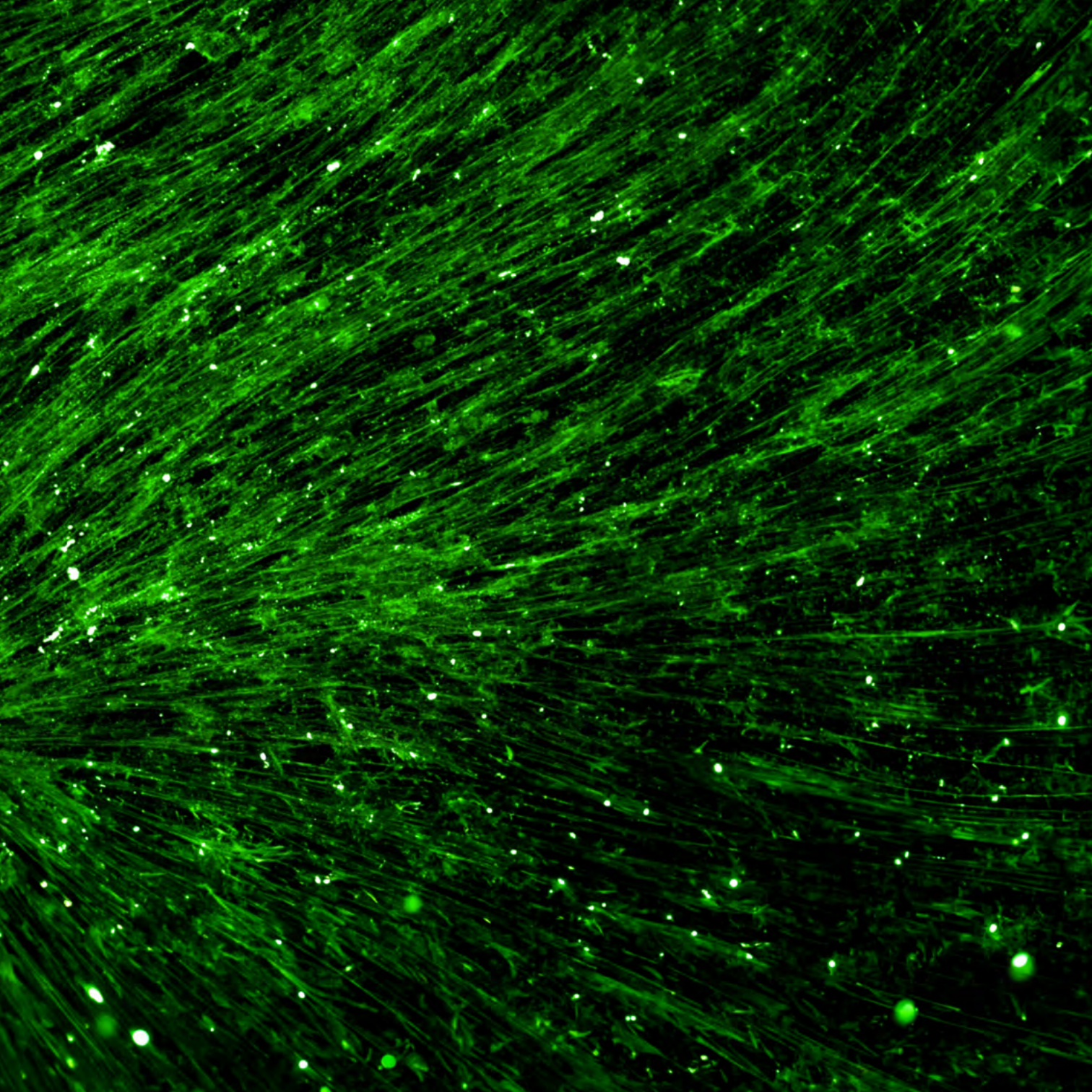




IRCCS REGINA ELENA NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE, ROME
in collaboration with THE MANCHESTER CELL-MATRIX CENTRE, THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER,
AND THE CANCER RESEARCH UK MANCHESTER INSTITUTE

8th WORKSHOP IRE ON TRANSLATIONAL ONCOLOGY
EXTRACELLULAR MATRIX IN CANCER:
TUMOR MICROENVIRONMENT DYNAMICS AND
TRANSLATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

ROME, OCTOBER 19-20, 2026
IRCCS REGINA ELENA NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE



WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

The extracellular matrix (ECM) is a dynamic and active component of the tumour microenvironment that shapes cancer progression, metastasis and therapeutic response through its biochemical, structural and mechanical properties. By orchestrating the interactions among tumour cells, fibroblasts, immune cells and the vasculature, the ECM plays a critical role in tumour evolution and treatment outcome.

