



Centre for
Cancer Biomarkers



CCBIO Newsletter

www.ccbio.no

ISSUE NO 1, VOL 13, APR 2026

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Dear all,

The 14th CCBIO Annual Symposium is coming up soon – although there is still some time left to register for the latecomers. We have a strong program for you, with top presentations from contemporary cancer research, and an opening keynote lecture by 'living legend' William A. Haseltine. He has been described as a *scientist, businessman, author, and philanthropist*. Among many achievements, he was a founder, chairman, and CEO of [Human Genome Sciences](#), a company that pioneered the application of genomics to [drug discovery](#). Don't miss out!

As a pre-meeting to the CCBIO symposium, you also have the opportunity to attend the 1st European Ovarian Cancer Research Symposium (OC-INSIGHTS), organized and chaired by CCBIO Co-Director Line Bjørge. The program is a strong representation of current translational research on ovarian cancer. Bjørge and the program committee should be congratulated on this initiative, and we hope that this meeting will be the first in a row.

The field of *cancer neuroscience* is on the rise, and the Research Council of Norway just awarded 9 mill. NOK to the Akslen group to recruit internationally recognized cancer biologist and neuroscientist *Tracy-Ann Read* to Bergen. We are happy to welcome Tracy-Ann to the CCBIO family. You can read the full story on 'Read' below.

You can also be updated on a range of other achievements and top publications below – [congratulations](#) to all involved! In particular, we would like to congratulate the following: our longtime supporter and friend Frédéric Amant for receiving the Helga Salvesen Translational Research Award 2026 (from ESGO), former CCBIO PI and current Harvard-professor Ole F. Norheim who was honored as a Gates Foundation "Goalkeepers Nordic Champion" for his work in global health, and Line Bjørge for being named a finalist for the Women's Health Award (Kvinnehelseprisen) at the HER Awards 2026.

Please take the time to read the many stories behind the headlines, as well as information on papers, media appearances, and coming events. Do not forget to sign up for courses by the CCBIO Research School of Cancer Studies.

And most important: see you all at Solstrand!

Best regards, Lars A. Akslen, Director

***Capturing cancer complexity
and clinical challenges***

The 14th CCBIO Annual Symposium



ccbiosymposium.no

14th
CCBIO
ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM

2026
12
13
MAY

SOLSTRAND
BERGEN
NORWAY

SPEAKERS

- WILLIAM A. HASELTINE
- RONNY DRAPKIN
- GEMA MURENO-BUENO
- JANNE LEHTIÖ
- VERA THIEL
- BART NEYNS
- KEITH HUNTER
- JON AMUND KYTE
- CHRISTIAN KERSTEN
- ANTONIO CURTI
- FRANCIS JACOB
- KARL-HENNING KALLAND



The 14th CCBIO Annual Symposium is rapidly approaching, and we are currently filling the last rooms. Be sure to register now if you haven't done so yet!

This year's program spans the full translational spectrum—from biomarkers, genetics, proteogenomics, and spatial profiling, to immunotherapy, treatment resistance, and real-world clinical impact, with strong contributions from both academia and industry.

You will hear inspiring talks on tumor microenvironment research, gynecologic and breast cancers, leukemia, and prostate cancer, plus speed presentations from early-career researchers and sessions focused on innovation, startups, and turning discoveries into patient benefit.

Set against stunning fjord views, this is the perfect setting to learn, share ideas, and connect with colleagues across cancer biomarker disciplines!

Date: May 12 and 13, 2026

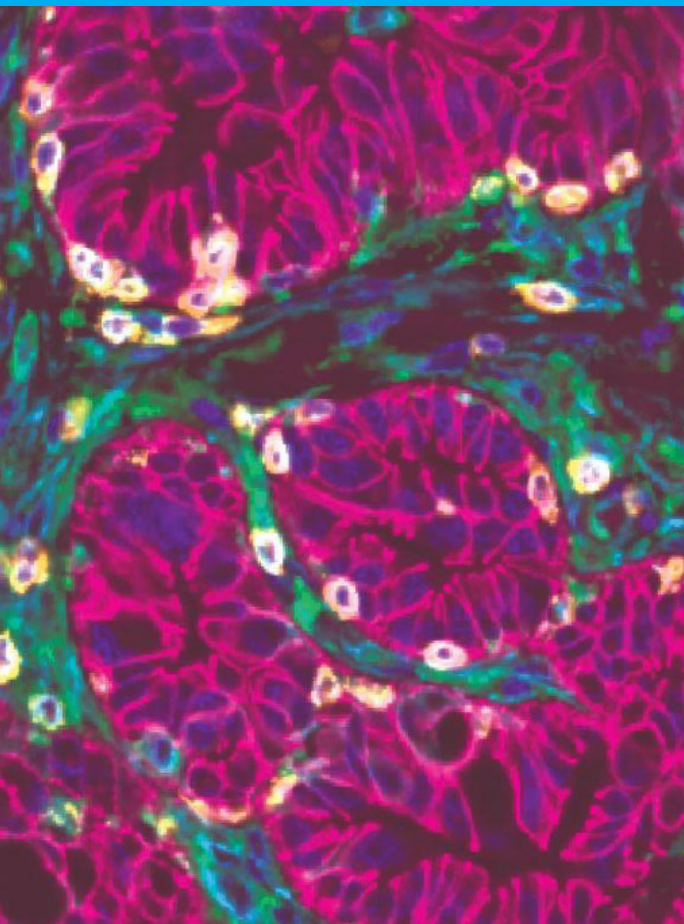
Place: Solstrand Hotel & Bad, Os, Bergen

