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IRB  
An institute  
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Institute  
for  
Research  
in  
Biomedicine

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September  
28–29 2026



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### 3<sup>rd</sup> International Workshop on

# Ankylosing Spondylitis: Tales of Molecules and Patients

September 28–29 2026  
BIOS\* Seminar room  
Institute for Research in Biomedicine  
Bellinzona, Switzerland

Supported  
by

*Fondazione Ceschina*



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## Monday, September 28

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14:00	Arrival of the participants
15:00	<b>Welcome addresses</b> Mariagrazia Uguccioni, IRB Franco Porzio, Fondazione Ceschina Mario Branda, Città di Bellinzona
15:15	<b>Opening Lecture</b> Chair: Angelo Manfredi <b>Xenofon Baraliakos</b> – Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany “Novel insights into the imaging of axSpA – Status 2026”
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<b>Therapies in Spondyloarthritis</b> Chairs: Maria Teresa Fiorillo, Francesco Boin	
16:00	<b>Francesco Ciccia</b> – Università degli Studi della Campania “L. Vanvitelli”, Italy “Decoding shared and divergent immune mechanisms in psoriatic disease”
16:30	<b>Lars Rogge</b> – Institut Pasteur, Paris, France “The IL-23 pathway in spondyloarthritis”
17:00	<b>Adrian Ciurea</b> – Clinic for Rheumatology, University Hospital Zurich, Switzerland “Are we satisfied with our management of axSpA patients?”
17:30	<b>Claudia Mauri</b> – University College London, United Kingdom “Can we use anti-SSRI as anti-inflammatory therapy in autoimmunity?”
19:00	<i>Dinner at Castelgrande</i>

## Tuesday, September 29

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<b>The tissue microenvironment in disease modulation</b> Chairs: Veronica Martini, Xenofon Baraliakos	
9.00	<b>Andreas Ramming</b> – University Erlangen-Nürnberg, Germany “The tissue microenvironment orchestrates immunoregulation in AxSpA”
9.45	<b>Geraldine Gillespie</b> – University of Oxford, United Kingdom “Functional characterisation of a C-type lectin-like receptor expressed on auto inflammatory-associated T cells in Ankylosing Spondylitis”
10.15	<b>Costantino Pitzalis</b> – Queen Mary University of London, United Kingdom “Distinct synovial macrophage subsets in Spondyloarthropathies”
10.45	<i>Coffee break</i>
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<b>Mucosal barrier and immune system crosstalk</b> Chairs: Valentina Cecchinato, Carlo Selmi	
11.30	<b>Dirk Elewaut</b> – Ghent University/VIB-UGent, Belgium “Mucosal barriers and AxSpA: what have we learned and where are we heading to?”
12.00	<b>Robin Dart</b> – King’s College London, United Kingdom “Lymphocyte-epithelial interactions for barrier protection”
12.30	<b>Valeria Rios Rodriguez</b> – Universitätsmedizin Berlin; Klinikum Ernst von Bergmann Potsdam, Germany “Gut microbiota-immune system crosstalk in axial spondyloarthritis: implications for disease activity and treatment response dynamics.”
13.00	<i>Lunch</i>
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<b>CAR-T Cell approaches in autoimmune diseases</b> Chairs: Xenofon Baraliakos, Costantino Pitzalis	
14.30	<b>Marcela Maus</b> – Massachusetts General Hospital, Cancer Center, Boston, USA “Considerations in designing new CAR studies in autoimmune disease”
15.00	<b>Matteo Doglio</b> – Vita-Salute San Raffaele University, IRCCS San Raffaele Scientific Institute, Italy “CAR-Tregs a promising approach for autoimmune diseases”
15.30	<b>Zandra Walton</b> – Massachusetts General Hospital, Rheumatology, Boston, USA “Target choice in the design of new CARs for autoimmunity”
16.00	<i>Coffee break</i>
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<b>Seed ideas in Ankylosing Spondylitis research</b> Chairs: Veronica Martini, Bernhard Moser	
16.30	<b>Gea Cereghetti</b> – Institute for Research in Biomedicine, Bellinzona, Switzerland “Cytokine self-assembly: emerging mechanisms and roles in (auto)immunity”
17.00	<b>Mariagrazia Uguccioni</b> – Institute for Research in Biomedicine, Bellinzona, Switzerland “Chemokine research: a journey from basic biology to translational medicine”
18.30	<i>Apero / Dinner</i>

