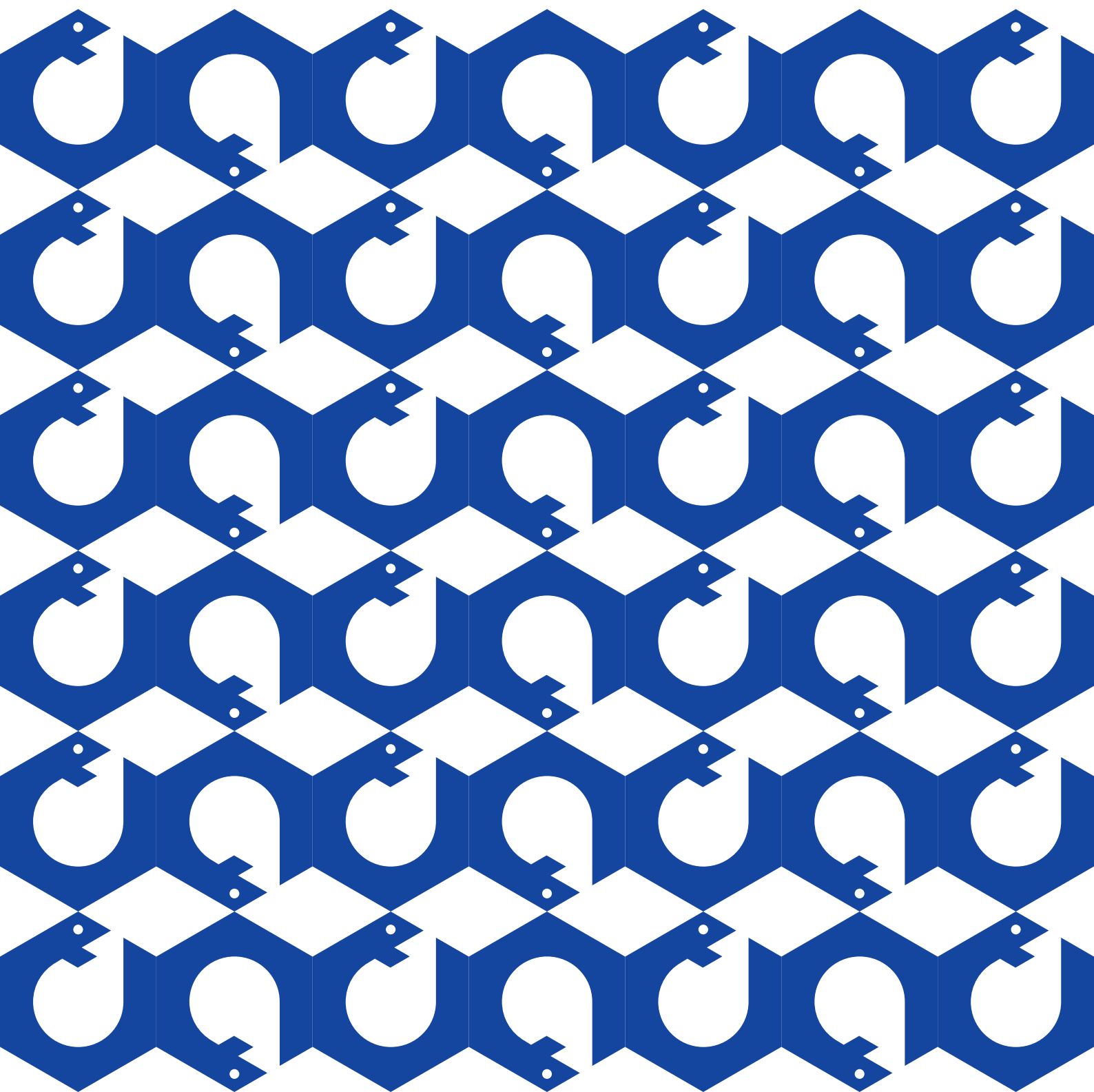


**2026**

Medicinal Chemistry and  
Chemical Biology in Europe



## Content

|                                                                                                                 |    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Corporate Members                                                                                               | 3  |
| Executive Committee                                                                                             | 4  |
| National Adhering Organisations                                                                                 | 5  |
| Council                                                                                                         | 6  |
| Sustainability WG                                                                                               | 8  |
| Chemical Biology Initiative                                                                                     | 9  |
| Best Practices                                                                                                  | 11 |
| EFMC <sup>2</sup> : A Year of Growth and Connection                                                             | 12 |
| EFMC Young Scientists Network                                                                                   | 13 |
| EFMC International Symposium on Chemical Biology - Report                                                       | 14 |
| EFMC Short Course 2025 - Report                                                                                 | 16 |
| ACSMEDI-EFMC Medicinal Chemistry Frontiers 2025 - Report                                                        | 17 |
| X EFMC International Symposium on Advances In Synthetic and Medicinal Chemistry (EFMC-ASMC 2025) - Short Report | 18 |
| 12 <sup>th</sup> EFMC Young Medicinal Chemists' Symposium (EFMC-YMCS 2025) - Short Report                       | 20 |
| EFMC Prizes 2025                                                                                                | 22 |



## Corporate Members

EFMC offers any company the opportunity to become an official Corporate Sponsor. Corporate membership will help the EFMC with its objective of advancing the science of medicinal chemistry and chemical biology and can be achieved by paying an annual fee of 2.250 € to the EFMC.

Companies interested in becoming a Corporate Member should contact the Administrative Secretariat at [administration@efmc.info](mailto:administration@efmc.info).

### CURRENT EFMC CORPORATE MEMBERS



### AWARDS & PRIZES SPONSORS

EFMC is thankful to the below organisations for helping in its mission to advance the science of medicinal chemistry and chemical biology in acknowledging and supporting excellence in the fields.