Registration: [Please register through this link](#)
(Still possible to submit poster abstract as well)

Program: [Find the final program here](#)

Website: [Find more information here](#), incl. practical information

Coming up before the main event: OC-INSIGHTS



Don't miss out on the pre-symposium either, the 1st European Ovarian Cancer Research Symposium (OC-INSIGHTS), taking place May 10–11, 2026, also at Solstrand Hotel & Bad. Under the theme "Improving ovarian cancer outcomes: harnessing tumor–host interactions," this new European meeting brings together leading international experts and early-career researchers for focused, in-depth discussions on ovarian cancer biology and treatment.

The program covers key challenges and emerging directions in the field, including early detection and tumor initiation, ethnic and histological diversity, biomarkers and precision oncology, preclinical and organoid models, immunology and spatial biology, and emerging cell types and therapeutic targets. Expect inspiring keynote lectures, short talks from PhD students and postdocs, extended poster sessions, and plenty of time for informal discussions—with strong opportunities for academic–industry interaction woven throughout.

Date: May 10 and 11, 2026

Place: Solstrand Hotel & Bad, Os, Bergen

Registration: Please contact Minh Thu Le (Minthu.Le@uib.no)

Program: [Find the prefinal program here](#)

Website: [Find more information here](#)

CCBIO recruits international expert in cancer neuroscience



CCBIO and Lars A. Akslen have received a major grant from the Research Council of Norway's program "[Recruitment of talented researchers to Norway](#)", securing NOK 9 million to recruit internationally recognized cancer biologist and neuroscientist Tracy-Ann Read to Bergen.

The funding strengthens CCBIO's strategic investment in *cancer neuroscience*, an emerging field that explores how the nervous system influences cancer development and progression.

With this funding, the total external support for CCBIO's cancer neuroscience initiative now amounts to NOK 36 million, reflecting a growing research effort centered on what CCBIO scientists increasingly describe as "nervous tumors".

Tracy-Ann Read is currently an Associate Professor at the Department of Neuroscience and Regenerative Medicine at the Medical College of Georgia, Augusta University, USA. After many years in leading research environments in the United States, she is now returning to the University of Bergen, where she previously completed her academic training. Over more than two decades, Tracy-Ann Read has worked at the intersection of cancer biology and neuroscience, with expertise in tumor-microenvironment interactions. Her research has provided important insights into how cancer cells adapt to and exploit neural niches, including mechanisms that support tumor growth, invasion, and metastasis.

[Read the full story here.](#)

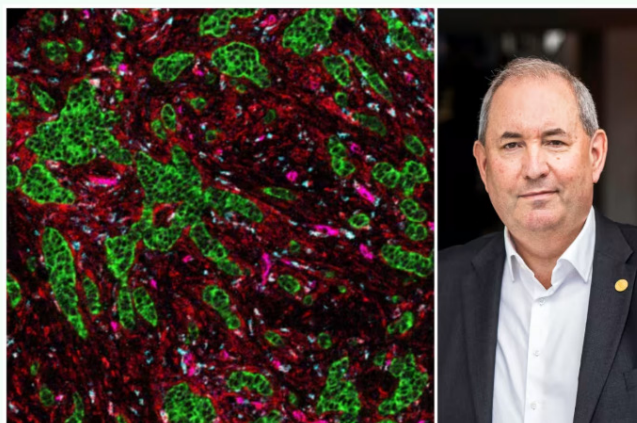
Have you seen UiB's feature story on CCBIO and CCBIO 2.0?

Building on excellence: CCBIO research from SFF to CCBIO 2.0

During its ten-year period as a Centre for Excellence (SFF), CCBIO contributed to more precise cancer therapy by investigating the biological characteristics of cancer and the environment surrounding cancer cells.

By: Ole M. Kvamme

Published: 19.03.2026 (Updated: 17.04.2026)



Detailed images of the tissue surrounding cancer cells are central to the work of CCBIO and its director, Lars A. Akslen. Photo: CCBIO / Ingvid Festervoll Melien

UiB has published a new feature story highlighting CCBIO's journey from a Centre of Excellence (SFF) to its next phase, CCBIO 2.0, and where the center is heading next.

The article includes reflections from CCBIO Director Lars A. Akslen, looking back on more than a decade of pioneering biomarker and precision oncology research that has already influenced clinical practice and national guidelines—and ahead to a continuation with an even stronger focus on innovation, translational impact, and faster paths from discovery to patient benefit.

The story also highlights how strong interdisciplinary collaboration, cutting-edge technology, and long-term strategic thinking have been key to CCBIO's success. Several concrete research examples show how insights into the tumor microenvironment have shaped new diagnostic and therapeutic approaches.

Importantly, the article emphasizes career development, education, and community-building as core elements that are continued in CCBIO 2.0. It's a reminder that while one chapter has closed, the momentum—and ambition—remain very much alive.

Read the [full feature on UiB's website, in English](#), or [in Norwegian](#).

