

# Iniziative PNRR nella Facoltà di Farmacia e Medicina. Rome Technopole, Centri Nazionali e Partenariati estesi – 16/01/2025

## Rome Technopole

- [Il contributo del Dip. Fisiologia e Farmacologia](#)
- [Il contributo del Dip. Medicina Molecolare](#)
- [Il contributo del Dip. Chimica e tecnologie del Farmaco](#)
- [Il contributo del Dip. Scienze Biochimiche](#)
- [Il contributo del Dip. Scienze e Biotecnologie medico-chirurgiche](#)

## PNRR Salute: M6/C2 - Innovazione, ricerca e digitalizzazione del servizio sanitario nazionale

- [Presentazione e contributo del Dip. Fisiologia e Farmacologia](#)

## PNC Salute/D34 - Health Digital Driven Diagnostics, pronostics and therapeutics for Sustainable Health care

- [Il contributo del Dip. Fisiologia e Farmacologia](#)
- [Il contributo del Dip. Scienze Anatomiche, Istologiche, Medico-legali e dell'Apparato Locomotore](#)
- [Il contributo del Dip. Chirurgia Generale e Specialistica](#)

## Centro Nazionale 3 - National Center For Gene Therapy & Drugs Based On Rna Technology

- [Presentazione](#)
- [Il contributo del Dip. Fisiologia e Farmacologia](#)
- [Il contributo del Dip. Medicina Molecolare](#)
- [Il contributo del Dip. Chimica e tecnologie del Farmaco](#)
- [Il contributo del Dip. Scienze Biochimiche](#)
- [Il contributo del Dip. Scienze Anatomiche, Istologiche, Medico-legali e dell'Apparato Locomotore](#)



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**Iniziative PNRR nella Facoltà di Farmacia e Medicina:**

**Dipartimento di Fisiologia e Farmacologia «V. Erspamer».**

Rome Technopole, FP7: Metabolomics and biomarker  
discovery for neurological, neurodegenerative and  
inflammatory disorders

# Department contribution

- 1) **C. Babiloni Research, Open Lab Platforms, and High Formation on Neurophysiological Biomarkers of Wake and Sleep Regulations in Neurological Disorders**
- 2) **L. Saso CIVIS High Formation on Neurophysiological Biomarkers of Wake and Sleep Regulations in Neurological Disorders**
- 3) **G. Esposito, P. Campolongo Advanced and automated innovation labs for diagnostic and therapeutic biopharma solutions**
- 4) **S. Gaetani, M. Friuli Study of Oleoylethanolamide as a potential pharmacological target for the treatment of obesity and eating disorders**
- 5) **C. Limatola Platform for the study of drug permeability across the blood brain barrier (BBB): focus on gut-brain biomarker discovery in inflammatory/neurodegenerative diseases in preclinical settings**
- 6) **D. Ragozzino, B. Basilico Understanding gut brain interactions in preclinical animal models of peripheral inflammation**

# Specific aims

**Main aim** To contrast pathological brain aging with dementia, neurodegenerative diseases with an inflammatory component, brain tumors, eating disorders, and behavioral disorders related to post-traumatic stress.

## HOW

Through the creation of **technological platforms**  
(integrated with the industry)

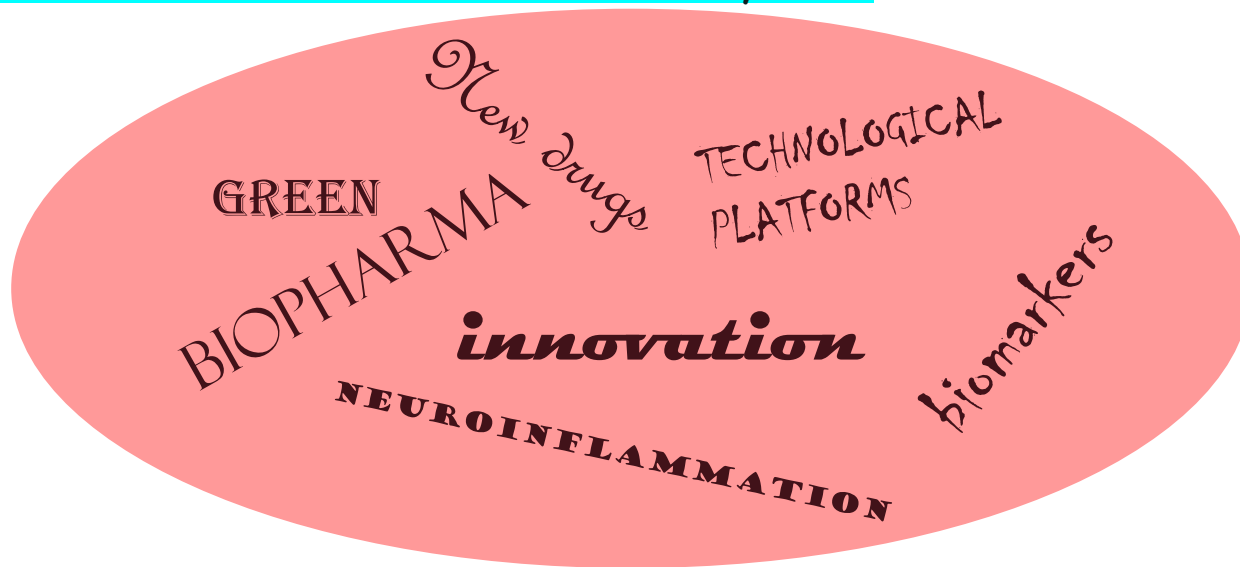
**Open siesta lab:** to validate EEG markers and digital tools for home telemonitoring (Sentech, Sogetel) (<https://smartme.cloud.garr.it/>).

