

50 Years – Research for
A Life Without Cancer



newsletter

PostDoc Network

ISSUE
MARCH 2015

Dear Postdocs and Colleagues,

Spring has come to Heidelberg! The year is only a few months old and the PDN already has quite some news to share with you. The PDN committee recently elected a new speaker – Kristin Rattay – who will represent the PDN to the DKFZ management board together with the deputy speaker Christian Breunig. Kristin is taking over this role from Anna Shavinskaya who has been the PDN speaker for a year (see page 2).

Each year the DKFZ recruits young scientists for its DKFZ Postdoc Fellowship Program. The last selection round was taking place in Heidelberg end of last year and we congratulate the five new stipends Ann-Christin Gaupel, Danny Kägebein, Eva Nievergall, Daniel Pastor-Flores, and Sreejith Rajasekharan. Welcome to the DKFZ! You can read more about the new Postdoc fellows on pages 3-4. The Annual Postdoc Survey has the goal to identify and ultimately address your needs. The PDN thanks everyone who participated in last year's survey! The analysis is done and you can read about its outcome on page 5 of this newsletter. The PDN together with the Career Service organized a Career Day on Project Management last December, which many of you attended. Thanks to great speakers and participants it was a huge success and you can find a report about this exciting day on page 4. In this issue you can also learn more about the Postdoc Certificate Program offered by the Advanced Training (see page 6), read about the Welcome & Get-Together events organized by Hadeel Khallouf (see page 4), and find out about the great achievements of your Postdoc Fellows (see pages 7-8). As a new section we will from now on include short profiles of former DKFZ Postdocs illustrating career paths of DKFZ Postdoc Alumni (see page 6). If you like to suggest someone for an interview, let us know!

Have a great day,
Karolin Willmund & Christian Breunig

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„DKFZ Career Day: Publishing” on May 8th 2014

Save the date:
Career Day: Publishing
May 8th, 2015

Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum
Communication Center, Lecture Hall
Im Neuenheimer Feld 280.
69120 Heidelberg

Organized by:
PDN – The PostDoc Network
DKFZ Career Service

For more information check:
www.dkfz.de/careerday

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CANCER RESEARCH CENTER
IN THE HELMHOLTZ ASSOCIATION
50 Years – Research for
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All scientists need to publish articles or books during their career. However, Publishing is by itself a professional career. Are you interested in learning more about the Publishing world? Do you want to know what professional opportunities are out there? Which skills and qualifications are required to work as a Publisher?

Then Save The Date!
“Career Day: Publishing”

There you will have the opportunity to hear directly from scientific publishers from different companies what are the opportunities and benefits of working in the Publishing sector.

We look forward to see you there!

Save the Dates:

Career Day: Research & Development
June 22nd 2015

Running Meetup
Tuesdays at 18:30 at the main building
(contact Octavio Espinosa)

Next PDN Committee Meetings
March 23rd ATV A2.128 12:00-13:00
April 9th H2.02.073 11:00-12:00
April 23rd H2.02.073 11:00-12:00
May 7th H2.02.073 11:00-12:00

Next Welcome & Get-Together
March 25th, 7:30 p.m. Restaurant Tati

New speaker of the PDN and news of the PDN committee members

This time we announce the change of our speaker. Our former speaker **Anna Shavinskaya** steps down from her duties as a speaker to go on with her personal career. Anna works in the scientific laboratory management of the Division of Vascular Oncology and Metastasis of Hellmut Augustin since February 2014 and worked before in the unit "Molecular Oncology of solid Tumors". Besides her duties as the PDN speaker, she worked on a new vision of the PDN, was involved in career day and retreat organisation. She has been the speaker of the PDN for the last year. We are grateful to Anna for her passionate and devoted work in the committee and wish her all the best in her future career!



Kristin Rattay (D090)

We would like to welcome the new speaker **Kristin Rattay**. Kristin is a molecular biologist, working as a Postdoc at the DKFZ in the Division of Developmental Immunology (Prof. Dr. Bruno Kyewski; D090) since July 2014. She started her PhD in 2011 in the same lab, working on gene regulation in the context of central tolerance in the thymus, which plays an important role in the prevention of autoimmune diseases. She studied biology at the Albert-Ludwigs University in Freiburg and performed her diploma thesis at the Max-Planck-Institute for Immunobiology and Epigenetics in the department of Molecular Immunobiology (Prof. Dr. Rudolf Grosschedl). Kristin got involved in the PDN committee in September 2014 and has been elected for the PDN speaker starting from March 2015. Kristin's comment after the election: "I am very much looking forward to continue working in the PDN and to be your PDN speaker." **Christian Breunig** will continue being the deputy speaker of the PDN.

