

34th BioCity Symposium

TRANSFORMING DRUG DEVELOPMENT FOR TOMORROW

28-29 August 2025 in Mauno Koivisto Centre, BioCity, Turku, Finland

THURSDAY, 28 AUGUST 2025

08.30 **Marjo Kaartinen**, Rector, University of Turku
Opening words and presentation of the Elias Tillandz prize

KEYNOTE LECTURE

09.00 **Nathanael S. Gray**, Stanford University, USA
Molecular glues to induce cancer cell death

09.30 Q&A

SESSION I – DRUG DISCOVERY TECHNOLOGIES Chairs: Olli Pentikäinen and Paola Moyano Gómez

09.40 **Christian Heinis**, École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, Switzerland
Development of cyclic peptides for oral administration

10.10 Q&A

10.20 **Pankaj Singh**, University of Turku, Finland
MDisco: Platform for rational macrocycle discovery

10.35 POSTER SESSION A with coffee, tea and exhibition

11.35 **Francesca E. Morreale**, The Francis Crick Institute, UK
Hijacking protein degradation in bacteria

12.05 Q&A

12.15 **Laura Kauppi**, University of Turku, Finland
Protein stability sensing probes for early-stage drug discovery

12.30 **Jelena Gnjatovic**, University of Turku, Finland
Novel solutions for improved B cell lymphoma disease models and treatment

12.45 LUNCH and exhibition

SESSION II – DRUG DISCOVERY TECHNOLOGIES Chairs: Reko Leino and Jessica Rosenholm

14.00 **Carmen Galan**, University of Bristol, UK
Sweet solutions to tackle antimicrobial resistance: Towards the development of new glycan-based diagnostic tools

14.30 Q&A

14.40 **Hélder A. Santos**, University Medical Center Groningen; University of Groningen, The Netherlands
Polysaccharide-based nanoformulations for myocardium infarction therapy: RNA-applications for mending the broken hearts

15.10 Q&A

15.20 POSTER SESSION B with coffee, tea and exhibition



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- 16.20 **Mikko Airavaara**, University of Helsinki, Finland
Phenotypic modeling of Parkinson's for drug development
- 16.35 **Teemu Junttila**, Genentech, Research Oncology, USA
Synthetic immunity through T Cell bispecifics: Overcoming barriers in solid tumor targeting
- 17.05 Q&A
- 17.15 First symposium day ends
- 19.00 Symposium dinner

FRIDAY, 29 AUGUST 2025

SESSION III – OVERCOMING VALLEY OF DEATH Chairs: Jukka Westermarck and Phuong Doan

- 09.00 **Richard Marais**, Oncodrug Ltd, UK
Setting up a biotech company after 35 years in academia
- 09.30 Q&A
- 09.40 **Silvia Marsoni**, IFOM ETS The AIRC Institute of Molecular Oncology, Italy
Timing is everything: Can understanding tumor biology help overcome the drug development dead zone?
- 10.10 Q&A
- 10.20 **Kiesha Rice**, Misvik Biology, Finland
Pan-cancer ex vivo trials illuminate responses to novel drugs
- 10.35 POSTERS with coffee, tea and exhibition
- 11.35 **Maarit Merla**, Finnish Drug Discovery Center Ltd, Finland
Turning innovations into successful products – with Finnish Drug Discovery Center
- 12.05 Q&A

SESSION IV – CLINICAL DRUG DEVELOPMENT Chairs: Maija Hollmén and Laura Airas

- 12.15 **Anniina Färkkilä**, University of Helsinki, Finland
Harnessing spatial biology for advancing precision medicine
- 12.45 Q&A
- 12.55 LUNCH and exhibition
- 14.15 **Parul Singh**, University of Turku, Finland
Charting HNSCC vulnerabilities using molecular and functional profiling
- 14.30 **Saara Koskela**, University of Turku, Finland
Immunotherapy prognostication biomarkers at the dendritic cell – CD8+ T cell interface
- 14.45 **Petri Bono**, Faron Pharmaceuticals, Finland
Targeting immunosuppression in cancer: Bexmarilimab phase 2 results
- 15.15 Q&A
- 15.25 **David Leppert**, University Hospital Basel, Switzerland
Biomarkers in drug development: getting more for less
- 15.55 Q&A
- 16.05 **Klaus Elenius**, BioCity Turku Scientific Director
Closing remarks

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