**Smart probiotics:** to synthesize neuroprotective lipids in an eco-friendly manner, with therapeutic applications for metabolic and neuropsychiatric diseases

**BBB lab:** to study new drugs for their effects on the CNS (Takis)

# Expected results in line with the PNRR pillars

- Identification of **biomarkers** for the early diagnosis of dementia or cognitive deficits through telemonitoring
- Produce new drugs in an eco-friendly way, reducing environmental impact
- Development of a technological platform to test new drugs for their effect on the central nervous system



# Expected impact and beneficiaries

By the end of the Rome Technopole project (**short-term**)

Creation of multiple permanent nodes in the Lazio biotechnology and bio-pharma innovation ecosystem (**medium-term**)

Increase in knowledge for further therapeutic developments (**long-term**)

## Impact on

Citizens (early diagnosis of neurological diseases)

Fragile individuals (telemonitoring)

National Health Service (digitalization and green, targeted care)

Care centers (greater treatment effectiveness)

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## **Iniziative PNRR nella Facoltà di Farmacia e Medicina.**

**Realization and application of an innovative CMOS- optical based  
Biosensor for the Early and Rapid Self- Detection of  
Cardiovascular Biomarkers of Vital Interest**

**C.O.S.E.D.H.: CMOS, Optical, Sensor, Early, Diagnostic, Heart)**

**Prof.ssa Elisa Messina**

Foto: Stefania Sepulcri (Stampa e comunicazione)

- **Unsolved problem:** Cardiovascular electronic devices (CEDs, implantable or wearable devices), monitoring the cardiac electric activity at **terminal event**.

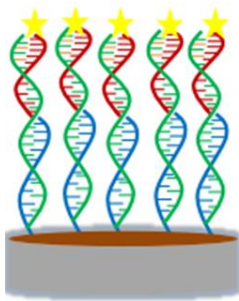
- With the **hypothesis** that a **self-manageable, easily available and costless tool** for monitoring strategic **standard biomarkers** in cardiac diagnostics, could **capture an essential biological window of the early stages of an incoming acute heart failure event**, a low cost, point of care device could prevent a huge number of serious cases that, otherwise, cannot be treated effectively,

- **our main goal** is to provide accurate and **rapid diagnosis** through the use of a **costless electronic device**, who's **the innovation lies in the realization of a fluorescence detector coupled to a commercial silicon CMOS technology, elicited by the contact of chip with any easily available biologic fluid (saliva, blood drop), by separating it from the pump radiation, without the need to apply complex and expensive optical filtering systems.**

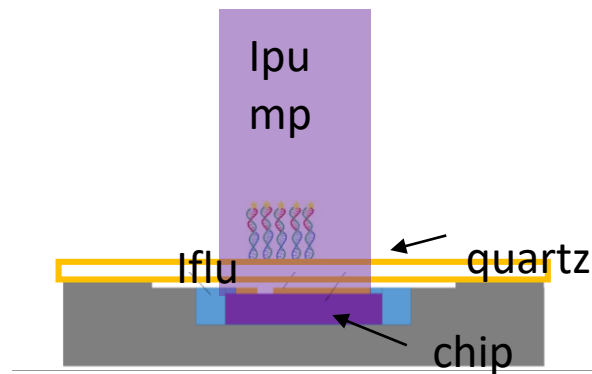


# CMOS Image Sensor

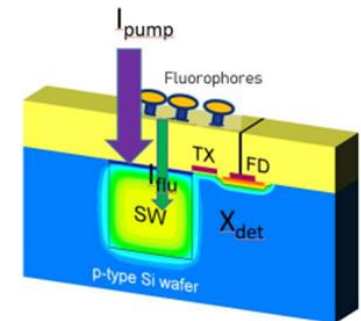
The device is **a lab-on-chip system potentially capable of performing ELISA assays through the specialization of complementary metal-oxide semiconductor (CMOS) Image Sensors (CIS)**. The fluorescence emission is read by the solid state amplified sensor, and the result analyzed. This system should have an **increased sensitivity** (up to 0.1 nM of conjugated streptavidin solution has currently been demonstrated) and **decrease production costs as compared to other available biosensors or standard (ELISA or PCR) techniques**