Recent advances in spatial omics, imaging technologies, engineered models and computational approaches are transforming our understanding of ECM biology. However, integrating these discoveries into clinically relevant biomarkers and therapeutic strategies remains a major challenge.

This workshop will bring together leading experts in ECM biology, mechanobiology, immunology and oncology to discuss how ECM dynamics regulate tumour-stroma interactions and how these insights can be translated into innovative diagnostic and therapeutic opportunities. Through interdisciplinary dialogue, the meeting aims to foster collaborations that will accelerate ECM-driven advances in cancer research and patient care.

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

ANNA BAGNATO

IRCCS Regina Elena National Cancer Institute
Rome, Italy

GIOVANNI BLANDINO

IRCCS Regina Elena National Cancer Institute
Rome, Italy

ADAM BYRON

The University of Manchester
Manchester, UK

CLAUS JØRGENSEN

Cancer Research UK Manchester Institute
Manchester, UK

PAOLA NISTICÒ

IRCCS Regina Elena National Cancer Institute
Rome, Italy

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CATIA MINUTIELLO

MARIA VINCENZA SARCONE



via Elio Chianesi 53 - 00144 Rome, Italy
tel. +39 06 52662728
email: dirscire@ifo.it

PROGRAM

MONDAY, 19 OCTOBER 2026

13.30-14.00

Welcome Address

Livio De Angelis

CEO Istituti Fisioterapici Ospitalieri
Rome, Italy

Giovanni Blandino

Scientific Director
IRCCS Regina Elena National Cancer Institute
Rome, Italy

Claus Jørgensen

Cancer Research UK Manchester Institute
Manchester, UK

SESSION I

Chairpersons:

Mario Colombo

IRCCS Istituto Nazionale dei Tumori
Milano, Italy

Anna Bagnato

IRCCS Regina Elena National Cancer Institute
Rome, Italy



14.00-14.30

Lecture sponsored by
the Italian Foundation for Cancer Research
**FORCING INFLAMMATION-DEPENDENT
TUMOR INITIATION AND PROGRESSION**

Valerie Weaver

University of California
San Francisco, USA

14.30-15.00

**THE DUAL ROLE OF INFLAMMATION IN
CANCER IMMUNITY**

Santiago Zelenay

Cancer Research UK Manchester Institute
Manchester, UK

15.00-15.30

**TARGETING PIN1 TO BREAK ECM-DRIVEN
IMMUNE EVASION**

Giannino Del Sal

University of Trieste
Trieste, Italy

15.30-16.00 Coffee break

16.00-16.30

**MECHANOSENSITIVE ADHESION NETWORKS
IN CANCER:
LINKING THE EXTRACELLULAR MATRIX TO
GENE REGULATION**

Adam Byron

The University of Manchester
Manchester, UK

16.30-17.00

**BEYOND THE ACTIN CYTOSKELETON:
MENA AS AN ARCHITECT OF THE
EXTRACELLULAR MATRIX AND THE TUMOR
IMMUNE MICROENVIRONMENT IN
LUNG CANCER**

Paola Nisticò

IRCCS Regina Elena National Cancer Institute
Rome, Italy

17.00-17.30

**STROMA-RELATED IMMUNOSUPPRESSIVE
AND IMMUNOCOMPETENT NICHES IN CANCER**

Fatima Mechta-Grigoriou

Institut Curie, Paris, France

TUESDAY, 20 OCTOBER 2026
YOUNG INVESTIGATOR SESSION

Chairpersons:
Marta Di Martile
IRCCS Regina Elena National Cancer Institute
Rome, Italy