 Inspired by patients.  
Driven by science.

## Executive Committee

The EFMC Executive Committee (EC) consists of seven members: the President, the President Elect or the Past President, the Secretary, the Treasurer and three additional members. All details about the election process can be found in the statutes of the EFMC on the EFMC official website: [www.efmc.info](http://www.efmc.info)



*President*  
**Dr Luc VAN HIJFTE**  
**Novalix**  
16 Rue d'Ankara  
67000 Strasbourg, France



*President-Elect*  
**Prof. Gianluca SBARDELLA**  
**University of Salerno**  
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132  
84084 Fisciano (SA), Italy



*Treasurer*  
**Prof. Beatriz DE PASCUAL-TERESA**  
**CEU San Pablo University**  
Urb. Montepincipe  
Ctra. Boadilla del Monte Km 5.3  
28668 Madrid, Spain



*Member (and acting Secretary)*  
**Dr Mathilda BINGHAM**  
**GIO Therapeutics**  
Swiss Innovation Park – Novartis Campus  
Lichtstrasse 35  
4056 Basel, Switzerland



*Member*  
**Dr Martin MISSBACH**  
**Novartis**  
WKL-136.3.23  
4002 Basel, Switzerland



*Member*  
**Prof. Christa MÜLLER**  
**University of Bonn**  
Pharmazeutisches Institut  
An der Immenburg 4  
53121 Bonn, Germany



*Member*  
**Prof. Zeynep ATES-ALAGOZ**  
**Ankara University**  
Tandogan  
6100, Ankara, Turkey



## National Adhering Organisations

Below you can find the list of the 31 National Adhering Organisations composing the European Federation for Medicinal chemistry and Chemical biology (EFMC). More information can be found on the EFMC website:

<http://www.efmc.info/adhering-organisations-european-medicinal-chemistry>

|                           |                                                                                                                                                       |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Austria</b>            | Austrian Chemical Society, Medicinal Chemistry Section                                                                                                |
| <b>Belgium</b>            | Société Royale de Chimie (SRC), Medicinal Chemistry Division<br>Medicinal and Bioorganic Chemistry Division of Royal Flemish Chemical Society (KVCV)  |
| <b>Bosnia-Herzegovina</b> | Organization Pharmaceutical Research Institute                                                                                                        |
| <b>Croatia</b>            | Croatian Chemical Society, Section of Medicinal/Pharmaceutical Chemistry                                                                              |
| <b>Czech Republic</b>     | Section of Synthetic Drug of the Czech Pharmaceutical Society                                                                                         |
| <b>Denmark</b>            | The Danish Society for Medicinal Chemistry and Chemical Biology                                                                                       |
| <b>Finland</b>            | Finnish Pharmaceutical Society                                                                                                                        |
| <b>France</b>             | Chemical Biology group of the French Chemical Society (SCF-ChemBio)<br>Société de Chimie Thérapeutique (SCT)                                          |
| <b>Germany</b>            | German Pharmaceutical Society, Section of Pharmaceutical/Medicinal Chemistry<br>Division of Medicinal Chemistry of the German Chemical Society (GDCh) |
| <b>Greece</b>             | Hellenic Society of Medicinal Chemistry                                                                                                               |
| <b>Hungary</b>            | Organic and Medicinal Chemistry Division (OMCD) of the Hungarian Chemical Society (HCS)                                                               |
| <b>Ireland</b>            | Medicinal and Biological Chemistry Division of the Institute of Chemistry of Ireland                                                                  |
| <b>Israel</b>             | The Medicinal Chemistry Section of the Israel Chemical Society                                                                                        |
| <b>Italy</b>              | Division of Medicinal Chemistry of the Italian Chemical Society (Divisione di Chimica Farmaceutica - Società Chimica Italiana, DCF-SCI)               |
| <b>Lithuania</b>          | Lithuanian Chemical Society                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Poland</b>             | Polish Society of Medicinal Chemistry                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Portugal</b>           | Division of Medicinal Chemistry of the Portuguese Chemical Society                                                                                    |
| <b>Russia</b>             | The D.I. Mendeleev Russian Chemical Society, Medicinal Chemistry Section                                                                              |
| <b>Serbia</b>             | Serbian Chemical Society, Division of Medicinal Chemistry                                                                                             |
| <b>Slovenia</b>           | Section for Medicinal Chemistry of the Slovenian Pharmaceutical Society                                                                               |
| <b>Spain</b>              | Spanish Chemical Biology Group of the Royal Spanish Society of Chemistry (RSEQ)<br>Sociedad Española de Química Terapéutica                           |
| <b>Sweden</b>             | Swedish Pharmaceutical Society                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Switzerland</b>        | Swiss Chemical Society, Division for Medicinal Chemistry & Chemical Biology (DMCCB)                                                                   |
| <b>The Netherlands</b>    | Division Medicinal Chemistry & Chemical Biology, Royal Netherlands Chemical Society (KNCV-MCCB)                                                       |
| <b>Turkey</b>             | Turkish Association of Medicinal and Pharmaceutical Chemistry                                                                                         |
| <b>United Kingdom</b>     | Society for Medicines Research<br>The Biological and Medicinal Chemistry Sector (BMCS) of the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC)                        |



## Council

The Council consists of the members of the Executive Committee and one delegate of each National Adhering Organisation.

