



🍁 Welcome to the FOCIS Fall Newsletter 🍁

We're excited to share what's new across the FOCIS community—highlighting a season of scientific innovation, international collaboration, and continued growth.

FOCIS 2026 is just around the corner! Registration is now open, along with abstract submissions—free for FOCIS Members. Speaking of membership, it's time to renew for the 2025–2026 cycle. If your membership lapses, this will be the last newsletter you receive—don't miss out, renew today!

Beyond the Annual Meeting, registration is also open for the 2026 Advanced Course in Basic and Clinical Immunology—another can't-miss opportunity.

In this issue, you'll find updates from our FOCIS Centers of Excellence, a preview of the upcoming FOCIS Podcast Series, and highlights from our new Journal Club.

Thanks for being part of FOCIS—stay tuned for more ways to connect, learn, and grow with us!

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[FOCIS 2026 - Registration Now Open](#)

Join us in San Francisco for the 26th Annual FOCIS Meeting!

The premier event in translational immunology, the FOCIS 2026 Annual Meeting brings together top researchers, clinicians, and innovators for cutting-edge science and collaboration. Don't miss this unique opportunity to shape the future of immunological research and care.

The Scientific Program will feature four dynamic keynote speakers—stay tuned for more!



[Learn about the Program](#)

Submit Your Research to FOCIS 2026

We're excited to announce that abstract submission for the FOCIS 2026 Annual Meeting is officially open! This is your opportunity to contribute to the scientific program by sharing your latest research with a global community of immunology experts, clinicians, and scientists.

FOCIS Members save! Abstract submission fees are waived for current members—a \$30 savings per abstract. Plus, authors of abstracts selected for oral presentations may be eligible to apply for a 2026 Travel Award to attend FOCIS 2026.

Abstract submission deadline: December 31, 2025

2026 ABSTRACT TOPICS

Submissions Due: Wednesday, December 31, 2025



FOCIS
2026 JUNE 9-12
ANNUAL MEETING SAN FRANCISCO CALIFORNIA

➤ Allergy: Asthma, Food Allergy, Eosinophilic Gastrointestinal Disease, Eczema ➤ Autoimmune Diseases: Rheumatologic Diseases, General Autoimmunity, Diabetes and Other Autoimmune Endocrine Diseases, Autoimmune Hematologic Diseases, Autoimmune Skin Disease, Uveitis, CNS Autoimmunity ➤ Autoinflammatory Diseases: Eye, Skin, GI Tract, Systemic ➤ Basic Science of Immunology - Adaptive Immunity: B Cells, Crosstalk, Signaling, T Cells ➤ Basic Science of Immunology - Innate Immunity: Crosstalk, Cytokines/Chemokines, Innate Cells, Signaling, Trained Immunity ➤ Immuno-engineering and Cellular Therapies: Biospecifics, CAR-T and NK Cells, Gene Therapy, Nanoparticles, TCR T Cells, TILs, Regulatory T Cells, Regulatory APC, Organoid Models ➤ Immuno-oncology: Checkpoint Therapy, Immune Monitoring, Vaccines ➤ Immunogenetics: Epigenetics, Immunodeficiency: Primary or Acquired, Immune Dysregulation Disorders	➤ Immunology Across the Ages: Immunology of Aging, Newborn Immunology, Inflammaging ➤ Immunometabolism: Innate Immunity, Adaptive Immunity ➤ Infectious Diseases: Vaccines, Host Pathogen Responses, COVID-19, Post-infection Outcomes, Treatment ➤ Mucosal Immunology: Microbiome, Immunology of the Gastrointestinal Tract, IBD ➤ Neuroimmunology: CNS Neuroimmunology, Peripheral Neuroimmunology ➤ Reproductive Immunology: Maternal/Fetal Immunology, Immunology of Pregnancy Loss ➤ Stem Cell and Organ Transplantation: GvHD, Rejection, Biologics ➤ Systems Immunology: Molecular Networks, Cell-cell Interactomes, Multi-OMIC Tools, AI in Imaging, Structural Immunology, Correlates of Immunity, Single Cell
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[Submit Abstract](#)

Renew Your Membership!