Finalist for the HER AWARDS 2026



Photo by Ingvild Festervoll Melien

We are proud to share that CCBIO Co-Director Line Bjørge has been named a finalist for the Women's Health Award (Kvinnehelseprisen) at the HER Awards 2026, one of Norway's leading recognitions celebrating women who make a real difference in leadership, innovation, and health.

The HER Awards, presented as part of the annual HER Conference & Awards, highlight outstanding female leaders, role models, and changemakers across a wide range of sectors, including entrepreneurship, social impact, innovation, and healthcare.

Professor Bjørge's nomination recognizes her long-standing commitment to gynecologic cancer research and women's health, combining clinical excellence, translational research, and leadership to improve outcomes for women affected by cancer.

Being selected as a finalist among nearly 2,000 nominations is a strong acknowledgment of both her work and the broader efforts within the CCBIO and UiB/Helse Bergen community.

The winners will be announced on April 27, 2026, during the HER Conference & Awards ceremony in Oslo at Ullevål stadion.

You can [see all categories and finalists here](#).

See also [news article in Health Talk](#).

New K.G. Jebsen Center in Bergen focusing on the BRCA1 gene



A new K.G. Jebsen Center for Medical Research will be established in Bergen in 2026, aiming to solve fundamental genetic mysteries linked to cancer risk later in life. CCBIO is strongly represented in this major new initiative: CCBIO PI Camilla Krakstad is one of three center leaders, together with Stian Knappskog and Halfdan Sørbye.

The center will receive NOK 25 million in funding from the K. G. Jebsen Foundation and will run for an initial five-year period, starting in summer 2026.

The research is based on a recent breakthrough from Bergen showing that nearly 10% of healthy women carry cells in which the BRCA1 gene is permanently misregulated already during early fetal development, significantly increasing the risk of breast and ovarian cancer later in life.

As a long-standing CCBIO PI and a leading researcher in gynecologic cancer, Krakstad brings strong expertise in clinically relevant translational research, with a particular focus on women's health. One of the center's main goals is to understand how and why these early epimutations occur, and whether similar mechanisms may increase the risk of other cancer types, including colorectal and uterine cancer. The new K.G. Jebsen Center represents a major boost for women's health and precision cancer research in Bergen, while further strengthening the CCBIO community's role in cutting-edge national and international cancer research.

Read the full story on UiB's website (in Norwegian): [Nytt K.G. Jebsen-senter i Bergen skal løse genetiske gåter](#)



Mendus launches CML clinical program with strong CC BIO collaboration



Photo by Thor Brødreskift

The Swedish biopharmaceutical company Mendus has recently launched a new clinical program in chronic myeloid leukemia (CML), marking an important step in the development of its lead immunotherapy, vididencel. The company-sponsored Phase 1b VITAL-CML trial is led by CC BIO Principal Investigator Bjørn Tore Gjertsen.

The VITAL-CML trial targets patients with chronic-phase CML who have a sub-optimal response to standard tyrosine kinase inhibitor (TKI) therapy, an area with significant unmet medical need. While TKIs have transformed survival in CML, many patients must remain on lifelong treatment, often experiencing long-term side effects. The goal of the trial is to evaluate whether vididencel can stimulate the patient's own immune system to control residual disease, ultimately enabling more patients to achieve treatment-free remission.

In April 2026, Mendus announced that the first patient had been enrolled in the VITAL-CML trial, officially initiating clinical testing at study sites led from Bergen. The trial plans to enroll up to 24 patients.

Gjertsen and his group play a central role not only in the clinical leadership of the study, but also in the translational research efforts linked to the trial. Blood samples collected from participants will support biomarker and immune-response analyses, helping to deepen understanding of how patients respond to immunotherapy and paving the way for more personalized treatment strategies in CML.

Read more:

- [Mendus starts clinical program in chronic myeloid leukemia](#) (Nordic Life Science)
- [First patient enrolled in the VITAL-CML trial](#) (Mendus)

Protein Patterns Reveal Hidden Aggressive Breast Cancers



Photo by Ingvild Festervoll Melien

A new study led by researchers at CC BIO shows that protein patterns in the breast tumor microenvironment can improve how patients with hormone receptor-positive breast cancer are stratified by risk. The findings may help explain why some patients experience aggressive disease despite being classified as low-risk using today's standard methods.

The paper, in press in *npj Breast Cancer*, is a collaboration with researchers at Karolinska Institutet and Karolinska University Hospital in Stockholm.

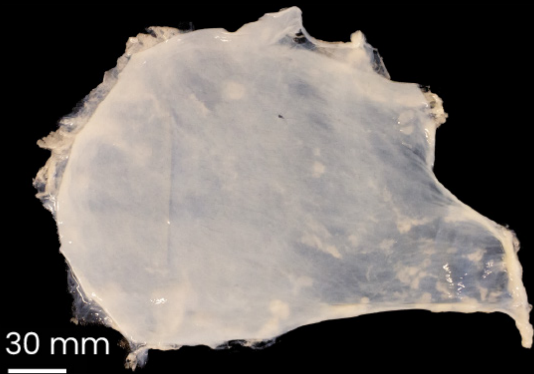
Using proteomics, Finne et al. identified a 35-protein tumor microenvironment signature that separates patients with breast cancer into distinct prognostic groups, independent of current molecular subtypes, which are largely based on tumor cell characteristics.