### CURRENT COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

**Prof. Stefano ALCARO****Università Magna Graecia di Catanzaro, Italy**

Medicinal Chemistry Division of the Società Chimica Italiana (Italian Chemical Society) (DCF-SCI)

**Prof. Marko ANDERLUH****University of Ljubljana, Slovenia**

Section for Medicinal Chemistry of the Slovenian Pharmaceutical Society

**Prof. Zeynep ATES-ALAGOZ****Ankara University, Turkey**

EFMC Executive Committee

**Prof. KUÇUKGUZEL İlkey****Fenerbahçe University**

Turkish Association of Medicinal and Pharmaceutical Chemistry

**Prof. Sergey BACHURIN****Institute of Physiologically Active Compounds, Russia**

The D.I. Mendeleev Russian Chemical Society, Medicinal Chemistry Section

**Dr Jose Manuel BARTOLOME****Johnson & Johnson Pharmaceutical R&D, Spain**

Spanish Society of Medicinal Chemistry (Sociedad Española de Química Terapéutica)

**Dr Tilly BINGHAM****GIO Therapeutics, Switzerland**

EFMC Executive Committee

**Dr Daniel HILLEBRAND O'DONOVAN****University of Manchester, United Kingdom**

Society for Medicines Research

**Prof. Rasmus P. CLAUSEN****University of Copenhagen, Denmark**

The Danish Society for Medicinal Chemistry and Chemical Biology

**Prof. Bernd CLEMENT****Universität Kiel, Germany**

German Pharmaceutical Society, Section of Pharmaceutical/Medicinal Chemistry

**Prof. Iwan DE ESCH****VU University Amsterdam, The Netherlands**

Division Medicinal Chemistry &amp; Chemical Biology, Royal Netherlands Chemical Society (KNCV-MCCB)

**Prof. Beatriz DE PASCUAL-TERESA****Universidad San Pablo CEU, Spain**

EFMC Executive Committee

**Prof. Rebecca DEPRez-POULAIN****Université de Lille / Institut Pasteur de Lille, France**

Société de Chimie Thérapeutique (SCT)

**Prof. Martin DOLEZAL****Charles University, Czech Republic**

Section of Synthetic Drug of the Czech Pharmaceutical Society

**Dr Virginija DUDUTIENE****Vilnius University, Lithuania**

Lithuanian Chemical Society

**Prof. Pierre FRANCOTTE****University of Liège, Belgium**

Société Royale de Chimie (SRC), Medicinal Chemistry Division

**Dr Pedro GOIS****University of Lisbon, Portugal**

Division of Medicinal Chemistry of the Portuguese Chemical Society

**Dr Martin SWARBRICK****Pharmaron, United Kingdom**

The Biological and Medicinal Chemistry Sector (BMCS) of the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC)

**Prof. Anna K. H. HIRSCH****Helmholtz Institute for Pharmaceutical Research Saarland, Germany**

Division of Medicinal Chemistry of the German Chemical Society (GDCh)

**Dr Annika JENMALM-JENSEN****Karolinska Institutet, Sweden**

Swedish Pharmaceutical Society

**Prof. György Miklós KESERU****Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Hungary**

Organic and Medicinal Chemistry Division (OMCD) of the Hungarian Chemical Society (HCS)

**Dr Martin KONDZA****University of Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina**

Organization Pharmaceutical Research Institute

**Dr Sanja KOSTRUN****Selvita Ltd, Croatia**Croatian Chemical Society, Section of Medicinal/  
Pharmaceutical Chemistry**Prof. Thierry LANGER****University of Vienna, Austria**

Austrian Chemical Society, Medicinal Chemistry Section

**Dr Nir LONDON****The Weizmann Institute of Science, Israel**The Medicinal Chemistry Section of the Israel Chemical  
Society**Prof. Dariusz MATOSIUK****Medical University of Lublin, Poland**

Polish Society of Medicinal Chemistry

**Prof. Emmanuel MIKROS****University of Athens, Greece**

Hellenic Society of Medicinal Chemistry

**Dr Oscal MILLET****CIC bioGUNE, Spain**Spanish Chemical Biology Group of the Royal Spanish  
Society of Chemistry (RSEQ)**Dr Martin MISSBACH****Novartis Pharma, Switzerland**

EFMC Executive Committee

**Prof. Christa MÜLLER****University of Bonn, Germany**

EFMC Executive Committee

**Prof. Jarkko RAUTIO****University of Eastern Finland, Finland**

Finnish Pharmaceutical Society

**Prof. Rubini MARINA****University College Dublin, Ireland**Medicinal and Biological Chemistry Division of the  
Institute of Chemistry of Ireland**Prof. Gianluca SBARDELLA****University of Salerno, Italy**

EFMC Executive Committee

**Dr Zivota SELAKOVIC****University of Belgrade – Faculty of Chemistry,  
Serbia**Serbian Chemical Society, Division of Medicinal  
Chemistry**Dr Antonia F. STEPAN****F. Hoffmann-La Roche, Switzerland**Swiss Chemical Society, Division for Medicinal  
Chemistry & Chemical Biology (DMCCB)**Prof. Serge VAN CALENBERGH****Ghent University, Belgium**Medicinal and Bioorganic Chemistry Division of Royal  
Flemish Chemical Society (KVCV)**Dr Luc VAN HIJFTE****Novalix, France**

EFMC Executive Committee

**Dr Boris VAUZEILLES****CNRS, France**Chemical Biology group of the French Chemical Society  
(SCF-ChemBio)

## Sustainability WG

There is increasing concern that a significant proportion of current drugs and active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs), either in their original forms or as their transformation products, are prevalent in the environment, posing risks to human and environmental health. This has sparked discussions on designing greener APIs, ranging from adopting "benign by design" principles to outright restricting certain reagents from the pool of building blocks.

The EFMC is committed to staying at the forefront of developments in this field and influencing decisions to ensure that essential drugs reach the market efficiently. We believe the EFMC can play a pivotal role in uniting pharmaceutical companies, regulatory authorities, and academia to establish robust "benign by design" principles grounded in optimal environmental considerations, but also ensuring to the fullest the interests of the patients. Our Sustainability Working Group will dedicate time to shaping our strategy for addressing this critical issue.