As a valued member of the FOCIS community, we want to thank you for your commitment to advancing immunology and helping us achieve our mission. You're a vital part of the FOCIS community— and we'd love to have you with us for another great year!

Please see this as a friendly reminder that your [membership renewal](#) is due by **December 31st, 2025**. [Renewing](#) ensures you continue to receive access to exclusive member benefits, networking opportunities, and the latest in translational immunology.

Let's keep moving science forward — together.



**Please reach out to the FOCIS office at info@focisnet.org if you have any questions.*

[Renew Today](#)



[FOCIS 2026 Advanced Course in Basic & Clinical Immunology Registration Now Open](#)

We're excited to announce that registration is now open for the 2026 Advanced Course in Basic & Clinical Immunology!

Join us March 9–11, 2026 at the Benson Hotel & Faculty Club in Aurora, CO, for an engaging educational experience. This course features renowned faculty who will

deliver a clinically focused take on major topics in cellular and molecular immunology.

Who Should Attend?

- Clinical fellows in disciplines related to immunology
- Fellows doing basic research with an emphasis on human disease\
- Industry Partners
- Academic or community physicians

What to Expect

- 16-course lectures from renowned faculty
- Clinical spin on major topics in cellular and molecular immunology
- Ample opportunity for students to interact with the faculty outside the lecture room

[Learn More](#)

[Register Today](#)

Pioneers in Immunology

FOCIS proudly congratulates Drs. Mary Brunkow, Fred Ramsdell, and Shimon Sakaguchi, for their groundbreaking discoveries in the characterization of regulatory T cells (Tregs), an immune cell population essential for maintaining immune tolerance to host tissues.

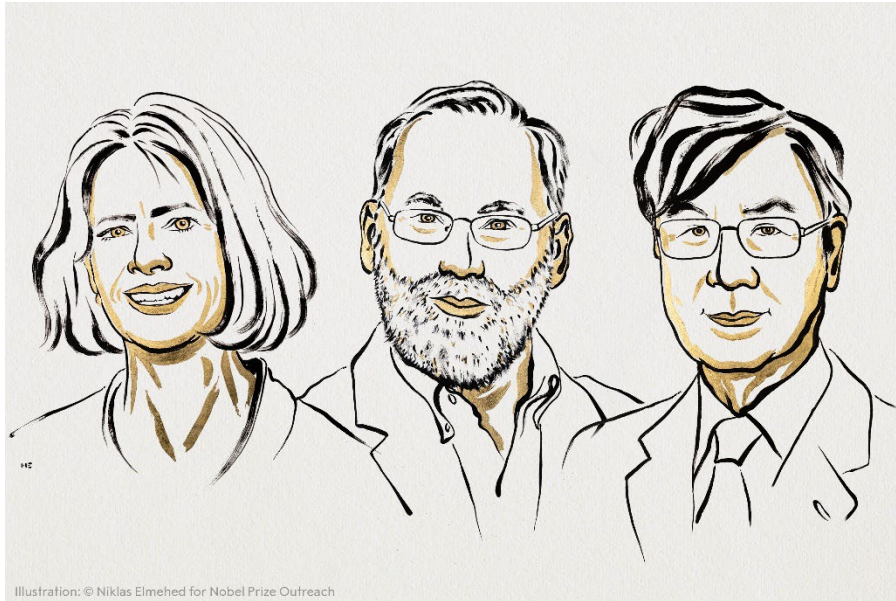
Their seminal contributions laid the scientific foundation for a new generation of therapies aimed at restoring immune tolerance in transplantation and the treatment of autoimmune diseases, many of which are currently under clinical investigation. This award also emphasizes the importance of international efforts in basic and translational immunology research in forwarding human health.

To learn more about the history of this transformative discovery from one of the Nobel awardees, we recommend the following article:

 Regulatory T cells: history and perspective

[Read on PubMed>>](#)

[Official Nobel Prize Website](#)



[FOCIS Journal Club - October 2025](#)

We had an outstanding turnout at our debut journal club—thank you to everyone who joined us!