As you know, Postdocs do not stay too long at one place, and the PDN committee welcomes new members and says good-bye to the old ones on a regular basis. **Rosario Piro** and **Thomas Wolf** moved on with the career and unfortunately left the DKFZ. We thank both of them for their enormous contribution and work they did for the PDN. Besides being actively involved in different projects, Rosario organized the last PDN retreats which were a great success. Thomas created and analyzed the Postdoc survey and he established together with Ocatvio Espinosa the Postdoc Running Meetup.



Rosario Piro



Thomas Wolf

The established working groups of the PDN will continue their work to improve the situation of Postdocs at DKFZ by providing information on career possibilities, answering specific questions regarding any aspect of PostDoc life, and providing space for scientific and non-scientific exchange between Postdocs. If you are interested in learning more about the PDN or would like to see your ideas come to life contact us (pdn@dkfz.de) or join our next meetings.

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Anna Shavinskaya

As I was the only Postdoc in my department, my first motivation in joining the PDN in 2010 was to get in contact with other Postdocs at the DKFZ and expand my network. Very soon I became more involved in the PDN and was fascinated by the idea to create a network as an information platform for DKFZ Postdocs. So I decided to contribute actively to the development of the PDN. Since then, together with my colleagues from the PDN committee, I organized PDN retreats, career-related and other information events. Being the PDN speaker was a great experience for me and I learned a lot about management of teams, project management and strategy development. Through my work in the PDN, I met many interesting and talented people, won new friends, and acquired new skills and hands-on experience that I'm applying now in my daily work. I am very happy that I have had an opportunity to be part of the PDN. I encourage everyone, who is interested in event organization; networking and wants to realize his/her own ideas to join the PDN.

DKFZ Postdoc Fellows 2014

There are many ways to become a Postdoc at DKFZ – one is through the DKFZ Postdoctoral Fellowship program! Through a competitive selection process involving a three-day symposium in Heidelberg each year up to 10 young scientists are recruited for this 2-year program. In the last selection round 5 new Postdoc Fellows could be recruited!

Ann-Christin Gaupel obtained her PhD at the Cancer Research Center, State University of New York, Albany, NY, USA in the lab of Martin Tenniswood, where she worked on histone deacetylase inhibitors (HDACis). At the DKFZ, she joined the **Division of Molecular Genetics (B060)** studying the effect of tumor metabolism on the stromal cell compartment in diffuse large B cell lymphoma.

“I decided to join the DKFZ because of its outstanding reputation, the great research environment within the technology park, the friendly members of the division as well as the research project, which allowed me to combine two research interests: tumor metabolism and tumor microenvironment“, says Ann-Christin.



*Ann-Christin Gaupel
(B060)*



*Danny Kägebein
(D100)*

Danny Kägebein obtained his PhD at the University of Greifswald. His research work was done at the Friedrich Loeffler Institute on the island of Riems focusing on molecular mechanisms of MHCII-mediated antigen processing/presentation of chlamydial peptide antigens in dendritic cells. At the DKFZ he will join the **Junior Research Group Immune Tolerance (D100)** working on the regulation of immune responses and especially the function of regulatory T cells.

“In my opinion the DKFZ is one of the world’s leading cancer research institutes and has a high reputation in the scientific community. Moreover Heidelberg is a wonderful city to live and work in.“

Eva Nievergall obtained her PhD from Monash University, Melbourne, Australia, where she explored the signaling of the receptor tyrosine kinase EphA3. She also worked on targeting chronic myeloid leukemia progenitors and stem cells, which are known to be refractory to currently used tyrosine kinase inhibitor therapy. At the DKFZ Eva joined the **Division of Stem Cells and Cancer (A010)** focusing on microenvironmental regulation of leukemic stem and progenitor cells in myelodysplastic syndromes and acute myeloid leukemia.