### SPONSOR

**Dr Luc VAN HIJFTE**

*Novalix & EFMC president, France*

### MEMBERS

**Prof. Benoit DEPREZ (Chair)**

*Université de Lille 2, France*

**Prof. Serge VAN CALENBERGH**

*Ghent University, Belgium*

**Prof. Klaus KÜMMERER**

*Leuphana University Lüneburg, Germany*

**Tiina SIKANEN**

*Helsinki University, Finland*

**Dr Neil PRESS**

*Novartis, Switzerland*

**Prof. Magnus JOHANSSON**

*AstraZeneca, Sweden*

**Dr Helen SNEDDON**

*University of York, United Kingdom*



## Chemical Biology Initiative

The Chemical Biology (CB) Working Group (WG) plays an active role in positioning Chemical Biology as a cornerstone of EFMC. The CB WG's foundational mandate is structured around five key objectives:

- *Fostering the Education and Development of future Chemical Biologists.*
- *Enhancing Academia-Industry Collaboration.*
- *Collaborating with other EFMC Groups.*
- *Expanding Interactions with Chemistry Europe.*
- *Promoting High-Quality Scientific Communication.*

The WG membership includes eight core members, along with additional partners from both industry and academia across Europe. Two meetings were held in 2025: one during the **2<sup>nd</sup> EFMC International Symposium on Chemical Biology (EFMC-ISCB 2025)**, on Jan 29-31) in Basel, and the second, on **October 10, 2025, at the Institute Pasteur in Paris**.

### KEY SCIENTIFIC EVENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

A highlight of 2025 was the **2<sup>nd</sup> EFMC International Symposium on Chemical Biology (EFMC-ISCB 2025)**, held in Basel on January 29-31, 2025. The WG actively contributed to the preparation and success of the conference. It published a conference report in **Chimia**, featured in the **July edition of MedChemBioWatch**. A **Chimia special edition** dedicated to the conference is on track for publication in **Q1 2026**, featuring contributions from eleven authors.

Of note, the EFMC rebrands its events for clarity, and the **EFMC-ISCB will become EFMC Chemical Biology**. The next **EFMC Chemical Biology conference will take place in November 2027**.

The CB WG contributed to the EFMC session at the **15<sup>th</sup> AFMC International Medicinal Chemistry Symposium (AIMECS 2025)**, held in Hangzhou, China (Sept 25-27). Efforts are underway to enhance alignment and strengthen collaborative interactions with the **International Chemical Biology Society**.

### COLLABORATION, BEST PRACTICES, AND EDUCATION

The WG actively collaborates with the **Best Practices Working Group**. There is ongoing support for the best practices contribution on **covalent ligands**. In addition, an outline for chemoproteomics best practices, led by **Stephan Hacker**, was prepared, and the setup of the team is progressing steadily. Finally, a proposal for best practices on **labeled chemical probes** was **endorsed**, with team formation planned for 2026.

The WG promotes high-quality scientific communication and has intensified its collaboration with **Chemistry Europe**, resulting in two special collections in ChemBioChem focusing on **Academia-Industry Collaborations** (10 manuscripts) and **Chemical Probing Concepts** (14 manuscripts). Two ChemBioChem special collections are planned for 2025/2026, focusing on **PPIs/proximity-induced degradation** (ongoing) and **DEL technology** (planned for **Q2 2026**). Two **MedChemBioWatch contributions** were **published in February and March 2025**. The team agreed to start a MedChemBioWatch series highlighting **Chemical Biology labs across Europe** to provide a platform to enhance their visibility.

### ACADEMIA-INDUSTRY COLLABORATION

A significant focus is placed on enhancing the integration of the CB community in industry through the **'Chemical Biology in Industry' Interest Group**, which regularly discusses hot topics and aims to catalyze both pre-competitive information exchange and interactions with academia. The group held a hybrid meeting on **October 10, 2025, at the Pasteur Institute in Paris**, discussing among others the responses to a questionnaire on covalent libraries previously shared with multiple companies, and which will be the subject of an upcoming manuscript for ChemBioChem. A collection of topics of interest was generated, and the group selected two key focus areas for further exploration: **Multimomics and Proteomics** and **Chemical Biology Tools and Techniques**.

As of January 2026, **Amanda Cobos-Correa (Novartis)** and **Laura Luh (Bayer)** will co-lead the CB in Industry activities, with **Boris Vauzeilles'** support for academia-related topics.



### OUTLOOK

For 2026, the WG will continue pursuing these activities. Two hybrid face-to-face meetings are planned: one optional meeting in **March/April in Leiden**, and a meeting during the **EFMC Medicinal Chemistry 2026 (Sept 6-10, 2026) in Basel**. Collaborations will continue with the **YSN**, and the **EFMC Best Practices group**.

### CURRENT CORE TEAM MEMBERS

**Uwe GRETHER (chair)**

*F. Hoffmann-La Roche, Switzerland*

**Paola ARIMONDO**

*Institute Pasteur, France*

**Yves AUBERSON**

*Novartis, Switzerland*

**Shiao CHOW**

*University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom*

**Sebastian ESSIG**

*Zenith, Switzerland*

**Ruben RAGG**

*Wiley-VCH, Germany*

**Gianluca SBARDELLA**

*University of Salerno, Italy*

**Mario VAN DER STELT**

*University of Leiden, The Netherlands*



## Best Practices

Are you looking for courses on drug discovery? Are you looking to create teaching material in Medicinal Chemistry? Are there important trends or emerging technologies you may have missed?

Our group is creating open-access educational content on Best Practices in Medicinal Chemistry to help answer these questions. We use the literature as well as our collective, real-world knowledge and experience. The primary audience is students and early career scientists, but we hope it will also be valuable for experienced scientists.

