

NEWSLETTER: INTERREG PROJECT 'MEMORIES'

Issue 6, 01.2020

RECENT PROGRESS:

1. An environmental microRNA profile has emerged.
2. Human cohorts were enrolled and are in place for assessment of the predictive potential of this microRNA profile;
3. The potential of the acquired microRNA data to improve existing mouse models and identifying new drug targets is being assessed.



FINDING A NEW PACE IN A COVID-19 ERA.

It will not be a surprise to the reader of this newsletter that the project has been hit by the 2020 lockdown and restrictions.

The Board expects a delay of 6 months and therefore requested from Interreg, a prolongation of the project timeline. We are happy to announce that this request was met. Our deadline is now 30.06.2021.

In September 2020, the project could finally deduce a promising environmental microRNA biomarker profile. While 20 microRNAs emerged from the analysis, 9 appeared to be extremely interesting for a further pursuit.

To evaluate the predictive capacity of these microRNAs in a prospective human study, the project was set to enroll patients and control individuals (age and gender matched). Due the Covid-19 restrictions, this human study was turned into a chimeric study with a prospective and a retrospective arm. Assessment of the microRNA profile on these human cohorts is anticipated to start in February 2021.

“Being active, eating and drinking healthy, using your brain, getting enough sleep, taking good care of your teeth even: Is it all about neuro-inflammation?”

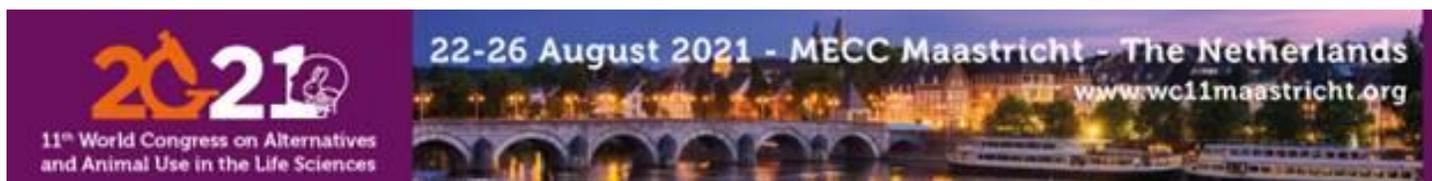
‘MEMORIES’ IS HITTING THE ROAD

1. EC Scientific Conference: Towards replacement of animals for scientific purposes (02-03.02.2021):

The main objectives of the conference are:

- To provide an update on the Commission’s strategic work towards the ultimate goal of Replacing animals in science by advancing non-animal alternatives.
- To illustrate how increased transparency on current animal use can help speed up the transition to non-animal approaches.
- To showcase the most recent scientific advances in replacing animal models.

2. 11th World Congress on Alternatives and Animal Use in the Life Sciences goes from 23-27.08.2021. The Workshop Biomarker-based in vitro tools targeting early Alzheimer’s in a human relevant fashion was accepted.



PROGRAMME:

- *Erwin L Roggen (ToxGenSolutions, NL): Objectives of the project ‘Herinneringen’*
- *Sebastiaan Engelborghs (UAntwerpen, B): The current translational gap: problems and solutions*
- *Carl Borrebaeck (ULund, S): The impact of biomarkers on drug development in the area of Oncology*
- *Hüseyin FIRAT (FIRALIS, F): Challenges, strengths and limitations*
- *Jacco Briedé (UMaastricht, NL): Nonanimal approaches for mapping of processes and acquiring knowledge (WP3), and their relevance for humans (WP5)*

Looking forward to meeting you there ...

Project partners



Project expertise

Icometrix (<https://icometrix.com>)

- Supporting prospective evaluation of selected biomarker signatures with Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) for objective quantification of relevant brain structures in individual AD patients.

Stem Cell Institute Leuven, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (<https://www.kuleuven.be/samenwerking/scil>)

- Providing the necessary iPSC expertise required for the identification and handling of relevant human iPSC lines, as well as production and quality control of iPSC-derived human neuron cell models for testing.

reMYND (<https://www.remynd.com>)

- Application of the genetic signatures to validate proprietary AD mouse models and to improve the assessment of *in-vivo* characteristics, pharmacokinetics, pharmacodynamics and the effects of experimental treatments.

ToxGenSolutions (www.toxgensolutions.eu)

- Valorisation of (epi-)genetic biomarker signatures as novel methods for diagnosis, novel tools for follow-up of disease progression or response to treatment in humans, and novel drug development.

Department of Biomedical Science, University of Antwerp (<https://www.uantwerpen.be/nl/faculteiten/faculteit-fbd/onderzoek/departementen-en-ond/dept-biomedische-wetenschappen>)

- Supporting evaluation of emerging biomarker signatures with well-characterized clinical samples (retrospective evaluation), and study cohorts (prospective evaluation).

Department of ToxicGenomics, Maastricht University (<https://toxicogenomics-um.nl>)

Providing the required expertise in (epi-)genetic approaches for the identification of early-AD specific peripheral biomarker signatures.

The INTERREG project “Memories” is made possible with co-financing from the following parties:

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