



Annual Symposium, Workshop & Mid Term Meeting

13th-16th April 2026

AGENDA

Meeting venue: Avepark, Parque de Ciência e Tecnologia, Universidade do Minho
Edifício 1 (Sede) | Rua Ave 1, 4805-694 Barco, Guimarães - Portugal

DAY 1

Monday, 13th April - Mid-Term Meeting

08:45 - 09:00 **Registration** - ALL participants check in and collect materials
Facilitator: TBD

09:00 - 09:15 **Welcome and Introduction** on the purpose of the meeting (15')
Speakers: Shana Impens, REA Project Officer; Prof. Parolini, Coordinator (UCSC)

09:15 - 09:35 **Tour de table** - Pl's briefly present their research team and describe their role within the network. Introduction of the Associated Partners (20')
Speakers: All Pls, 1-2 min each

09:35 - 10:00 **REA Project Officer presentation and Q&A (25')** - slides from the REA PO will be circulated in advance, during the session the PO will answer any question related to the monitoring of project implementation, reporting and purpose of the mid-term check.
Speaker: Shana Impens, REA Project Officer

10:00 - 10:20 **COFFEE BREAK** - 20'

10:20 - 11:00 **Coordinator's report and Q&A** - Presentation of SECRET progress report and achievements (40' / Q&A)
Speaker: Prof. Ornella Parolini (UCSC)

11:00 -12:15 **DCs 1-10 Individual presentations** - DCs present themselves, their background and an update of their individual research project (including training, secondments, etc.). Scientific results are not expected in the presentations at this stage of the project (7' / each)

12:15-13:15 - **LUNCH** - 1h

Parallel Session #1 - 13:15 - 14:15 (1h)

- **Restricted session with the DCs** - Researchers common session to discuss with the REA PO about their experiences within the network in terms of training foreseen, supervision arrangements, progress and impact on their future careers.
Speakers: All DC fellows; Shana Impens, REA Project Officer
- **Pl's scientific discussion/ networking-** (ALL Participants except DCs)



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Parallel Session #2 - 14:15 - 15:00 (45')

- **Restricted session:** Meeting between Coordinator and PO to discuss project progress -
Speaker: Shana Impens, REA Project Officer, Prof. Ornella Parolini (UCSC)
- **Open discussion and networking** - DCs and other attendants.

15:00 - 15:30 *COFFEE BREAK* - 30'

15:30 - 16:30 **Feedback and open discussion - 1h** REA Project Officer feedback on the output of the network so far, possible training areas for future exploitation or the impact on DCs' future careers.
Speaker: Shana Impens, REA Project Officer

16:30 - 16:45 **Wrap up and conclusions - 15'**
Speaker: Prof. Ornella Parolini (UCSC)

Visit to the UNESCO protected city centre of Guimarães, Palace and Medieval Castle - 16:45-18:00

20:00 - 22:00 *Networking Dinner @ Histórico (at participants' own expense)*
(Guimarães City Centre, <https://papaboa.pt/hist/>; <https://maps.app.goo.gl/NmbF15tFoNKWA16r8>)

End of Mid Term Meeting (PO departure)



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DAY 2

Tuesday, 14th April - Annual Symposium

09:00 - 09:15 **Registration (ALL)**

- Welcome attendees

09:15 - 09:30 **Opening Remarks - 15'**

- Welcome by the Coordinator, an overview of today's objectives and expectations.
Speaker and Coordinator: Ornella Parolini (UCSC)

09:30 - 10:30 **Doctoral Researchers' Presentations (DC1-DC5) - 1h'**

- Each PhD fellow gives 10 min presentation on research progress and future plans

10:30 - 11:00 *COFFEE BREAK - 30'*

- Networking opportunity for attendees

11:00 - 12:00 **Doctoral Researchers' Presentations (DC6-DC10) - 1h'**

- Each PhD fellow gives 10 min presentation on research progress and future plans.