"We found that patients who are classified as low-risk using standard tumor markers may have a high-risk tumor microenvironment and experience aggressive disease," says Kenneth Finne, first author of the study and researcher at CC BIO. "This adds a layer of information that is not captured by existing classification systems."

[Read the full story here.](#)

CCBIO research featured in Best Practice Nordic

Peritoneal matrix (PerMa)



CCBIO Co-Director Line Bjørge, along with Christiane Helgestad Gjerde, Emmet Mc Cormack, and Katrin Kleinmanns, were recently invited to present their latest eBioMedicine publication in Best Practice Nordic, a leading Nordic platform for medical knowledge sharing and continuing education.

The featured article, "[Testing New Therapies for Ovarian Cancer in a 3D Model](#)," highlights a novel 3D peritoneal matrix (PerMa) model developed by the team to better study metastatic ovarian cancer.

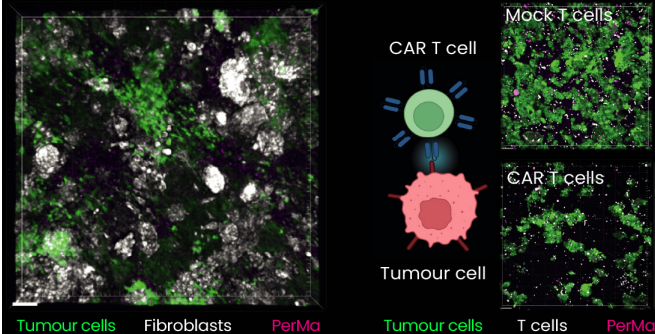
High-grade serous ovarian carcinoma (HGSOC), the most aggressive ovarian cancer subtype, commonly spreads within the peritoneal cavity and remains difficult to treat, partly because traditional preclinical models fail to capture the complexity of the tumor microenvironment. To address this challenge, the group developed a biomimetic 3D model based on decellularized peritoneal extracellular matrix, closely resembling human tissue. Using this platform, they were able to grow ovarian cancer "mini-tumors" that recapitulate many features seen in patients, including invasion patterns and interactions with surrounding stromal cells. The model allows direct visualization and quantitative analysis of tumor growth and treatment response over time.

Importantly, the PerMa model was shown to be suitable not only for testing conventional chemotherapy (such as carboplatin), but also for evaluating novel immunotherapies, including CAR T-cell-based approaches. By preserving the native extracellular matrix and enabling advanced imaging, the model offers a more physiologically relevant way to assess treatment efficacy and resistance mechanisms. This is an essential step toward better translational success. The work points toward future possibilities such as patient-specific 3D cultures for personalized therapy screening.

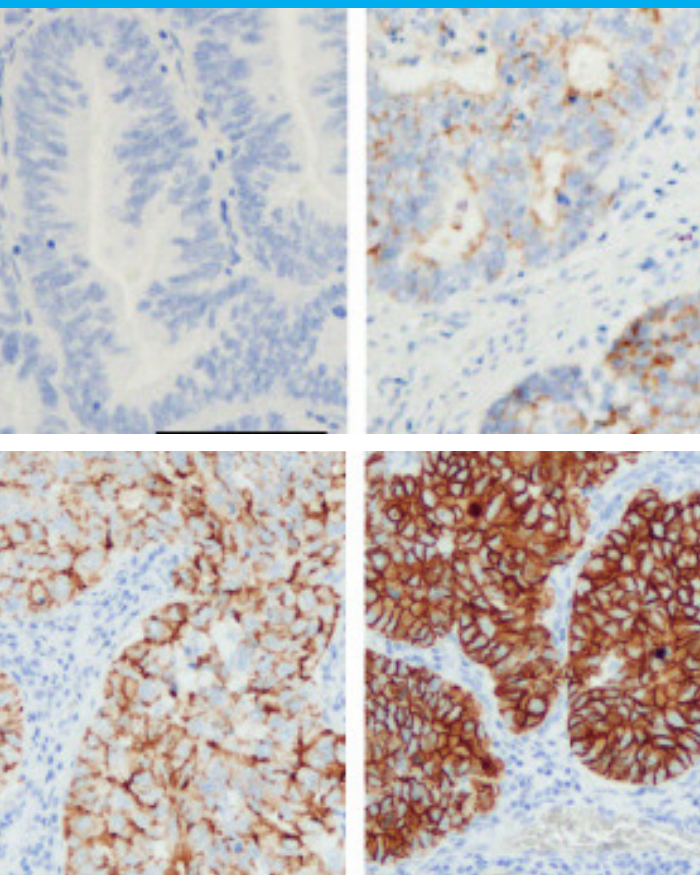
See [the original research publication in eBioMedicine here](#).