A special thank you to our speakers, **Dr. Alice Horisberger** and **Dr. Deepak Rao**. Dr. Horisberger led an excellent presentation. She provided a clear and compelling overview of their recent study using mass cytometry immune profiling in lupus nephritis.

Journal Clubs will become a member only benefit in the future, giving you exclusive access to these presentations! We hope you will continue to join us. [You can stay up to date on future journal clubs on our website.](#)



[Next Podcast Release - End of October](#)

The next podcast series is here! Join us at the end of every month to hear from the FOCIS community.

The first episode in this series features interviews with **FOCIS President-Elect Dr. Megan Levings** and **former board member Dr. Hans-Dieter Volk** — two leaders you won't want to miss.

 **Mark your calendars:**



The episode drops the **last week of October**. Make sure you're subscribed and ready to tune in!

[View Past Episodes](#)

[What an Amazing Week in Rouen, France!](#)

The **2025 European Advanced Course**, held from **October 20–24, 2025**, at the University of Rouen Normandy, Faculty of Health, was a tremendous success! Participants from across Europe gathered for a week of insightful lectures, interactive discussions, and an inspiring exchange of ideas and expertise.

We extend our sincere thanks to our outstanding faculty for sharing their knowledge and enthusiasm, and to all attendees for their active participation and energy throughout the week.

A special word of gratitude goes to our dedicated course directors — Olivier Boyer, MD, PhD, and Jérémie Martinet, PharmD, PhD (University of Rouen Normandy & Rouen University Hospital) — for their exceptional leadership, organization, and commitment in making this event such a success.



[Exciting News from the FOCIS FCE & MS Community](#)



Stay up to date with the latest news and updates from our FCEs!

FCE News: FOCIS Center of Excellence at Ghent University Hospital

Prize for Fundamental Research in
Medicine 2025 awarded to Dr. Joke
Deprez by Belgian Royal Academy of
Medicine

Dr. Joke Deprez, postdoctoral researcher in the FOCIS Center of Excellence at Ghent University Hospital directed by Prof. Dr. Dirk Elewaut, has been honored with a prestigious award from the Royal Academy of Medicine of Belgium in recognition of her doctoral research on nanomedicine delivery by myeloid cells in inflammatory conditions.

Her award-winning work, published in *Nature Nanotechnology* (impact factor 38.1), fundamentally challenges the long-standing belief that nanomedicines accumulate in inflamed tissues primarily via passive leakage through blood vessels—the so-called Enhanced Permeation and Retention (EPR) effect.



Through an elegant series of experiments in rheumatoid arthritis models, Dr. Deprez demonstrated that circulating myeloid immune cells—monocytes and neutrophils—play a pivotal role in transporting liposomal drug carriers directly to sites of inflammation. Remarkably, depleting these immune cells reduced liposome accumulation by over 50-60%, revealing that more than half of drug delivery relies on cell-mediated transport rather than passive diffusion.

[Read the Full Article Here >>](#)

FCE News: Benaroya Research Institute

New Genomic Screens Illuminate How Genetic Variants Drive Autoimmune Disease Through T Cells

In a [Nature Genetics](#) study published in September, Benaroya Research Institute (BRI) researchers led by [John Ray, PhD](#), reveal how autoimmune-associated genetic variants directly impact gene regulation and function in primary human CD4 T cells. First author Ching-Huang Ho, PhD, developed a high-throughput pipeline using massively parallel reporter assays (MPRA) to test over 18,000 variants linked to diseases such as multiple sclerosis, rheumatoid arthritis, type 1 diabetes, and inflammatory bowel disease.

Unlike traditional studies that rely on immortalized cell lines, this work used primary CD4 T cells from human donors — offering a more physiologically relevant view of variant function. The team identified 545 expression-modulating variants (emVars) that influence gene activity in CD4 T cells. These emVars were enriched for pathways related to inflammation and T cell activation, underscoring their relevance to autoimmune pathogenesis.