Our first three sets of Best Practices focused on the early phase of drug discovery: **Validating Chemical Probes**, **Phenotypic Drug Discovery** and **Hit Generation**. In 2024, we have continued along the drug discovery journey with the release of a set on the **Hit to Lead** phase. The group is now tackling the **Lead Optimization** phase together with invited experts to tackle sub-chapters on safety and DMPK (Mikael Boberg, AstraZeneca; Oscar Mammoli, Johnson & Johnson).

Beyond this, we are exploring important modalities with a webinar on **PROTACs<sup>®</sup> Development** (Proteolysis Targeting Chimeras). To broaden the scope of drug discovery, the group together with invited experts will release in 2026 a topic on **Covalent Drug Discovery** (Sebastian Essig, Bayer; Uwe Grether, F. Hoffmann-La Roche; Marc Grundl, Alexander Pautsch and Birgit Wilding, Boehringer Ingelheim; Simon Lucas, AstraZeneca). For our future topic, we will assemble a group of experts to focus on **CNS Drug Discovery** (Central Nervous System).

The material is available in several formats: webinars on the EFMC YouTube channel, educational slide decks and case studies: [Best Practices in Medicinal Chemistry](#). These are freely accessible for personal use or to create further training or teaching material. If you're also interested in contributing with your experience and expertise in a specific area, please reach out to us.

We also would love to hear your feedback on the existing content and on how you use the material:

[administration@efmc.info](mailto:administration@efmc.info)

## CURRENT MEMBERS

**Stéphanie GUERET (Chair)**  
*AstraZeneca, Sweden*

**Russell CRAFT**  
*Symeres, The Netherlands*

**Matthias Gehringer**  
*University of Tübingen, Germany*

**Alex Hallatt (YSN Representative)**  
*University of Dundee, United Kingdom*

**Stefan LAUFER**  
*University of Tübingen, Germany*

**Susan LEPRI**  
*Johnson & Johnson, Belgium*

**Jean QUANCARD (Past Chair)**  
*DSM Firmenich, Switzerland*

**Kurt RITTER**  
*University of Tübingen, Germany*

**Gianluca SBARDELLA**  
*University of Salerno, Italy*

**Martin Schmiedel**  
*Boehringer Ingelheim, Germany*

**Olli Törmäkangas**  
*Orion Pharma, Finland*

**Andrea UNZUE LOPEZ**  
*Merck KGaA, Germany*

**Rob YOUNG**  
*Blue Burgundy, United Kingdom*



## EFMC<sup>2</sup>: A Year of Growth and Connection

2025 was a year of growth for EFMC<sup>2</sup>. Our initiative brought together computational, data science, and medicinal chemists to exchange ideas, tackle challenges, and celebrate innovation.

The **EFMC<sup>2</sup> – Computational Chemistry Initiative** is dedicated to strengthening the EFMC community in modeling, digital technologies, and data science. Our mission is to advocate for digital techniques across Europe and foster stronger connections between industry and academia.

Within medicinal chemistry and chemical biology, EFMC<sup>2</sup> works to uniting the various communities and supporting the progress of this fast-evolving discipline.

Through our **EFMC<sup>2</sup> Tandem Talks** series, we shared real-world insights into how medicinal and computational chemists can successfully collaborate. These sessions featured case studies and roundtable discussions that explored the essence of effective MedChem–CompChem interactions. What sets these webinars apart is the opportunity for participants to engage directly with our speakers.

**Join us in celebrating not only cutting-edge science but also the collaboration strategies that drive success.**

Interested in learning more about the EFMC<sup>2</sup> activities?

Visit [www.efmctandemtalks.org/](http://www.efmctandemtalks.org/) and [www.linkedin.com/groups/12902355/](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/12902355/)

### MEMBERS

**Franz NUSSBAUM**

*Nuvisan, Germany*

**Andreas BENDER**

*University of Cambridge, United Kingdom*

**Hayley BINCH**

*F. Hoffmann-La Roche, Switzerland*

**Zoe COURNIA**

*Biomedical Research Foundation Academy of Athens, Greece*

**Marco DE VIVO**

*Istituto Italiano di Tecnologia, Italy*

**Mireille KRIER**

*OpenEye, Cadence Molecular Sciences, Germany*

**Martin MISSBACH**

*Novartis, Switzerland*

**Werngard CZECHTIZKY**

*AstraZeneca, Sweden*

**Theodor THEIS**

*Boehringer Ingelheim, Germany*

**Stefanie FLOHR,**

*Novartis, Switzerland*



## EFMC Young Scientists Network

This year, the EFMC Young Scientists Network (EFMC-YSN) continued its efforts to promote the development of early career medicinal chemists and chemical biologists in Europe.

First, highlighting our most recent creation, the “**Lunch & Learn**” series. This one-hour session organised over lunch time comprised of foundational presentations outlining key topics and techniques in drug discovery, delivered by PhD students, postdoctoral researchers, and their industry peers.

In addition, our energetic team continued our successful activities, such as:

- *The MedChemBioOnline webinar series.*
- *The second edition of the virtual poster session, jointly organised with the GDCh NextGenMedChem group, and the SCT YMCF.*
- *The EFMC-YSN Publishing Academy and the EFMC-YSN Reviewer Academy, together with Chemistry Europe.*
- *The fifth edition of our successful Mentoring Programme and associated Virtual Career Development Sessions.*

We were particularly happy to maintain and even extend our prizes and funding opportunities.

- *The EFMC-YSN PhD Prize, sponsored by Selvita, to recognise excellence and accomplishment in postgraduate research.*
- *The two joint YSN-YMCC Grants, valued at 1.500€ to finance the participation of two European researchers to attend the ACSMEDI-EFMC Medicinal Chemistry Frontiers 2025 in Chicago, IL.*
- *The EFMC Grants, each covering the full registration fee of an early career researcher, to attend the 19th EFMC Short Course on Medicinal Chemistry, the 10th EFMC International Symposium on Advances in Synthetic and Medicinal Chemistry and the 12th EFMC Young Medicinal Chemists' Symposium.*

One of our proudest accomplishments for 2025 was the successful **12<sup>th</sup> EFMC Young Medicinal Chemists' Symposium**, held in Porto on September 5-6, 2025. Around 180 researchers gathered for an intensive 2-day event with lots of networking and collaboration opportunities.