3D in vitro model

Testing CAR T-cell therapy



Claudin-6 emerges as a promising target in aggressive endometrial cancer



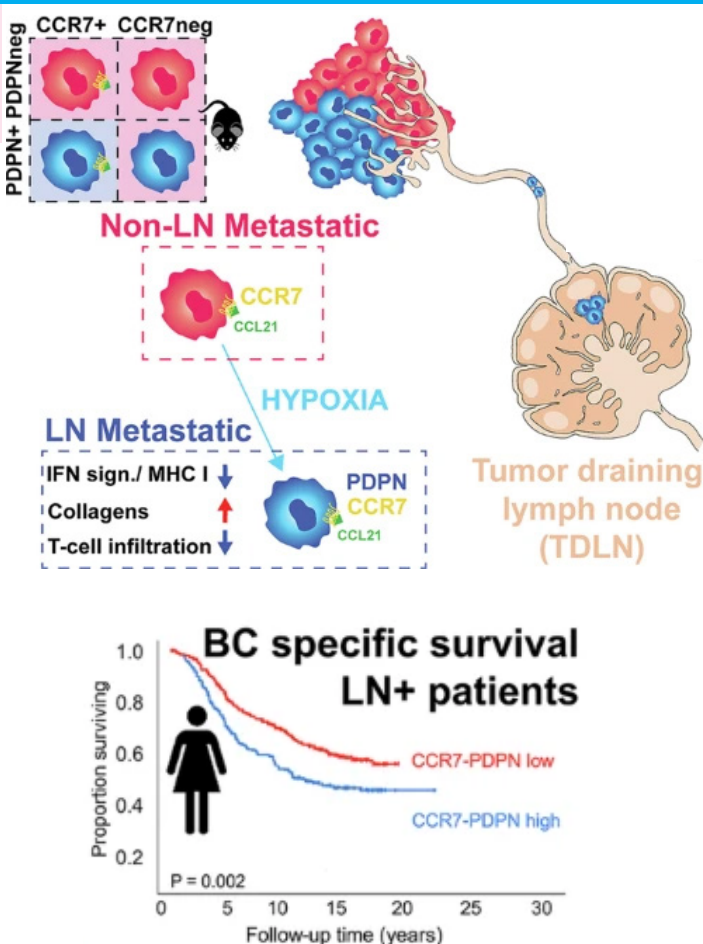
A new publication from CCBIO researchers, led by CCBIO PI Camilla Krakstad, highlights Claudin-6 (CLDN6) as a potential game-changer in the treatment of aggressive endometrial cancer. The study was published in BJC Reports in April 2026.

Claudin-6 is a tight-junction protein that has gained increasing attention as a target for antibody-drug conjugates (ADCs), but its role in endometrial cancer has remained largely unexplored. In this study, the team shows that high CLDN6 expression is strongly associated with high-risk disease features, including aggressive tumor biology and poor clinical outcome.

Notably, the researchers demonstrate that CLDN6 expression remains high in metastatic lesions, addressing a key challenge in targeted cancer therapy: loss of target expression during disease progression. This finding strengthens the case for CLDN6 as a robust and clinically relevant target, even in advanced and metastatic disease settings. The study is based on well-characterized patient cohorts from Haukeland University Hospital and integrates detailed histopathological analyses with imaging and clinical data. This comprehensive approach allows the team to map CLDN6 expression across disease stages and anatomical sites, providing insight that is directly relevant for translational and clinical research.

Link to the publication: "[High expression of the ADC target Claudin-6 associates with aggressive endometrial cancer and remains high in metastatic lesions](#)."

New insights into tumor plasticity and lymphatic spread in triple-negative breast cancer



A new collaborative study involving CCBIO (Elisabeth Wik, Erling A. Hoivik, and our alumna Lise Ingebriksten), Uppsala University, Karolinska Institutet, Umeå University, and SciLifeLab provides new insight into how tumor plasticity and lymphatic signaling drive metastasis in triple-negative breast cancer (TNBC).

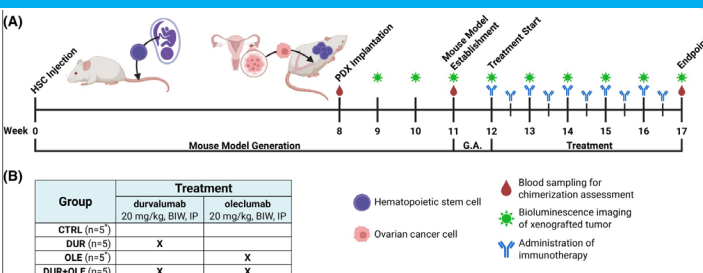
The study, "[Podoplanin-defined tumor plasticity and CCR7-mediated lymphatic metastasis in triple-negative breast cancer](#)" by Z. Wang et al. was published online in the British Journal of Cancer in April 2026.

The researchers show that podoplanin, a cell-surface glycoprotein involved in cell shape, adhesion, and motility, defines a highly plastic tumor cell state in TNBC. These podoplanin-positive tumor cells display increased invasive capacity and are particularly prone to lymphatic dissemination.

Mechanistically, the study demonstrates that this metastatic behavior is driven by CCR7-mediated signaling, which guides tumor cells toward lymphatic vessels and lymph nodes. By combining experimental models with analyses of patient material, the authors link dynamic changes in tumor cell identity directly to lymphatic metastasis, a key step in disease progression associated with poor outcome in TNBC.

Overall, the work provides new biological insight into TNBC progression and points to lymphatic signaling pathways as potential targets for future therapeutic strategies.