To validate functional impact, researchers used CRISPR-interference (CRISPRi) to perturb emVar-containing loci and observed that many of them affect T cell proliferation. This provides compelling evidence that non-coding genetic risk regions can shape immune responses by altering T cell behavior. [Check out the press release here.](#)

[Read the Full Article Here >>](#)

FCE NEWS: Yale Human and Translational Immunology Program

October 2025 – Yale Immunology Update

David Hafler

The Hafler lab has recently published several articles of interest to the FOCiS community:

[New clinical trial:](#)

The PRISM clinical trial, led by Dr. Hafler, is starting. PRISM is a large-scale exploratory study focused on preventing the progression of prodromal Parkinson's Disease that is funded by The Marcus Foundation. The trial will assess the

Potential for Rational Immune System Manipulation to prevent emergence of synucleinopathy manifestations in persons with REM Sleep Behavior Disorder (RBD).

Prashanth Vallabhajosyula

The Vallabhajosyula Lab would like to share a scientific discovery of interest to the FOCiS community that has been reported in three recent publications:

Development of a novel biomarker platform for acute rejection monitoring in transplant patients

Our laboratory investigates the potential diagnostic utility of cell-specific extracellular vesicles (EVs) in cardiovascular diseases. Specifically, there's a critical need for biomarkers to monitor acute cellular rejection (ACR) after heart and lung transplantation. We hypothesize that ACR leads to changes in the secretory EV output of cells involved in the acute rejection process. Thus, we proposed that ACR would result in changes in T-cell and donor tissue EV profiles in peripheral circulation.

Over the past year, we developed a novel T cell EV platform using a rodent heart transplant ACR model¹. We then translated these EV methodologies to a clinical setting, validating their potential in heart transplant patients². Our study demonstrated that the protein and RNA cargoes of circulating donor heart EVs and T cell EVs can accurately diagnose ACR².

[Read the Full Article Here >>](#)

Member Society NEWS: German Society of Immunology

Highlights of German Immunology

DGfI Study Groups: Be simply the best!

The “Best of” Satellite Symposium of the Study Groups of the German Society of Immunology (DGfI) was scheduled for August 17, 2025. The event showcased recent achievements in various research areas while maintaining a focus on the clinical relevance of immunological research. The symposium attracted scientists from around the world who gathered in beautiful Vienna for the IUIS Congress.



German immunologists are organized into sixteen Study Groups within the DGfI that cover a variety of topics. These areas range from immune cells and organ immunity to basic and clinical immunology. This diversity was reflected in the talks delivered by members of the study groups. Min Ae Lee-Kirsch (Dresden University of Technology) and Fabian Hauck (Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich) presented elegant studies unveiling the molecular basis of the genetic determinants of autoimmune disorders, such as systemic lupus erythematosus, as well as innate immune deficiencies. Triantafyllos Chavakis (Dresden University of Technology) discussed the context-dependent effects of trained innate immune memory, including beneficial anti-tumor effects and potential maladaptive memory due to clonal hematopoiesis of indeterminate potential.

[Read the Full Article Here >>](#)

Member Society NEWS: The Japanese Society of Clinical Immunology

The 5th International Symposium of Clinical Immunology will be held in 22-23 May 2026 at Maihama, Japan. You can participate either in person or

online.

Abstract submission and early registration will be available from January 2026.

Please visit the website below:

<https://icongroup.co.jp/isci2026/>



Member Society NEWS: American Society for Histocompatibility and Immunogenetics (ASHI)

2026 ASHI Annual Meeting – Montreal

The American Society for Histocompatibility and Immunogenetics (ASHI) is partnering with the Canadian Society for Transplantation (CST) to host a joint scientific meeting from October 26–30, 2026 in Montreal, Quebec.



Together, the two societies will present the ASHI/CST Joint Scientific Meeting: Advancing the Science of Transplantation—a collaborative program dedicated to sharing the latest research, innovations, and clinical advancements in the field. For more information, contact ASHI at info@ashi-hla.org.

