab, although I feel bad for them now that they will have to teach me the new techniques I will work with. I guess being the last ARCAID fellow to arrive has its good and bad things, but for my part, everyone has been very welcoming and attentive to me, and I look forward to starting with the more practical aspects of my project and seeing where this will take me in the future.



ARCAID Secondments

One of the opportunities in Marie Curie COFUND and ITN/ETN grants are the so-called secondments; the researchers will spend 1-6 months at one of the partner institutes, for example to learn new techniques, but also for

the ARCAID ESRs to be able to work and communicate in multiple sectors and environments. In this way, ARCAID strengthens the collaborations between the Amsterdam UMC and these companies and graduated ESRs may even continue their career at these research sites. These rotations stimulate their and ARCAIDs international collaborations as well as optimal dissemination of their research results.

Therefore, we invited the partner organisations to shortly introduce themselves and the opportunities for interactions with the fellows in the network. We will publish these introductions on the website and in the newsletter. The Center of Experimental Rheumatology, Zurich, Switzerland kicked off, and now we have Center for Genomics and Oncological Research (GENyO), the complex diseases Group led by Prof. Marta E. Alarcón-Riquelme.

Brief description of the Center: GENyO is located in Granada, Spain and was founded 10 years ago in a collaborative framework between the pharmaceutical Pfizer, the University of Granada and the Andalusian Government, in particular the Health Council and the Knowledge and Universities Council. The center has two main areas, medical genomics and oncology and high-level technology platforms and performs Next Generation Sequencing, Mass cytometry and flow cytometry, microscopy, and has two important unit of genomics and bioinformatics.

Please check their website

(<https://www.genyo.es/?lang=en>) and the ARCAID website ([Partner organisations \(arcaid-h2020.eu\)](https://www.arcaid-h2020.eu) for more info.

Upcoming ARCAID meetings

We are currently discussing the organisation of a one-day meeting organized by the fellows. We will keep you updated on any news!

For more information on the network and topics/input for the next newsletter please contact the project manager (Laurian Jongejan);

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