“I was very keen to join the leading German cancer research institute, which with its world class research infrastructure is an ideal place for the discovery and development of innovative therapies that have the potential to change current treatment regimens to ultimately improve outcomes of cancer patients.“



Eva Nievergall (A010)



*Daniel Pastor-Flores
(A160)*

Daniel Pastor-Flores obtained his PhD from the University of Frankfurt. His doctoral research was focused on the characterization of the yeast ortholog of phosphoinositide-dependent protein kinase 1 (scPDK1) as a potential target of antifungal compounds. At DKFZ he joined the **Division of Redox Regulation (A160)** focusing on the basis of redox regulation in the mitochondrion of eukaryotic cells applying new genetically-encoded H₂O₂ sensors.

“Following my PhD I decided to focus on understanding the role of redox regulation of protein function (post-translational redox-based modification of specific protein residues). This is an exciting and rapidly emerging field.“

Sreejith Rajasekharan obtained his PhD from the Jaypee Institute of Information Technology, Noida, India working on viral-host protein interactions in Chandipura Virus (a pediatric encephalitic virus endemic to India) pathogenesis. At DKFZ he will join the **Division of Genome Modifications and Carcinogenesis (F020)** studying the interactions of APOBEC3 proteins in the molecular biology, replication, particle release of foamy retroviruses and their role in cellular DNA editing, mutagenesis and oncogenecity.



*Sreejith
Rajasekharan (F020)*

“I came to know about DKFZ during the 64th Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting. I learnt that DKFZ has a research program “Infection and Cancer” (...) working on various aspects of cancer caused by viruses; it was an opportunity for me to do research on both these topics. Such a combo is hard to find, at least in India.”

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Welcome & Get-Together

Dear Postdocs & Friends,

I am so glad that many of you have been regularly joining the Welcome & Get-Together events and that many new participants have joined us recently. It is this networking & collaboration spirit that keeps me organizing these events and I strongly hope that this tradition will go on.

As always, I am trying to organize different activities on different days of the week so that you can join at least once in a while. In January this year we visited the Gilbert's Goldener Adler restaurant, which was a nice place to try some traditional German dishes. In February, I organized once again a “new kind” of get-together: lasertag in the world of laser, it was fun to spend that evening with such a nice group of Postdocs coming from all over the globe and to have a “peaceful” international lasertag battle. Afterwards, we had some Middle Eastern food and discussed about world politics, history, culture and some science!

I hope you are having a good time in the get-together events and am always happy to hear your comments & suggestions. It is thanks to you that all those get-together events have been a success.

Hadeel Khallouf



*February-Postdoc-Get-Together: Lasertag battle
& Middle Eastern food (© Hadeel Khallouf)*

DKFZ Career Day: Project Management



*Career Day introduction by Marion G rth and
Timo Kehl*

On December 5th, 2014 more than 200 participants attended the Career Day on Project Management. The PostDoc Network (PDN) in collaboration with the DKFZ Career Service organized the Career Day event.

Early in the morning workshops were offered covering basic skills required in Project Management positions, the role of Project Management in EU-funded research projects, and clinical trials.

In addition to the workshops, experts in Project Management from DKFZ and other research institutes, universities and pharmaceutical companies gave short presentations. Speakers, many of them DKFZ Alumni, reported on their daily tasks at work as a project manager, their responsibilities and their personal career path.

The interactive round-table discussions after each session created a chance to ask questions in smaller groups and to discuss ideas with the speakers which were intensively used and appreciated.

Throughout the event, and especially during the breaks, attendees seized the chance to exchange opinions and networked with peers from different institutes.

The high number of attendees and positive feedback we received overwhelmed us, as the organizing team. We would like to thank everyone who made this Career Day on Project Management such a success and in particular the attendees for their active participation and hope to see many of you again at the next Career Day on Publishing taking place on May 8th, 2015.



Results of one table discussion

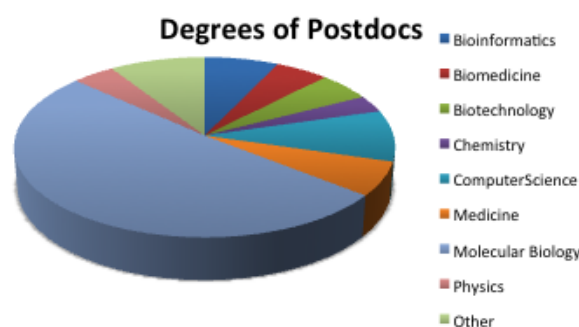
Christos Patsis, Kristin Rattay, Helena Schock, Timo Kehl