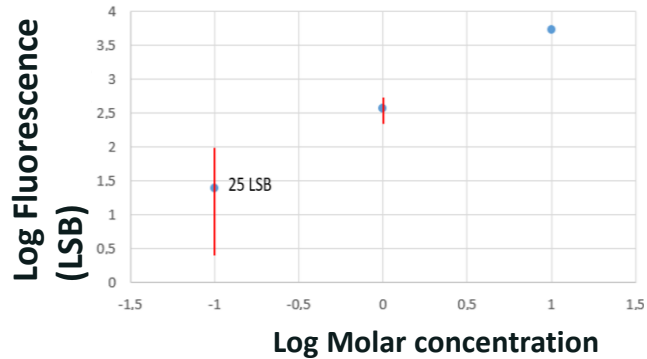
Functionalization on quartz slides to be placed upon the package.



Both the excitation light, and the fluorescence light reach the semiconductor.



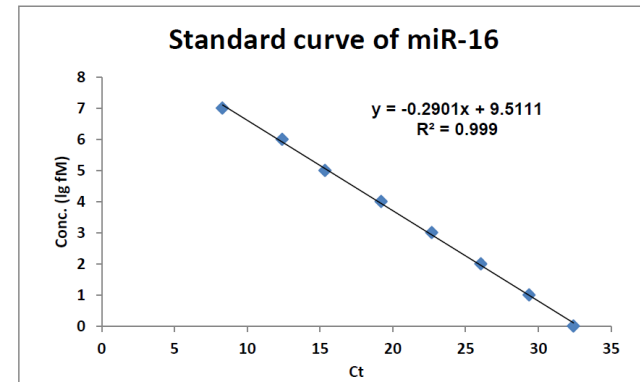
The gap between the spectrum of the laser and the emission of fluorescence, permits to design the structure of the semiconductor and dielectric layer on the back end of the CIS such as to capture only proper wavelength arising from the detected sample. The captured light is then converted into current.



Quartzes functionalized with Qdot 655 have been tested using standard solution samples with fluorophores, 10nM, 1nM, 0.1nM

*Use of CMOS Image Sensor as efficient low cost fluorescence detector, F. Palma, F. Michelotti, Eurosensors 2023*

A



Comparison with qRT-PCR Results. The proven sensitivity is equivalent to 15 cycles of PCR. The colored band indicates the concentrations tested

*Wei, Hui, et al. "Detection of circulating miRNA levels in schizophrenia." American Journal of Psychiatry 172.11 (2015): 1141-1147.*

## Applications

- Achieve a **new tool for faster biomarker identification and analysis** (no sample preparation, high sensitivity without amplification analysis),
- Achieve a **new tool centered on personalized biomedical diagnosis** (synergy between physicians and biologists, tele-expertise).
- Potential for **Multi-Marker Analysis** (measuring numerous markers in a single sampling and a single measurement procedure, improving diagnostic power and specificity of rapid clinical intervention and exploiting new mechanistic perspective in the development of critical events on cardiac diseases).

## Perspectives

In the presence of **know oncoming symptoms of an acute cardiac event**, a patient could simply put any easily collectible body fluid directly in contact with the device, thus detecting any kind of biomarker, in particular, those currently considered as gold standard of the routine standard clinical protocols (such as natriuretic peptides (NP), and cardiac troponins, as a proof of concept to figure out further genetic and omics analyses

## What needs to be done

The system should be tested with biological fluid-derived molecules to evaluate the detection of real markers. Up to now, the detection has been done using a known amount of fluorophores conjugated to the backend of the circuits.



## Ente partner Paese

Sapienza Università di Roma (Coordinatore) Italia

LFoundry Avezzano , CORPORATE HEADQUARTER / MANUFACTURING  
Italia

Fondazione Rome Technopole Italia

Cardiology UMCU/CMH, Netherlands Heart Institute Netherlands

Microfluidics-Chip Shop, Stockholmer Straße 20, 07747 Jena Germany



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## Iniziative PNRR nella Facoltà di Farmacia e Medicina.