12:00 - 12:45 **Seminar: Building Organs-on-Chips: Engineering the Cellular Microenvironment - 45'**

Speaker: Henriëtte Lanz (MIMETAS)

12:45 - 14:00 *Group Photo & NETWORKING LUNCH (1.15 h)*

14:00 - 14:30 **WP2 Cells and SECRET fractions - review next steps and challenges - 30'**

Speaker: WPLLeader Bernd Giebel (UKE) gives a 20 min presentation for discussion

14:30 - 15:00 **WP3 SECRET mechanisms of action - review next steps and challenges - 30'**

Speaker: WPLLeader Sveva Bollini (UNIGE) gives a 20 min presentation for discussion

15:00 - 15:30 **WP4 SECRET delivery methods - review next steps and challenges - 30'**

Speaker: WPLLeaders Ricardo A. Pires /Rui Luis Reis (UMINHO) give a 20 min presentation for discussion

15:30 - 16:00 *COFFEE BREAK - 30'*

16:00 - 16:15 **WP5 Education and training DC progress and next events - 15'**

Speaker: WPLLeader Peter Ponsaerts(UA)

16:15 - 16:45 **WP6 Communication, dissemination, exploitation and public engagement - progress review and DEC Plan next steps - 30'**

Speaker: WPLLeader Henriette Lanz (MIM)/Nicoletta Corti (INNACTA)

16:45 - 17:00 **Closing Remarks - 15'**

Speaker and Coordinator: Ornella Parolini (UCSC)



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17:00 - 17:30 **Management Board session** (MB members only) - 30'

17:30 - 18:00 **Supervisory Board session** (SB members + DC reps) - 30'

Visit to the 3B's Research Group Labs (University of Minho) 18:00 - 19:30

20:00 - 22:00 *Networking Dinner @ Príncipe Parque* (covered by central budget)

(Caldas das Taipas, Guimarães, <https://principeparque.pt/>,
<https://maps.app.goo.gl/iGRVDCJPJ8ZwFugf8>)

End Annual Symposium (PI's Departures)



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DAY 3

Wednesday, 15th April – Training Workshop on “Hydrogels for biomedical applications and controlled delivery systems” (Day 1)

09:30 – 10:00 **Registration (ALL)**

10:00 – 10:45 **“Engineering hydrogel-microfluidic interfaces and microenvironments for biological research” - 45’**

Speaker: David Caballero (UMINHO)

10:45 – 11:30 **“Microfluidic hydrogel biofabrication of complex 3D human tissue models” - 45’**

Speaker: Carlos Guimarães (UMINHO)

11:30 – 12:15 **“Supramolecular systems for regenerative medicine” - 45’**

Speaker: Ricardo A. Pires (UMINHO)

12:15 – 14:00 *NETWORKING LUNCH* (1.45 h)

14:00 – 14:45 **“Hydrogel-based delivery systems for tissue repair and regeneration” - 45’**

Speaker: Ana R. Araújo (UMINHO)

14:45 – 15:30 **“Mimicking glycan-associated extracellular mechanisms for the protection and delivery of bioactive molecules” - 45’**

Speaker: Iva Pashkuleva (UMINHO)

15:30 – 16:15 **“Engineering Antibacterial Hydrogels for Targeted and Controlled Drug Delivery” - 45’**

Speaker: Albina Franco (UMINHO)

16:15 – 16:30 **Closing Remarks - 15’**

Speaker and Coordinator: Ornella Parolini (UCSC)

16:30 – 17:00 *Refreshments & Networking - 30’*

- Networking opportunity for attendees

End DAY 1 Workshop and Departures



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DAY 4

Thursday, 16th April – Training Workshop on “Hydrogels for biomedical applications and controlled delivery systems” (Day 2)

09:00 - 9:30 **Registration (ALL)**

9:30 - 12:45 **“Preparation and characterization of hydrogels and nanoparticles” (Hands-on training)**

(Practical session, 2 groups of 5 DCs each)

Facilitator: Vânia Castro and Ana Rita Araújo (UMINHO)

12:45 - 14:30 *NETWORKING LUNCH* (1.45h)

14:30 - 15:15 **“Targeted Drug Delivery Systems aiming Personalized Therapies” - 45’**

Speaker: Albino Martins (UMINHO)

15:15 - 16:00 **“Engineering nanoscale solutions for immune-driven diseases” - 45’**

Speaker: Helena Ferreira (UMINHO)

16:00 - 16:45 **“Exploiting electrostatic interactions for generating interfacial polyelectrolyte complexation systems” - 45’**

Speaker: Rui Costa (UMINHO)

16:45 - 17:00 **Closing Remarks - 15’**

Speaker and Coordinator: Ornella Parolini (UCSC)

17:00 - 17:30 *Refreshments & Networking - 30’*

- Networking opportunity for attendees and goodbyes

End DAY 2 Workshop and Departures



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