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Postdoc Survey Results 2014

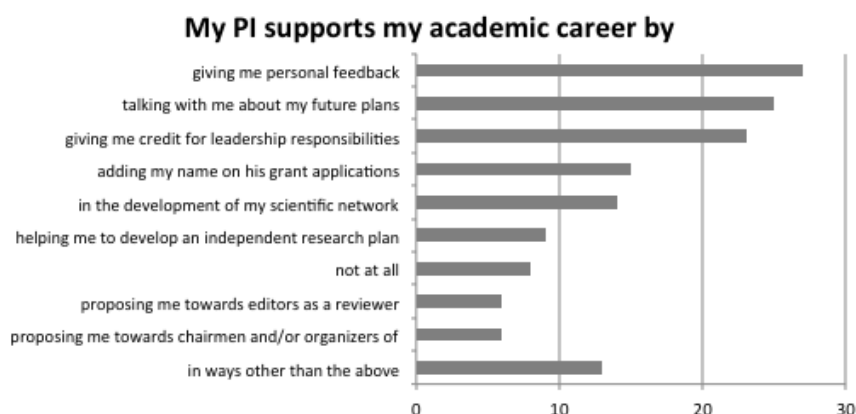
In the Postdoc Survey 2014 we had 134 participants (53 male and 81 females) comprising Postdocs from all departments of the DKFZ. 53.6% of the Postdocs at DKFZ are German and 24.5% are from other European countries. The mean age of females is slightly lower than of males (33.2% vs. 34.9% respectively). Almost 40% of the Postdocs have children and 40% would like to have children in the future.

Postdocs at the DKFZ have different scientific backgrounds: the most common degree is Molecular Biology (or closely related). The median time since Postdocs got their PhDs is around 4 years. Third party funding pays 33.1% of the Postdocs, 54.3% are paid by DKFZ, and only 10.2% hold a Postdoc fellowship. The main reasons for joining the DKFZ are the image and reputation of the DKFZ (65%) and its scientific infrastructure (64%), not so much because of advanced training possibilities (16%) and a family friendly policy (11%).



Postdocs feel that their supervisors support them most by giving personal feedback and talking about future plans. However, only 62.5% of the Postdocs answering this survey have discussed their project time frame with their supervisor. A big proportion of Postdocs (89%) has supervised someone during their postdoc time. Postdocs feel that these tasks contribute to their career development improving their communication and soft skills (58%), increasing their personal network (49%) or as motivation for their research (35%).

58.7% of the Postdocs aim for a career in academic research, 17.4 in non-academic research, and 17.48% would like to have a non-research position. The publication record of Postdocs is in line with previous surveys. 50% of the Postdocs publish in journals with an impact factor >5 and 15.7% in journals with an impact factor >10. Many Postdocs attend international meetings with 73.3% presenting posters versus 49.2% oral presentations. 7% have not attended an international meeting during their Postdoc time. And last, but not least: 81% of the Postdocs that participated in this survey enjoy working at DKFZ and 73.4% would recommend other scientists to join the DKFZ!



The PDN-Committee would like to thank all participants for taking the time to complete this survey in order to let us identify your needs & eventually make the necessary steps to meet them.

Marina Laplana & Thomas Wolf

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Postdoctoral Certificate Program

To support and improve their success in science, many postdocs also ask to train their competences in skills such as grant writing, project management or science communication. While there are many options to do so, the DKFZ now offers a modular Postdoctoral Certificate Program, which aims at giving interested Postdocs the option to obtain a personalized certificate with detailed information about advanced trainings and achievements (for example, such as helping in the organization of a career day).

The program consists of several modules from which trainings can be chosen. In February, a short lecture about Good Scientific Practice held by Prof. Stefan Eichmüller, as well as a one day workshop on Leadership in Science (conducted by Prof. Alexander Schiller and Dr. Daniel Mertens) took already place and were well received by participating Postdocs (see voices of participants below).

Further optional trainings within the framework of the DKFZ Postdoctoral Certificate Program cover topics such as grant writing, hands-on-training in project management, communication in science and others.

Here are some participants' comments on the 1-day Leadership in Science Workshop:

Gina Walter: "I highly recommend this interesting one-day-workshop to Postdocs. I particularly enjoyed the stimulating discussions we had."

Xuekai Zhu: "Thanks everyone for sharing his/her experience and opinion. The seminar really broadened my knowledge about how scientific teams work and what important factors are."

Michael Fletcher: "It was a great opportunity to discuss with a group of my peers, what scientific leadership is, how it affects our work, and how we could improve ourselves in the future."