New humanized PDX model advances immunotherapy testing in ovarian cancer

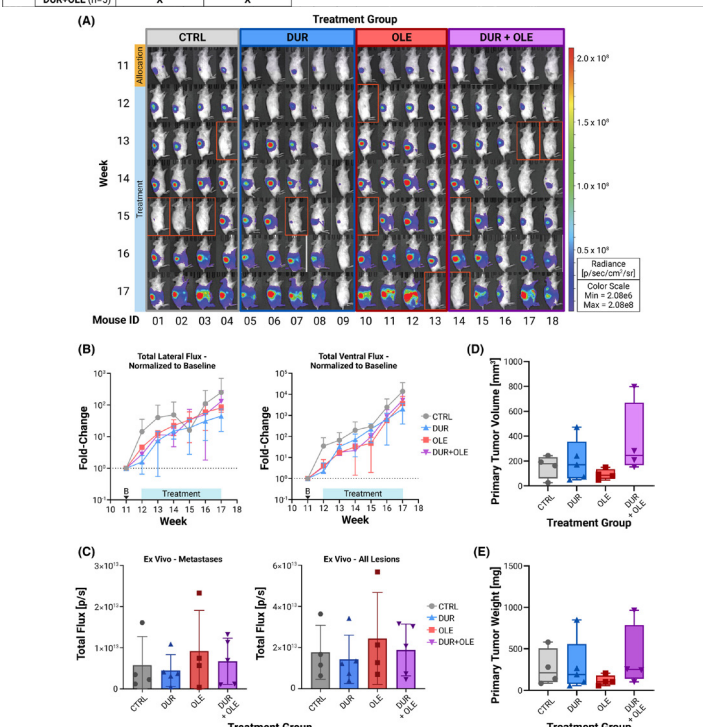


A new CCBIO study reports the establishment of a humanized patient-derived xenograft (PDX) mouse model for high-grade serous ovarian cancer (HGSOC). This study brings together the expertise of three CCBIO-affiliated teams—spanning tumor biology, precision oncology, and pathology (the groups of Bjørge, Costea, Akslen, and Mc Cormack).

The paper, "[Establishment of a humanized patient-derived xenograft mouse model of high-grade serous ovarian cancer for preclinical evaluation of combination immunotherapy](#)," by L. Tandaric et al. was published online in Molecular Oncology in March 2026.

HGSOC remains the most lethal gynecologic cancer, and effective immunotherapy strategies have been limited, partly due to a lack of preclinical models that accurately reflect human tumor-immune interactions. In this study, the researchers established a humanized PDX model in which patient-derived ovarian tumors are engrafted into mice with a reconstituted human immune system, enabling more clinically relevant testing of immunotherapies.

Using this platform, the team demonstrates how the model can be used to evaluate combination immunotherapy approaches, capturing both tumor growth dynamics and immune responses within a human-like tumor microenvironment. This represents an important step toward making preclinical ovarian cancer models more predictive of real-world patient responses.



Helga Salvesen Award to long-time CCBIO collaborator Frédéric Amant



Photo by Line Bjørge

We are happy to share that Professor Frédéric Amant has been awarded the Helga Salvesen Translational Research Award by the European Society of Gynaecological Oncology (ESGO) at ESGO 2026. The award honors outstanding contributions to translational gynecological cancer research and is named in memory of Helga Salvesen, a pioneering Norwegian cancer researcher and one of the founding members of CCBIO.

Prof. Amant is a long-time collaborator of CCBIO and served as an International Faculty member during CCBIO's Centre of Excellence period. He is internationally recognized for his groundbreaking work in gynecologic oncology and translational research, including his influential studies on cancer during pregnancy, patient-centered cancer care, and innovative preclinical models. His work exemplifies the bridge from fundamental science to clinical impact that [the Helga Salvesen Award](#) was created to recognize.

The Award was established by ESGO in 2017 to honor Helga Salvesen's (1963–2016) extraordinary legacy as a clinician-scientist, translational researcher, and international leader in gynecologic cancer research. Helga was one of the founders and co-directors of CCBIO, and a driving force in shaping its scientific vision and international profile. Her work and mentorship continue to influence the field and the CCBIO community today.

During his acceptance speech, Prof. Amant devoted part of his address to honoring Helga Salvesen's memory, having worked with her personally, underscoring the lasting impact she has had on colleagues, collaborators, and the international gynecologic oncology community. For CCBIO, the award is both a celebration of an exceptional collaborator and a meaningful recognition of Helga Salvesen's enduring legacy.

Ole F. Norheim honored by the Gates Foundation



We are also happy to share that another of CCBIO's former PIs, Harvard Professor and BCEPS Co-Founder Ole F. Norheim, was honored as a Gates Foundation "Goalkeepers Nordic Champion" for his work in global health.

The recognition was awarded at the inaugural Gates Foundation Goalkeepers Nordics event, held in Stockholm on January 22, 2026. The Goalkeepers initiative recognizes global leaders who are advancing progress toward the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through leadership, innovation, and impact. Norheim was selected as one of six Nordic Champions, in recognition of his contributions to evidence-based priority setting in health systems and efforts to reduce global health inequalities.

At the Stockholm event, Norheim delivered a memorable presentation on global childhood mortality. His message emphasized both the urgency of the challenge and the reason for optimism, underscoring that millions of children's lives can be saved through scaled-up, evidence-based interventions.

The recognition highlights Norheim's international leadership in global health and ethics, while also acknowledging the strong academic environments he has been part of, among them CCBIO, where his work on ethics and priority setting enriched the center's interdisciplinary perspective during his time as a PI.

Read more [here in news story at the Faculty of Medicine's web pages](#).