We strengthened our ties with **emerging young MedChem groups** and continued with the Young Scientists Network Council, fostering collaboration across networks.

Finally, we sadly saw a few of our board members leave, to whom we are more than thankful for their valuable contribution: Piia Bartos, Chiara Borsari, Maria Korpidou, Caroline Lanthier and Noemí Martínez Conde. We also welcomed two new members: Massimiliano Runfola and Tiago Bozzola.

### MEET THE TEAM

**Aikaterini BARMPIDI**

*University of Barcelona, Spain*

**Tilly BINGHAM**

*Cumulus Oncology, Switzerland (EFMC EC Sponsor)*

**Tiago BOZZOLA**

*Lead Discovery Center, Germany*

**Laia JOSA-CULLERE**

*Institute for Advanced Chemistry of Catalonia (IQAC-CSIC), Spain (Secretary)*

**Etienne J. DONCKELE**

*Monte Rosa Therapeutics, Switzerland (Treasurer)*

**Kristina GONCHARENKO**

*Zifo RnD Solutions, Switzerland*

**Alex HALLATT**

*Newcastle University, United Kingdom*

**Brieuc MATAGNE**

*EFMC & LD Organisation, Belgium*

**Sean MCKENNA**

*Leiden University, The Netherlands (Chair)*

**Massimiliano RUNFOLA**

*University of Padova, Italy*

### FOLLOW THE EFMC YOUNG SCIENTISTS NETWORK ON SOCIAL MEDIA



## EFMC International Symposium on Chemical Biology - Report

The second edition of the EFMC International Symposium on Chemical Biology (EFMC-ISCB 2025), which took place in Basel, Switzerland on January 29-31, 2025, successfully gathered 250 attendees.

The scientific programme was composed of 20 invited speakers and 9 oral communications. An additional 106 posters were presented over the 2,5-day of the conference.

The opening ceremony was led by the symposium chair Dr Uwe Grether (F. Hoffmann-La Roche, Switzerland) and the EFMC President, Dr Luc Van Hijfte (Novalix, France). The ceremony was followed by the lecture of the EFMC-WuXi AppTec Award for Excellence in Chemical Biology, awarded to Prof. Peng Chen (Peking University, China), on **“Deciphering Spatial-Temporal Biology with Bioorthogonal Cleavage Reactions”**.

Over the course of the event, participants attended a busy programme of seven sessions, among those two sessions by the EFMC Partners: the International Chemical Biology Society (ICBS) and the Division of Chemistry in Life Sciences (LS-EuChemS). Poster presenters shared their research during two dedicated poster sessions. Among the posters presented, three were awarded a joint EFMC/Chemistry Europe Poster Prize and two received an ICBS Best Poster Prizes. Five young scientists were also awarded free registration for the event through the EFMC Grant programme.

Amongst many highlights of the programme were keynote lectures by **Prof. Cynthia J. Burrows** (University of Utah, United States) and **Prof. Ben Davis** (University of Oxford, United Kingdom).

Several networking opportunities were offered: a welcome reception gathering all participants in an informal atmosphere and a conference dinner, hosted at the “Safran Zunft”. A specific programme, aimed towards the early career researchers was held, with a round table on the topics **“From Lab Bench to Career Benchmarks: Insights from Chemical Biologists”**.

We would like to thank all our committee members, speakers, supporters, sponsors, exhibitors, and of course participants for their support. We also would like to thank the Canton for its financial support, which was used to cover part of the rental cost of the Congress Centre Basel, allowing to maintain the registration fees at a reasonable level.



*Opening ceremony, hosted by Dr Luc Van Hijfte*



*Round table discussion for Early Career Researchers*





*Audience during the opening ceremony*



*Registration desk at the Congress Centre Basel*



*Awardees of the Best Poster Prizes, with the chair of the jury, Prof. Gianluca Sbardella.*



## EFMC Short Course 2025 - Report

The **19<sup>th</sup> edition of the EFMC Short Course**, titled "Artificial Intelligence and Medicinal Chemistry: Developments, Limitations, and Applications," was held from April 6 to 9, 2025, in the scenic surroundings of Castle Oud-Poelgeest in the Netherlands. Thirty-eight motivated participants took part in this intensive and engaging course.

With Prof. Gerard van Westen (Leiden University, The Netherlands) as organiser, the course gathered an additional five speakers. Over two and a half days, Dr Barbara Zdrazil & Mr Harris Ioannidis (EMBL-EBI, United Kingdom), Dr Christina Schindler (Merck KGAA, Germany), Dr Herman van Vlijmen (Janssen, Belgium) and Dr Bart Lenselink (La Randstad, The Netherlands) followed one another to present their research on Artificial Intelligence and Medicinal Chemistry.

Participants expressed strong appreciation for the course, highlighting the engaging presentation style and the numerous opportunities for questions and interaction between speakers and attendees. The course received an impressive average rating of 4 out of 5.

Beyond its academic value, the event was elevated by its charming location, a historic castle nestled in the heart of Leiden. Attendees praised the unique setting, which added to the overall experience.

To foster networking, the programme included a social dinner on Sunday, April 6, and a guided walking tour of Leiden on Monday, April 7. Evenings were animated by informal gatherings at the Castle Bar, where participants connected and shared memorable moments in a relaxed atmosphere.