Akke Botma: "It was an inspiring day, I gained a lot of insights through the review sessions we had after the exercises."

For further information about the Postdoctoral Certificate Program contact Celina Cziepluch (c.cziepluch@dkfz.de).

Mirko Sobotta

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Career Paths of DKFZ Postdoc Alumni

Anna Bertoni (PhD) – Lab Manager at DZNE in Bonn



Research background: Anna obtained her PhD 2012 in Genetics and Molecular Medicine from King's College in London where she investigated the effects of genetic and epigenetic variation on gene regulation in psoriasis. After her PhD she worked at the Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute in Cambridge developing high-throughput methods for whole genome sequencing and transcriptional analysis. In 2012 she joined the Department of Molecular Genetics at the DKFZ working on the epigenetic regulation of adult gliomas. Since December 2014 Anna works as Lab Manager at the German Center for Neurodegenerative Diseases (DZNE) in Bonn.

What is your current position and what do you like about it?

"As a Lab Manager at DZNE my main responsibility is to contribute to the build-up and subsequently running of laboratory facilities in the Rhineland Study examination centers. I am responsible for the collection, processing and storage of all biosamples within the study, and the development and implementation of analytical procedures in close collaboration with external experts and diagnostic laboratories.

What I like most is the opportunity to work with people who have very different backgrounds and professional roles."

What skills have been useful in obtaining your new job at the DZNE?

"I think it was a combination of technical/scientific skills and "soft" skills, particularly organization, coordination and communication skills, and in this regard, my previous experience in research, diagnostic and technology development laboratories was very much valued, particularly working with high-throughput methods in research and clinical settings."

What is your tip for DKFZ Postdocs that are interested in a similar job:

"The job itself requires planning and coordinating all the aspects related to the various laboratory activities (e.g. training and daily supervision of personnel, budgeting, close collaboration with other lab facilities etc) so my suggestion would be to gain some practical experience and/or attending seminars and training courses on scientific management."

You can contact Anna by e-mail: anna.bertoni@hotmail.it

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Achievements by Postdocs

We are happy to announce new publications of Postdocs and awards, fellowships and stipends given to them.

New Publications

Katrin Busch (D110)

Busch K, Klapproth K, Barile M, Flossdorf M, Holland-Letz T, Schlenner SM, Reth M, Höfer T, Rodewald HR. (2015) Fundamental properties of unperturbed haematopoiesis from stem cells in vivo. *Nature* 518(7540):542-6

Fabian Erdel (B066)

Erdel F, Baum M, Rippe K. The viscoelastic properties of chromatin and the nucleoplasm revealed by scale-dependent protein mobility. (2015) *J Phys Condens Matter*. 8;27(6):064115

Lei Gu (B080 / C010)

Gu L, Frommel SC, Oakes CC, Simon R, ... , Sauter G, Eils R, Plass C, Santoro R. (2015) BAZ2A (TIP5) is involved in epigenetic alterations in prostate cancer and its overexpression predicts disease recurrence. *Nature Genetics* 47(1):22-30

Nisit Khandelwal (D015)

Khandelwal N, Breinig M, Speck T, ... , Machlenkin A, Boutros M, Beckhove P. (2015) A high-throughput RNAi screen for detection of immune-checkpoint molecules that mediate tumor resistance to cytotoxic T lymphocytes. *EMBO Mol Med* e201404414 [Epub ahead of print]

Anton Khmelinskii (A260)

Khmelinskii A, Blaszcak E, Pantazopoulou M, ... , Rabut G, Ljungdahl PO, Knop M. (2015) Protein quality control at the inner nuclear membrane. *Nature* 516(7531):410-3

Kay Klapproth (D110)

Gomez Perdiguero E*, Klapproth K*, Schulz C, Busch K, Azzoni E, Crozet L, Garner H, Trouillet C, de Bruijn MF, Geissmann F, Rodewald HR. Tissue-resident macrophages originate from yolk-sac-derived erythro-myeloid progenitors. (2015) *Nature* 518(7540):547-51 *equal contribution

Kuanrong Li (C020)

Li K, Hüsing A, Fortner RT, ... , Terry K, Cramer D, Kaaks R. (2015) An epidemiologic risk prediction model for ovarian cancer in Europe: the EPIC study. *Br J Cancer* doi: 10.1038/bjc.2015.22. [Epub ahead of print]