Photo by Dalberg Media/the Gates Foundation

Scientific Writing and Communication Seminar



We still have some seats for this popular course, so if you haven't registered yet, you still can register for the Scientific Writing and Communication, taking place May 19–20, 2026.

During the seminar, you will learn how to:

- Organize ideas, results, and key messages in a scientific paper
- Improve titles and abstracts
- Present a clear problem statement
- Use punctuation, grammar, and numbering effectively
- Write an informative and convincing cover letter

The course will also explore what good research communication entails.

Even with the rise of AI tools, there is still plenty for all of us to learn! We strongly encourage students at all levels, including postdocs, to prioritize this opportunity. Senior staff are also very welcome.

Registration: UiB students register via [Studentweb](#). If you don't need the ECTS credits or are not a student, you register via [this separate link](#).

Registration deadline: May 1

When and where: May 19–20, 2026, Birkhaugsalen, Sentralblokk 3rd floor, Haukeland University Hospital, Bergen.

More info [on this website](#).

Coming CCBIO Seminar, May 28



Join us for the next CCBIO seminar, May 28 with Christer Betsholtz, Professor of Vascular Biology at Karolinska Institutet.

When: May 28, 2026, at 14:30–15:30

Where: Auditorium 4, BB-building

Speaker: [Christer Betsholtz](#), Uppsala University and Karolinska Institute

Title: *To be announced*

Abstract: [Will be available on this page](#)

Chair: Lars Muhl, CCBIO, and Henriette Aksnes, IBM

Junior Scientist Symposium June 2



Welcome to CCBIO's next Junior Scientist Symposium! Lunch is included, just remember to register within the deadline. Discuss and connect with inspiring researchers across fields!

This symposium is an arena where PhD candidates and postdocs gain experience with oral presentations and academic discussions. The meetings have proved to be an excellent place for young researchers to get input for potential collaborations in ongoing and future projects.

When: June 2, 2026, at 09:00–13:00

Where: Birkhaugsalen, 3rd floor, main building, Haukeland University Hospital.

Registration: Please [use this registration link](#)

Who: Open to both junior and senior researchers as well as students.

Organizers: Hege Fredriksen Berg and Manuel Carrasco

Program: Will be available [on this page](#)

In the last Junior Scientist Symposium, we got the chance to thank Mari and Vladan for a great job organizing the symposia for the last 3 years! Photo by Hege Berg.

Recent doctoral defenses

Marta Espevold Hjelmeland defended March 26, 2026 her doctoral work at the University of Bergen with the thesis "Towards improved treatment for women with endometrial cancer; vimentin as a robust biomarker and the search for mechanisms to overcome chemotherapy resistance". Supervisors have been Professor Camilla Krakstad (main supervisor) and Professor Jone Trovik (co-supervisor).



Marta Hjelmeland. Photo by Thor Brødreskift.

Endometrial cancer is the most common gynecologic cancer in women in Western countries, and its incidence is increasing. While many patients are cured by standard treatment, a subset develops aggressive disease with metastasis and poorer outcomes. Hjelmeland's doctoral work focuses on improving risk stratification and understanding why standard chemotherapy is less effective in some patients.

A key finding of the thesis centers on the protein vimentin, a cytoskeletal marker often associated with increased invasiveness in cancer. Interestingly, Hjelmeland's research shows the opposite pattern in endometrial cancer: tumors with loss of vimentin expression are more aggressive, with higher metastatic potential and poorer survival. By combining analyses of patient samples with advanced cell models, the work demonstrates that loss of vimentin increases tumor cell migration and alters the activity of genes linked to cell movement and aggressive disease behavior.

The thesis also investigates mechanisms of chemotherapy resistance. Using CRISPR-based gene editing, Hjelmeland identified genes and molecular pathways that enable cancer cells to better withstand chemotherapy. These insights could, over time, support the development of more targeted and effective treatment strategies.

[See the press release.](#)

Inga Kirstine Flaaten Motzfeldt defended February 19, 2026 her doctoral work at the University of Bergen with the thesis "Exploration of Disease Mechanisms and Targeted Therapies in Acute Myeloid Leukemia". Supervisors were Professor Bjørn Tore Gjertsen (main supervisor), Senior Researcher Monica Hellesøy, Associate Professor Maria Omsland, and Professor Lars Rönstrand (co-supervisors).



Inga Motzfeldt. Photo by Selina Cannon Homaei

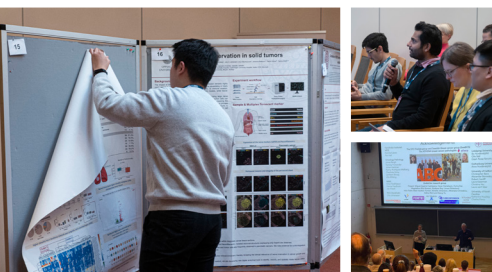
Acute myeloid leukemia (AML) is a severe and aggressive blood cancer characterized by the rapid expansion of abnormal myeloid cells in the bone marrow and blood. The disease is highly heterogeneous, with substantial variation between patient subgroups. Approximately 25–35% of AML cases carry mutations in the FLT3 gene, which are associated with increased risk of disease progression and relapse. Some subtypes, such as acute erythroid leukemia (AEL), are rare, aggressive, and particularly understudied.

