

Immunologist of the Month – 2022

Immunologist of the Month

Every month we will feature a new interview with an Immunologist. These Immunologists are at the cutting-edge of research and education, they have kindly offered to give us their time and insight into their research and studies.

November 2022

Thomas Murooka



I obtained my Bachelor's degree at the University of British Columbia (UBC) in Microbiology & Immunology. My first experience with research was when I entered the co-op program there and worked at two biotech companies as my work terms, where I learned many cellular and molecular techniques I continue to use today. I was also fortunate to have a supervisor who gave me free reins to experiment with anything I wanted in the cancer biology field, and I started to play around with a new fluorescent microscope that no one was using at the time. I started to make videos of cancer cells dying when applied with various drugs, which was my first appreciation of cell biology and the mechanisms that control cell survival and death.

Read now: [Thomas Murooka Interview](#)

October 2022

Martyna Scibiorek

Dr Martyna Scibiorek is an accomplished scientist with a Ph.D. degree in immunology. Born in Poland, she completed her studies undergraduate and postgraduate studies in the Netherlands (BSAc from Hogeschool van Arnhem en Nijmegen and MSc from Erasmus University Rotterdam). She continued her education being a PhD fellow at International Center of Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology receiving her PhD degree from University of Cape Town in South Africa. Martyna has spent 10 years studying and working in various countries abroad including Netherlands, Germany, and South Africa.



She is a founder of [Science Bridge](#), a company specializing in creating opportunities for biotechnology-related students across the country. Martyna is also a founder of the BuildUP Science Career Accelerator, which is a 2-year program providing support, guidance, education and mentorship for both students entering the job market as well as entrepreneurs. Today Martyna is advocating for creating joint ventures across the country, which will aid the transition of talented postgraduates to industry and result in the creation of more jobs for unemployed alumni.

Read now: [Martyna Scibiorek Interview](#)

September 2022

Melissa Murphy

Melissa Murphy grew up in Cape Town, South Africa. She attended the University of Cape (UCT) Town and graduated with a BSc in Biochemistry and Microbiology and a BSc Honours in Molecular and Cell Biology. Melissa worked for a scientific sales company as a Sales Administrator before returning to UCT and joined the [South African Tuberculosis Vaccine Initiative \(SATVI\)](#) to pursue her MSc in Clinical Science and Immunology and later upgraded to a PhD in Clinical Science and Immunology which she completed in 2022. She was supported by the National Research Foundation for her MSc and PhD.



Melissa is also passionate about youth mentorship, particularly with first-generation students pursuing studies at tertiary institutions, and was involved in running youth mentorship programmes through a partnership with UCT and [IkamvaYouth](#). Melissa recently joined the [Kløverpris research group](#) at the [Africa Health Research Institute \(AHRI\)](#) as a postdoctoral research fellow.

Read now: [Melissa Murphy Interview](#)

July 2022

Michael Betts



Professor Michael Betts earned his PhD in 1998 from the University of North Carolina in Dr Jeffrey Frelinger's lab working on human T cell responses to HIV. He continued this work during his postdoctoral fellowship with Dr Rick Koup at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center and then at the NIH Vaccine Research Center. In 2005 he started his lab at the University of Pennsylvania, where he continues to research the immune response to HIV and other viral infections in humans, most recently working on COVID-19. He maintains active collaborations in Latin America, Europe, and Africa, where he is involved in both immunology research studies and training of new investigators.

His continued contribution to the world of immunology includes contributing significantly to Immunopaedia course material. We are proud to have Professor Betts as our immunologist of the month for July 2022.

Read now: [Michael Betts Interview](#)

June 2022

Abdallah Badou



Our Immunologist of the Month for June 2022 is esteemed Professor Abdallah Badou. Watch the video interviews below where he talks about his career, lab and answers questions about cancers and provides advice for young immunologists. He is currently the Secretary General of the Moroccan Society of Immunology (SMI) and Secretary General of the Federation of African Immunological Societies (FAIS).

Watch now: [Abdallah Badou Interview](#)

May 2022

Catherine Kegakilwe Koofhethile

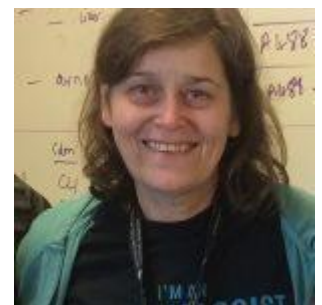


Dr Catherine Kegakilwe Koofhethile is currently in the final stages of her Postdoctoral/Fogarty Fellowship at Harvard T H Chan School of Public Health, Boston, USA. She also holds a Research Associate position at the Botswana Harvard AIDS Institute Partnership, Botswana and will soon be transitioning to set up her own research group there.

Read now: [Catherine Kegakilwe Koofhethile Interview](#)

March 2022

Pauline Johnson



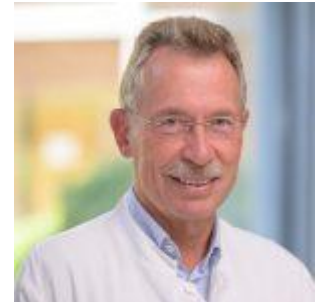
Pauline Johnson is an immunologist at the University of British Columbia. Her research has focused on innate and adaptive immune mechanisms – in particular, the mobility of proteins in membranes, lymphocyte cell surface molecules, T cell signalling, leukocyte adhesion, and macrophages in lung

inflammation and cancer metastases. Pauline's interview was conducted by Immunopaedia Ambassador Yane Valdez.

Read now: [Pauline Johnson Interview](#)

February 2022

Reinhold Schmidt Obituary



This month is not the usual immunologist of the month, but an obituary of quite an incredible immunologist who passed away at the end of January 2022. Immunopaedia salutes Professor Reinhold E. Schmidt.

Read now: [Reinhold Schmidt Obituary](#)