Roberto Dinami
IRCCS Regina Elena National Cancer Institute
Rome, Italy

09.30-09.45
**THE ROLE OF PLASTICITY AND HETEROGENEITY
IN SMALL CELL LUNG CANCER INVASION**
Martin Baker
University of Manchester
Manchester, UK

09.45-10.00
**THE LOX-MENA-ECM AXIS TO DEFINE SPATIAL
IMMUNITY AND IMMUNOTHERAPY RESPONSE
IN NSCLC PATIENTS**
Nicla Porciello
IRCCS Regina Elena National Cancer Institute
Rome, Italy

10.00-10.15
**THE ENDOTHELIN A RECEPTOR SENSES STIFF
EXTRACELLULAR MATRIX TO GUIDE DRUG
RESPONSE IN HIGH-GRADE SEROUS OVARIAN
CANCER**
Piera Tocci
IRCCS Regina Elena National Cancer Institute
Rome, Italy

10.15-10.30
**THE ROLE OF MATRIX STIFFNESS IN DRIVING
HEAD AND NECK CANCER RECURRENCE**
Martina Dragonetti
IRCCS Regina Elena National Cancer Institute
Rome, Italy

10.30-11.00 Coffee break

11.00-11.15
FINDING KRAS’S PARTNERS IN CRIME
Nasir Haider
Cancer Research UK Manchester Institute
Manchester, UK

11.15-11.30
**METABOLIC PLASTICITY OF CANCER-ASSOCIATED
FIBROBLASTS ENABLES STROMAL
REPROGRAMMING IN PANCREATIC DUCTAL
ADENOCARCINOMA**
Francesca Romana Auciello
IRCCS Regina Elena National Cancer Institute
Rome, Italy

11.30-11.45
**FROM METABOLIC STRESS TO
HEPATOCARCINOGENESIS: HIPK2 ROLE IN
SHAPING THE PREMALIGNANT MICRO-
ENVIRONMENT**
Silvia Sozzi
IRCCS Regina Elena National Cancer Institute
Rome, Italy

11.45-12.00
**AGE-ASSOCIATED CHANGES IN THE LUNG
MICROENVIRONMENT THAT IMPACT MELANOMA
METASTASIS**
Lutong An
Cancer Research UK Manchester Institute
Manchester, UK

12.30-14.00 Light lunch

SESSION II
Chairpersons:
Claus Jørgensen
Cancer Research UK Manchester Institute
Manchester, UK

Paola Nisticò
IRCCS Regina Elena National Cancer Institute
Rome, Italy

14.00-14.30
**A 3D MORPHOGENETIC BLUEPRINT FOR
METASTATIC OUTGROWTH IN BREAST CANCER**
Stefano Piccolo
University of Padua
Padua, Italy

14.30-15.00
**TARGETING PATHOPHYSIOLOGICAL ECM
REMODELING IN TUMOR MICROENVIRONMENTS**
Irit Sagi
Weizmann Institute of Science
Rehovot, Israel

15.00-15.30
**TISSUE PHASE TRANSITION IN CANCER
EVOLUTION AND IMMUNE RESPONSE**
Giorgio Scita
IFOM – The AIRC Institute of Molecular Oncology
University of Milan
Milan, Italy

15.30-16.00 Coffee break

16.00-16.30
**THERAPY-INDUCED EXTRACELLULAR
MATRIX REMODELING AND ITS POTENTIAL
CLINICAL IMPLICATIONS**
Yuval Shaked
Technion – Israel Institute of Technology
Haifa, Israel

16.30-17.00
**ECM AND IMMUNOTHERAPY RESISTANCE
IN HEAD AND NECK CANCER**
Amanda Psyrri
National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA),
School of Medicine
Athens, Greece

17.00-17.30
CLOSING REMARKS
Giovanni Blandino
IRCCS Regina Elena National Cancer Institute
Rome, Italy

Claus Jørgensen
Cancer Research UK Manchester Institute
Manchester, UK

FACULTY

Lutong An

Cancer Research UK Manchester Institute
Manchester, UK

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IRCCS Regina Elena National Cancer Institute
Rome, Italy