Daniel Lipka (C010)

Lipka DB, Wang Q, Cabezas-Wallscheid N, ... , Trumpp A, Milsom MD, Plass C. (2014) Identification of DNA methylation changes at cis-regulatory elements during early steps of HSC differentiation using tagmentation-based whole genome bisulfite sequencing. *Cell Cycle* 13(22):3476-87

Franz Meitinger (A180)

Meitinger F, Khmelinskii A, Morlot S, Kurtulmus B, Palani S, Andres-Pons A, Hub B, Knop M, Charvin G, Pereira G. (2014) A memory system of negative polarity cues prevents replicative aging. *Cell* 159(5):1056-69

Kristin Rattay (D090)

Rattay K, Claude J, Rezavandy E, Matt S, Hofmann TG, Kyewski B, Derbinski J. (2015) Homeodomain-interacting protein kinase 2, a novel autoimmune regulator interaction partner, modulates promiscuous gene expression in medullary thymic epithelial cells. *J Immunol*. 194(3):921-8

Mirko Sobotta (A160):

Sobotta MC, Liou W, Stöcker S, Talwar D, Oehler M, Ruppert T, Scharf AN, Dick TP. (2015) Peroxiredoxin-2 and STAT3 form a redox relay for H₂O₂ signaling. *Nature Chemical Biology* 11(1):64-70

New Awards & Grants

Karine Boulay (B150):

- RNA@DKFZ cross topic program funding together with Georg Stöcklin group (€20,000)

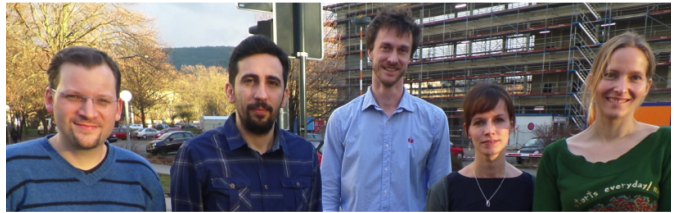
Jens Pahl (D080) & **Christian Breunig** (B050) :

- RNA@DKFZ cross topic program funding (€20,000)

Isabel Poschke (G180) & **Michael Floßdorf** (B086)

Isabel Poschke coordinates the “TIL-REP” systems medicine junior consortium (e:Med programme). It deals with “Dynamics of the tumor-infiltrating lymphocyte repertoire in melanoma and pancreatic cancer” and will study mechanisms, kinetics and composition of T-cell infiltrates in tumors, using melanoma and pancreatic cancer as examples. Our systems medicine approach combines data from mathematical models, preclinical experiments and patient-based research.

The interdisciplinary consortium consist of 5 young scientist, including **two DKFZ Postdocs**: **Dr. Michael Floßdorf** (Div. of Theoretical Systems Biology, head of the Quantitative Immunology subgroup) and **Dr. Isabel Poschke** (coordinator, Div. of Molecular Oncology of Gastrointestinal Tumors, head of the Human T cell Immunology subgroup). The other members are Dr. Jessica Hassel (NCT/Heidelberg University Hospital), Dr. Oliver Strobel (Heidelberg University Hospital) and Dr. Mustafa Diken (TRON, Mainz).



Oliver Strobel, Mustafa Diken, Michael Floßdorf, Isabel Poschke, Jessica Hassel

Vacancies at PDN:

Organizer of Retreat & Career Seminars, Editor of PostDoc Newsletter, Supporter of PDN website

From now on, we are looking for a new co-workers of the PostDoc Newsletter. If you would like to develop your networking and communication skills, this position is just right.

The PDN plans to organize a Postdoc Retreat and Career Seminars. If you would like to develop your networking and project management skills, these positions are just right.

In addition, we are looking for someone who wants to join to support the “Design and Homepage team”.

Next PDN committee meetings:

Our next PDN meeting is **March 23rd** from **12:00-13:00** at ATV in **A2.128**. From April 9th on we will have our PDN committee meetings **Thursdays every two weeks** from **11:00-12:00** in **H2.02.073**.

The PDN committee always welcomes new members. If you prefer to try yourself in something else or have your own valuable ideas, there is always an opportunity for you at the PDN. **Join us!**

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PDN: From Postdocs for Postdocs **Making more of your time as a Postdoc at DKFZ!**

Imprint

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Hadeel Khallouf	Thomas Wolf
Marina Laplana	

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