In her PhD work, Motzfeldt focused on characterizing the biology of AEL, demonstrating that patients could be stratified into distinct subgroups based on protein expression patterns. These findings suggest that different AEL subgroups may respond differently to treatment, underlining the need for more tailored therapeutic approaches. She also investigated FLT3 receptor biology, proposing new mechanisms for how FLT3 signaling is regulated in AML cells.

In addition, the thesis explored a new class of FLT3 inhibitors, aiming to identify more selective and less toxic treatment options. By combining advanced molecular, biological, and single-cell technologies, the work maps disease heterogeneity in AML and identifies new molecular features in aggressive subgroups, providing insight that may guide future drug development.

[See the press release.](#)

Coming CCBio events



Make sure to save the dates in your calendar, and register when applicable. You can see all planned CCBio events in the [CCBio web calendar](#).

- May 10–11, 2026, [Pre-Symposium to CCBio's 14th Annual Symposium](#), Solstrand
- May 12–13, 2026, [CCBio's 14th Annual Symposium](#), Solstrand
- May 19–20, 2026, [CCBio908 Scientific Writing and Communication Seminar](#)
- May 28, 2026, joint CCBio/BBB seminar, speaker [Christer Betsholtz](#) from Uppsala University and Karolinska Institute. Time: 14:30–15:30
- June 2, 2026, [CCBio Junior Scientist Symposium](#), 09.00–13.00
- June 11, 2026, [CCBio Seminar](#), speaker tba. Time: 14:30–15:30

Other relevant coming events



Events from collaboration partners and other relevant events.

- Open ended, [Nordic Masterclass on HER2 Testing in upper GI cancer](#), webinar video by Onkologisk tidsskrift
- Open ended, [SOTA HER2 Low/Ultralow High-Risk Breast Cancer – Diagnostics, Treatment and Clinical Implementation](#), webinar video by Onkologisk tidsskrift
- BBB Seminars spring 2026, [keep an eye on this webpage](#)
- May 6–8, [ESMO Breast Cancer 2026](#), Berlin
- June 4–6, [8th EuSARC Annual Symposium](#), Oslo Cancer Cluster
- June 8–11, [EACR 2026 Congress: Innovative Cancer Science](#), Budapest
- September 7–10, [the 51st Annual Meeting of the Scandinavian Society for Immunology](#), Griegshallen, Bergen
- September 10–11, [the Molecular Analysis for Precision Oncology Congress 2026](#), London
- September 14–15, [3rd European Cancer and Oncology Congress](#), London
- September 21–23, [Cancer R&D World Conference 2026](#), Miami
- September 24–26, [World Cancer Congress 2026](#), Hong Kong
- October 23–27, [the ESMO Congress](#), Madrid
- November 2–3, [the 10th ScanPath Meeting](#), Finland

Publications

You can find the CCBIO publications on [this pubmed link](#). See the most recent below.

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Recent CCBIO in the media

Recent media appearances by CCBIO PIs and group members. Date, medium, headline, and CCBIO person interviewed or referred to. For all media hits, see [CCBIO's web pages](#).

- April 2026, Best Practice Nordic: "[Testing New Therapies for Ovarian Cancer in a 3D Model](#)." Christiane Helgestad Gjerde, Line Bjørge, Emmet Mc Cormack, Katrin Kleinmanns.
- 21.04.26, MFN: "[Mendus announces first patient enrolled in the VITAL-CML trial](#)." Bjørn Tore Gjertsen.
- 16.04.26, Dagens Medisin: "Oppgitt over offentlig dobbelt-kommunikasjon." Oddbjørn Straume.
- 13.04.26, Nordic Life Science: "[Mendus starts clinical program in chronic myeloid leukemia](#)." Bjørn Tore Gjertsen.
- 10.04.26, MEDWATCH: "[Svensk biotek velger Norge for ny blodkreftstudie](#)." Bjørn Tore Gjertsen.
- 09.04.26, MFN: "[Mendus announces start of clinical program in CML](#)." Bjørn Tore Gjertsen.
- 25.03.26, Dagens Medisin: "[Klinikkdirektøren peker på flaskehals: – Det er dobbelt-kommunikasjon](#)." Oddbjørn Straume.
- 02.03.26, HealthTalk: "[ESGO 2026: Immunterapi gir lengre overlevelse ved platinum-resistent eggstokkreft](#)." Line Bjørge.
- 18.02.26, HealthTalk: "[Professor Line Bjørge er nominert til «Kvinnehelseprisen» på HER Awards](#)." Line Bjørge.
- 22.01.26, Gynkreftforeningen: "[Nytt forskningscenter skal gi mer kunnskap om BRCA1](#)." Camilla Krakstad.
- 22.01.26, UiB Aktuelt: "[Nytt K.G. Jebsen-senter i Bergen skal løse genetiske gåter](#)." Camilla Krakstad.
- 22.01.26, NTB: "[Nytt K.G. Jebsen senter i Bergen skal løse genetiske gåter](#)." Camilla Krakstad.

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Mechanisms of Tumor Micro-environment Interactions:

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- Karl-Henning Kalland
- Emmet Mc Cormack

Exploration and Validation of Cancer Biomarkers:

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- Jim Lorens
- Camilla Krakstad
- Daniela Costea
- Elisabeth Wik
- Carina Strell
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