[Read all FCE News Here](#)

Science Immunology



FOCIS publishes exceptional and interesting immunological research articles in every [Science Immunology](#) issue. The free articles are published under the 'Editors' Choice' article category. Browse and read the recent Editors' Choice articles linked below.

Science Immunology is a monthly, online-only, peer-reviewed research journal designed to facilitate understanding of the immune system by showcasing innovative advances in the expanding field of immunology. It draws from studies in all organisms and model systems, including humans.

Editor's Choice Articles

VOLUME 10 | ISSUE 110 | AUG 2025

[Immune signature clues are key to unlocking the mystery of clinical responses](#)

By Robin R. Kobylski & Laura A. Solt

A gene signature predicts infection severity and all-cause mortality across risk factors modifiable with lifestyle changes and treatment.

[A LAGging kiss leaves T cells cold](#)

By Thomas T. Xu & Shiv Pillai

LAG-3 dampens CD4+ T cell activation by disrupting CD3ε-Lck condensates and is a therapeutic target in both cancer and autoimmunity.

VOLUME 10 | ISSUE 111 | SEP 2025

[It's getting hot in here: Heating up the tumor microenvironment with an oral](#)

[**HO-1 inhibitor**](#)

By Cait A. McAlindon & Rachael A. Clark

A new orally bioavailable HO-1 inhibitor enhances tumor clearance after chemotherapy in mice by enhancing the recruitment of CD8 T cells.

[**Loss-of-function mutations ensure that response to immune checkpoint therapy is NOD2 be denied**](#)

By Ana C. Anderson & Manu Rangachari

Loss-of-function mutations in NOD2 may predict positive response to PD-1 blockade monotherapy in cancer.

VOLUME 10 | ISSUE 112 | OCT 2025

[**The power of the few: RORyt+ dendritic cells promote food-specific peripheral regulatory T cells**](#)

By Elise G. Liu & Adam Williams

Food antigen-specific peripheral regulatory T cell induction in the gut is driven by RORyt+ dendritic cells.

[**Taking aim at autoimmunity—Antigen-Fc constructs for mucosal pemphigus hit the mark**](#)

By Francesca Beretta & Valentina Damato

A desmoglein-3 antigen-Fc fusion construct shows promise as a therapeutic in a model of pemphigus vulgaris.

[**FOCIS Upcoming Community Events**](#)

[The Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer's 40th Anniversary Annual Meeting and Pre-Conference Programs \(SITC 2025\)](#)



Wednesday, November 5 – Sunday,

November 9, 2025 | National Harbor, MD
or Virtually

[Learn more>>](#)

[2025 Rachmiel Levine-Arthur Riggs
Diabetes Research Symposium](#)

Friday, November 14 – Monday, November
17, 2025 | The Westin Pasadena |
Pasadena, California.



[Learn more>>](#)

[BSI Congress 2025](#)

Monday, December 1 – Thursday,
December 4, 2025 | Liverpool, UK

Join the British Society for Immunology Congress 2025 at ACC Liverpool this December. Bringing together over 1,500 immunology professionals from across the world, the meeting will showcase advances in mucosal and neuroimmunology, cancer inflammation, metabolism, autoimmunity, AI-driven immune insights & more. Register now to share ideas, build collaborations, and advance immunology together!"



[Learn more>>](#)

[2026 ASHI Annual Meeting – Montreal](#)

[Details Coming Soon >>](#)



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**Senior Scientist in Immuno-
Inflammation**

Nantes, France

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Postdoctoral Fellowship

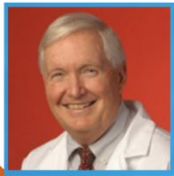
Nashville, TN

[View Now>>](#)

Use the [FOCIS Career Center](#) to post job openings, find potential candidates, search for openings, and subscribe to new posting notifications. To submit an opening, [click here](#).

FOCIS members may post job openings for free!

Thank you for reading and supporting FOCIS as we advance immunology together!



✚ C. Garrison
Fathman Fellows
Fund

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