Nasir Haider

Cancer Research UK Manchester Institute
Manchester, UK

Claus Jørgensen

Deputy Director of the Cancer Research
UK Manchester Institute
Manchester, UK

Fatima Mechta-Grigoriou

Institut Curie,
Paris, France

Paola Nisticò

IRCCS Regina Elena National Cancer Institute
Rome, Italy

Stefano Piccolo

University of Padua
Padua, Italy

Nicla Porciello

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Haifa, Israel

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Piera Tocci

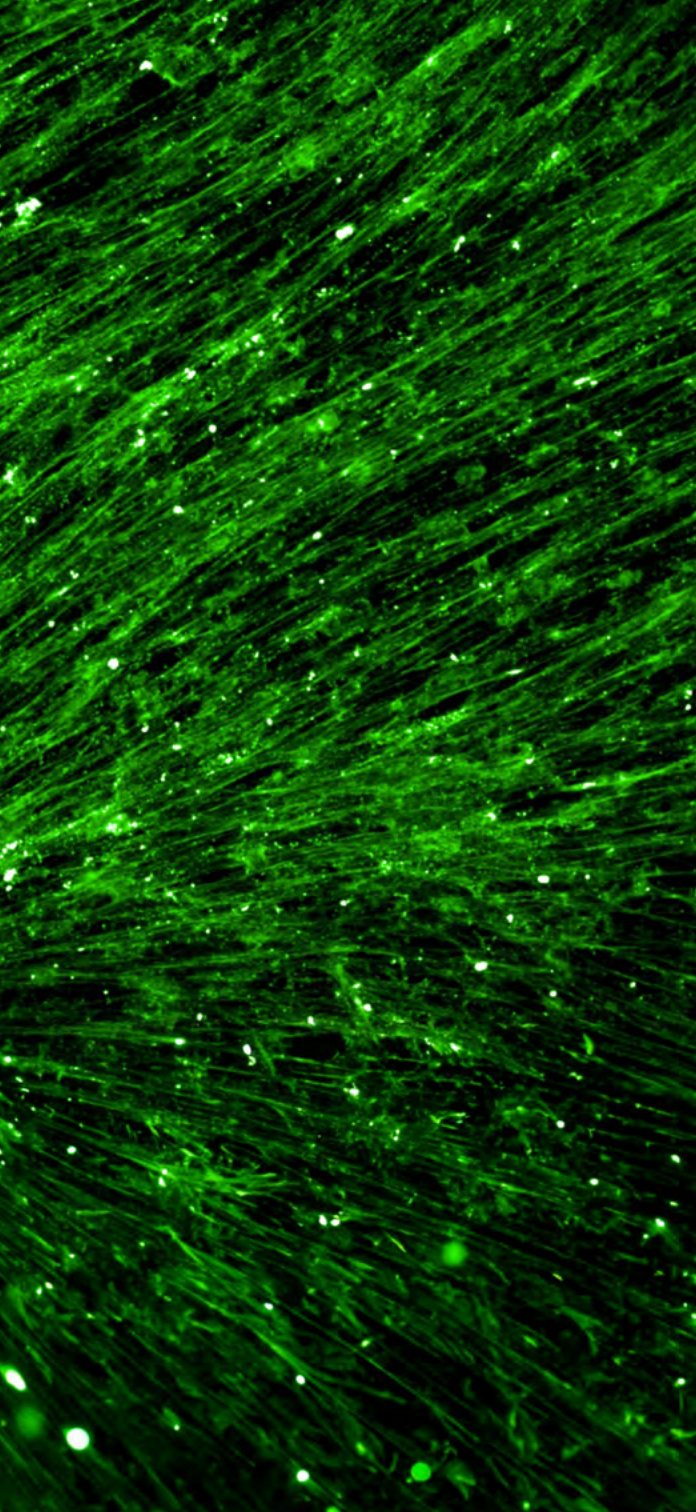
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Rome, Italy

Valerie Weaver

University of California
San Francisco, USA

Santiago Zelenay

Cancer Research UK Manchester Institute
Manchester, UK



GENERAL INFORMATION

VENUE

Regina Elena National Cancer Institute - Centro formazione Bastianelli

via Fermo Ognibene, 23 - Rome



REGISTRATION

Registration is free of charge. Please complete the process to register at our site www.mitcongressi.it

CME INFORMATION

The event will be accredited by the Italian Ministry of Health.