Would you like to attend the next edition? The 20<sup>th</sup> EFMC Short Course will be organised by Prof. Anna K. H. Hirsch (Helmholtz Institute for Pharmaceutical Research Saarland, Germany), supported by the Local Organiser, Prof. Laura Heitman (University of Leiden, the Netherlands). The course will focus on **"Atypical Approaches in Modern Medicinal Chemistry Focussing on Protein Targets"** and will be held in Oegstgeest, the Netherlands, on April 19-22, 2026.

More info on

[www.efmcshortcourses.org](http://www.efmcshortcourses.org)



*Thirty-eight motivated participants*



## ACSMEDI-EFMC Medicinal Chemistry Frontiers 2025 - Report

Jointly organised by ACS MEDI (Division of Medicinal Chemistry of the American Chemical Society), and EFMC (European Federation for Medicinal chemistry and Chemical biology), the ACSMEDI-EFMC Medicinal Chemistry Frontiers 2025 took place in **Chicago, IL, United States** on **May 12-15, 2025**. The latest advances and current state of research in drug discovery and development were presented to about 400 attendees, among which students, academics, and industry-affiliated researchers from all over the world.

A programme including nine sessions, composed of Plenary and Invited lectures, as well as short Oral Communications was proposed to the attendees. The symposium started with the Plenary Lecture of Dr Ingo Hartung (Merck KGaA, DE) on **“Designing Impactful Small Molecule Drugs”**. Additional Plenary lectures by **Prof. Paul J. Hergenrother** (University of Illinois, USA) and **Dr Wendy Young** (Biotech Executive & Independent Board Member, USA) figured among the numerous highlights of the event.

The conference covered different aspects of medicinal chemistry, from targeted protein degradation and other new therapeutic modalities, like peptide therapeutics, to AI-driven drug design. A noticeable trend throughout both the talks and poster presentations were the growing integration of computational tools into early-stage drug discovery, enabling more efficient lead identification. The presentations and posters also covered a range of therapeutic areas, such as cancer, Alzheimer's, and infectious diseases. Lastly, the company workshops offered a great opportunity to network and explore novel platforms and technologies.

The poster session sparked genuine curiosity especially with those less familiar with the concept of ferroptosis, a relatively novel form of regulated cell death (Camilla). It also provided an opportunity to present our approach to rescuing the "undruggable" tumor suppressor p53 (Dimitrios-Ilias).

The social programme included a welcome reception on the first day, a boat tour or baseball game on the second evening, and the traditional symposium banquet to conclude the event. These various networking activities provided an exceptional atmosphere for all the attendees to connect and share impressions in an informal setting.

The support from the YSN/YMCC Grant was instrumental in making our experience possible. It provided access to a vibrant international environment where we exchanged ideas and discussed the diverse challenges and opportunities currently facing the drug discovery field. We returned with fresh perspectives, new connections, and a clearer vision for the future of our scientific career. We are truly grateful for the opportunity to be part of this enriching experience.

The next edition of the **ACSMEDI-EFMC Medicinal Chemistry Frontiers** will take place in **Dublin, Ireland** on **June 22-25, 2026**, and the YMCC/YSN Grant will allow the participation of two US-based researchers.

*Written by:*

**Dr Camilla Scarpellini**  
**University of Antwerp, Belgium**

**Dr Dimitrios-Ilias Balourdas**  
**Utrecht University, The Netherlands**



## X EFMC International Symposium on Advances In Synthetic and Medicinal Chemistry (EFMC-ASMC 2025) - Short Report

The 10<sup>th</sup> edition of the EFMC International Symposium on Advances in Synthetic and Medicinal Chemistry (EFMC-ASMC 2025) took place last week on August 31-September 4 in Porto, Portugal.

Over 800 international scientists gathered to listen to the cutting-edge science presented by the 27 invited speakers, 12 oral communications and 400+ poster presenters over the five days of the conference.

The opening ceremony was led by the symposium chairs, Dr Malin Lemurell (AstraZeneca, Sweden) and Prof. Nuno Maulide (University of Vienna, Austria), the EFMC President, Dr Luc Van Hijfte (Novartis, France) and the Representative of the Division of Medicinal Chemistry of the Portuguese Chemical Society, Prof. Maria-Emilia Sousa (University of Porto, Portugal). The ceremony was followed by an inspiring lecture by **Prof. Samuel Stupp** (Northwestern University, United States) on **“Supramolecular Peptide Therapeutics: a New Frontier for Regeneration”** and a welcome reception gathering all participants in the impressive scenery of the venue, the ancient custom house of Porto.

Over the course of the event, participants attended a busy programme of seven sessions mixing talks equally selected from industry and academia, one first-time disclosure, the lectures of the EFMC Prize for a Young Medicinal Chemist or Chemical Biologist in Academia and in Industry, as well as two poster sessions. Among the posters presented, five were awarded an EFMC Best Poster Prize. Five young scientists were also awarded a free subscription to the event by the EFMC.

Amongst many highlights of the programme were the prize lectures by **Dr Joleen Masschelein** (KU Leuven, Belgium) and **Dr Veronika Ehmke** (Novartis, Switzerland), and the closing lecture delivered by **Dr Pedro Gois** (University of Lisbon, Portugal).

Several networking opportunities were offered during the event, and the exhibition gathered a total of 22 vendors, to whom we are thankful for their support. To conclude the event in style, a conference dinner was hosted at “Casa Ferreirinha”, a traditional wine cellar.

We would like to thank again all our committee members, speakers, sponsors, exhibitors, and of course participants for their support – and we look forward to warmly meeting you all in **Edinburgh, United Kingdom** for the XI EFMC International Symposium on Advances in Synthetic and Medicinal Chemistry, which will take place on **August 30-September 3, 2027**.