The CME Provider is IFO - Istituti Fisioterapici Ospitalieri (ID 1270).

This CME event will be held in presence (CME - RES).

Course ID: 1270-495338 - The workshop duration is 8 hours - CME: 5,6

The scientific sessions will be accredited for BIOLOGIST, MEDICAL DOCTOR (ALL THE MEDICAL SPECIALTIES).

HOW TO GET CME CREDITS

- Register on <https://ifo.sailportal.it/>
- Select the course from the catalogue.
- Click on "Access the course".
- Participants are required to attend at least 90% of the accredited sessions and the detection of the presence.
- At the end of the event, you will receive 2 paper questionnaires (satisfaction and evaluation questionnaire).
You will need a score of 75% or higher on the learning assessment questionnaire.
- CME Certificate will be available on the Educational Platform in your personal area.

For any further information please contact dirscire@ifo.it

CME PROVIDER & SCIENTIFIC SECRETARIAT

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Via Chianesi 53 - 00144 Roma

dirscire@ifo.it

Provider Nr. 1270

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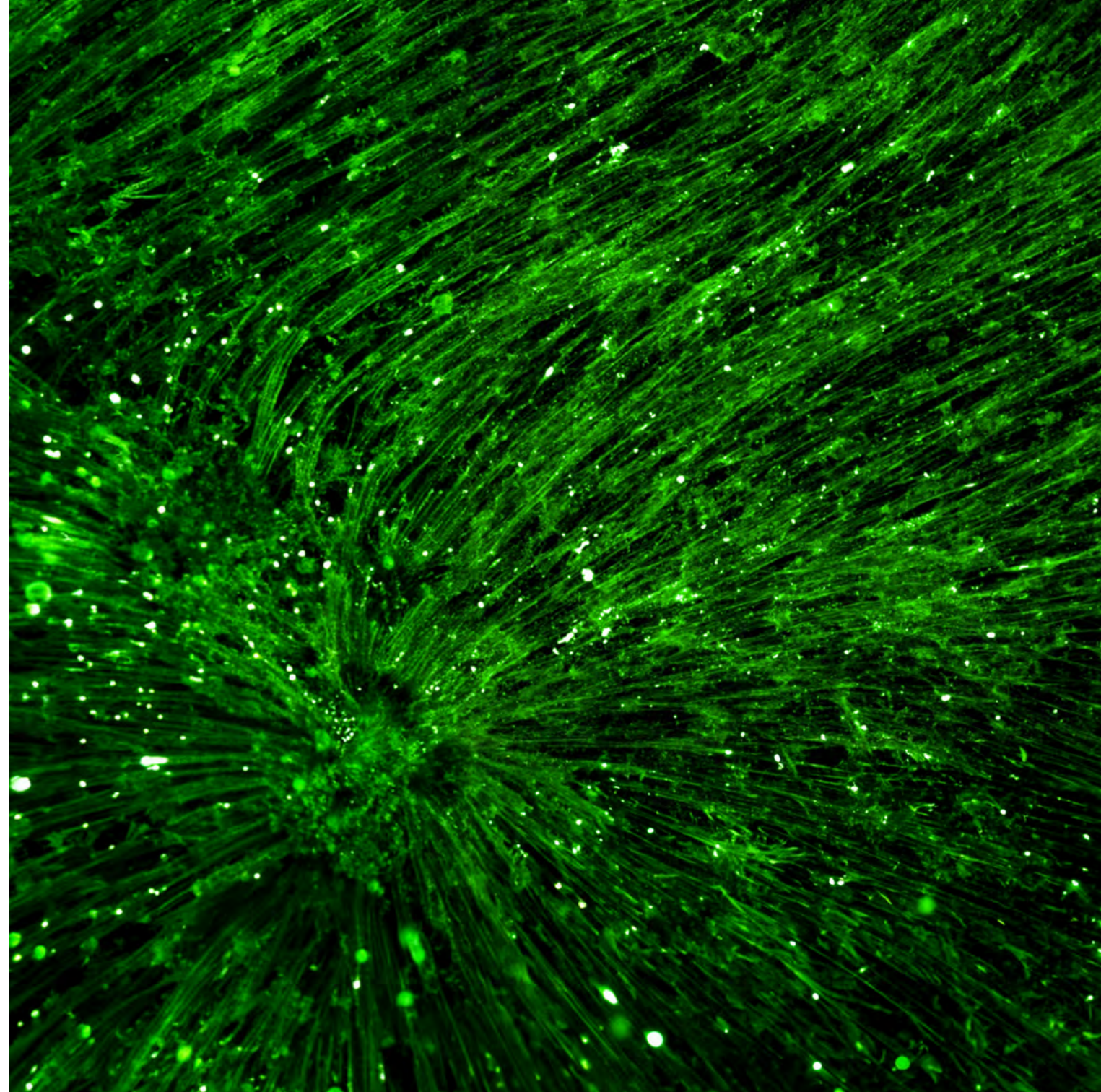
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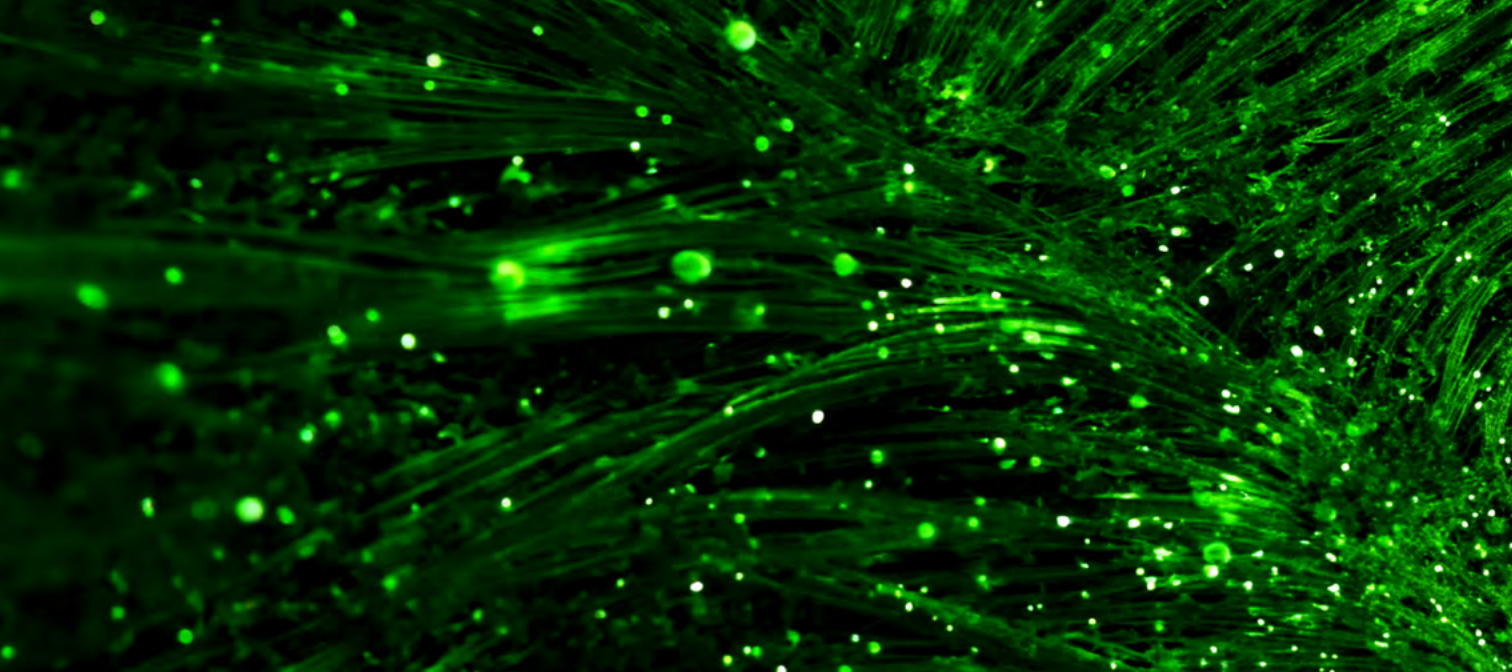
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