Conference dinner at “Casa Ferreirinha”





Photo Credits: Fabien Venturi



## 12<sup>th</sup> EFMC Young Medicinal Chemists' Symposium (EFMC-YMCS 2025) - Short Report

The **12<sup>th</sup> EFMC Young Medicinal Chemists' Symposium** followed the X EFMC International Symposium on Advances in Synthetic and Medicinal Chemistry and gathered 170+ attendees at the Faculty of Medicine of Porto, Portugal. The symposium programme for this year featured two distinguished Keynote Lectures, 8 Oral Presentations, 17 National Highlights by invited prize winners from national young medicinal chemist meetings across Europe, 1 Prize Lecture and 20 flash poster presentations.

The symposium began on Thursday, September 4, with a warm welcome from the chairs, Dr Diana Resende and Mr Ivo Dias (University of Porto, Portugal). The opening lecture **"Harnessing TRIM21 Mediated Protein Degradation, Selectively Degrading Pathological Protein Aggregates in the CNS"** was delivered by **Dr Andrea Testa** (Trimtech Therapeutics, United Kingdom), before leaving the stage to the competition between the oral communications, and the first set of flash poster presentations.

The second day of the conference commenced with a stimulating Career Panel Discussion, organised by the EFMC-YSN, featuring early-career talents from both industry and academia. The best oral communication contest resumed over the course of the day, as well as the second set of flash poster presentations before closing with a lecture by the winner of the 2025 EFMC Prize for a Young Medicinal Chemist or Chemical Biologist in Academia, **Dr Joleen Maschelein** (KU Leuven, Belgium) on **"Elucidating and Exploiting Novel Microbial Pathways for Antibiotic Biosynthesis"**.

Throughout the event, networking was at the heart, with a welcome reception and networking event offered by the EFMC-YSN, as well as two poster sessions showcasing 114 posters.

The Award Ceremony recognised the following champions:

- **Ms Katie Burke** (*Université Paris Cité, France*) received the **EFMC-YMCS Presentation Prize** for her presentation entitled **"Synthesis and Evaluation of Bis-Carbapenem Narrow Spectrum Antibiotics to Combat the Emergence of Bacterial Resistance"**.
- **Dr Wenxin Felix Zhu** (*Münster University, Germany*) was awarded the **EFMC-YMCS Public's Choice Prize**, sponsored by Roche, for his presentation entitled **"Design and Synthesis of PGE1-Photocages for the Investigation of Sperm-Specific CatSper Channels and their Role in Male Fertility"**.

Additionally, three deserving participants received the **EFMC-YMCS Best Poster Prizes**, sponsored by Chemistry Europe:

- **Poster 017:** *Jacob Bradbury (University of Oxford, United Kingdom)*
- **Poster 034:** *Rita Maria Concetta Di Martino (University of Piemonte Orientale, Italy)*
- **Poster 104:** *Ane Søgaaard (Aarhus University, Denmark)*

We extend our sincerest gratitude to all the committee members, speakers, sponsors, exhibitors, and, most importantly, the participants for their invaluable support. We look forward to meeting all of you in Basel, Switzerland, for the 13<sup>th</sup> EFMC Young Medicinal Chemists' Symposium (now known as **EFMC Young Scientists' Symposium**), set to take place on September 10-11, 2026.





Photo Credits: Fabien Venturi

## EFMC Prizes 2025

### EFMC PRIZES FOR A YOUNG MEDICINAL CHEMIST OR CHEMICAL BIOLOGIST IN ACADEMIA/INDUSTRY

The *EFMC Prize for a Young Medicinal Chemist or Chemical Biologist in Academia* and the *EFMC Prize for a Young Medicinal Chemist or Chemical Biologist in Industry* have been established by the European Federation for Medicinal chemistry and Chemical biology to acknowledge and recognise an outstanding young medicinal chemist working in academia or in industry within Europe. The Prizes are given annually and consist of a diploma, 2,500 € and an invitation for a short presentation at an EFMC Symposium.

**Prof. Joleen Masschelein** (KU Leuven, Belgium) received the Prize from Dr Luc Van Hijfte. **Dr Johannes Broichhagen** (Leibniz-Institute for Molecular Pharmacology (FMP), Germany) and **Dr Marta Artola** (Leiden University, The Netherlands) have been recognised as the most meritorious runners-up.

**Dr Veronika Ehmke** (Novartis, Switzerland) received the Prize from Dr Luc Van Hijfte. **Dr Andrea Testa** (Trimtech Therapeutics, United Kingdom) and **Dr Michael Reutlinger** (F. Hoffmann-La Roche Ltd., Switzerland) have been recognised as the most meritorious runners-up.

The 2025 Prize ceremony has been hosted at the occasion of the X EFMC International Symposium on Advances in Synthetic and Medicinal Chemistry (EFMC-ASMC 2025), which took place in Porto, Portugal on August 31 to September 4, 2025.

### EFMC-YSN PHD PRIZE

The EFMC-YSN PhD Prize, created in 2020 and now generously sponsored by Selvita, is an initiative of the EFMC Young Scientists Network to recognise excellence and merits at the early stage, was again awarded in 2025.

The selection committee designated **Dr Rebecca Stevens** (GSK) as the winner of the 2025 EFMC-YSN PhD Prize, sponsored by Selvita. **Dr Giulia Antonini** (Milan University) has been designated as the most meritorious runner-up.

The ceremony took place at the occasion of the 12<sup>th</sup> EFMC Young Medicinal Chemists' Symposium (EFMC-YMCS 2025), which took place in Porto, Portugal on September 4-5, 2025.

Dr Steven received the prize from the hands of Dr Sean McKenna (Leiden University), chairman of the Young Scientists' Network and the award sponsor, Dr Przemyslaw Zawadzki (Selvita).



*Prof. Joleen Masschelein (KU Leuven, Belgium)*



*Dr Veronika Ehmke (Novartis, Switzerland)*



*Dr Rebecca Stevens (GSK)*



[www.efmc.info](http://www.efmc.info)