Rome Technopole - Progetto Flagship 7

Advanced and automated innovation labs for diagnostic and therapeutic biopharma solutions -

**Therapeutic and diagnostic innovation: new bio-active antimicrobials, targeted drug delivery and genomic-based approach to monitor the emergence of drug resistance**

# Progetto Flagship 7

## Advanced and automated innovation labs for diagnostic and therapeutic biopharma solutions



# Contributo del Dipartimento di Chimica e Tecnologie del Farmaco

**FP7 Therapeutic and diagnostic innovation: new bio-active antimicrobials, targeted drug delivery and genomic-based approach to monitor the emergence of drug resistance**

## SPOKE 1: Applied Research Technology Development And Innovation.

### Identification Of Novel Promising Compounds As Antimicrobial Or Adjuvants Agents Or Adjuvants Agents

#### Dept. of Chemistry and Technology of Drugs (DP1)

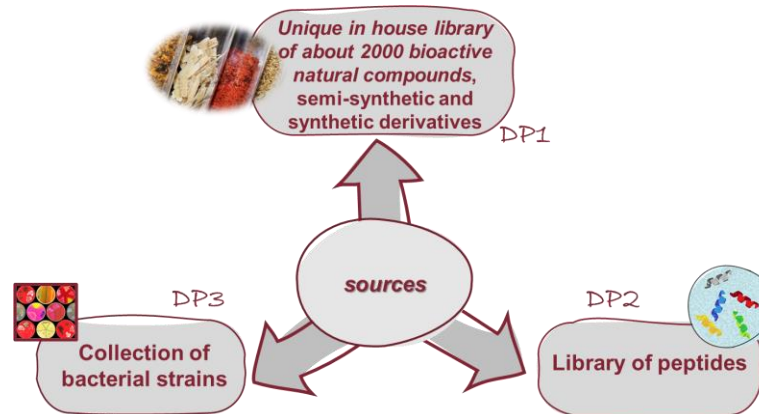
- Structure-based drug design
- Rational design and synthesis of natural compound and their derivatives
- Preparation and characterization of smart nanocarriers for drug delivery and targeting (passive, active and stimuli sensitive);
- Nanocarrier optimization on the basis of way of administration, target site, biological barriers (e.g., mucus, biofilm matrix) and the evaluation of their biological activity.

#### Dept. of Biochemical Sciences "A. Rossi Fanelli" (DP2),

- Antimicrobial characterization of natural compounds and their derivatives, on Gram-positive and Gram-negative bacteria
- Studies on their synergistic effect with conventional drugs
- Rational design and optimization of **antimicrobial** peptides.
- Cytotoxicity assays (on different **eukaryotic** cell lines) of the selected compounds either in the free or incorporated form into designed nanosystems;
- Investigation of the mechanism of antibacterial/antibiofilm activity of hit compounds.

#### Dept. of Molecular Medicine (DP3)

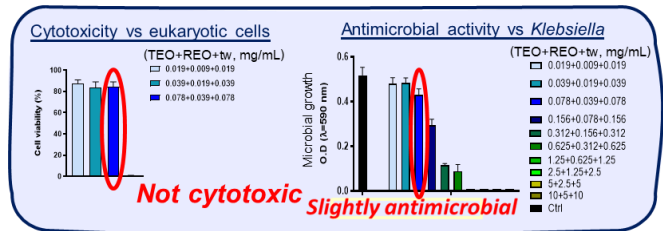
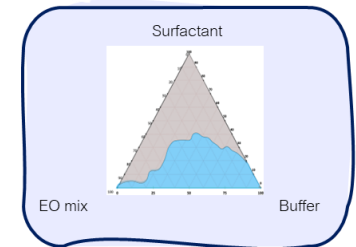
- Standard panel (reference Gram+ and Gram- bacteria)
- Disease-based panel (e.g., pneumonia UTI, sepsis)
- Updated panel (new/emerging resistances mechanisms)
- WGS of reference bacteria



# Bio-active TEO-based nanoemulsion for antimicrobial compounds delivery

**NEs components:**

- Tween® 85 (tw)
- Essential oils (EO) mix (*Thymus* EO + *Rosmarinus* EO, TEO + REO)
- Water phase



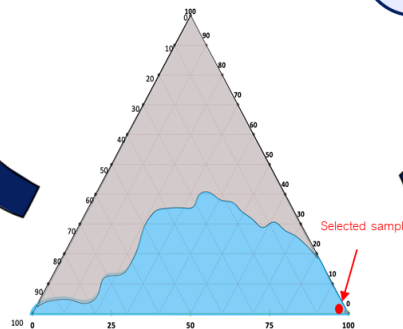
**Future perspectives:**

loading NEs with

Antimicrobial Peptides      or      Small bioactive compounds

**Nebulization Resistance Test**

Sample	Z-average ± SD (nm)	PDI ± SD	ζ Pot ± SD (mV)
Before neb	134 ± 1.29	0.22 ± 0.01	-34.4 ± 1.07
After neb	109 ± 1.56	0.26 ± 0.01	-31.4 ± 0.29





- **Contributo del Dipartimento di Chimica e Tecnologie del Farmaco**

### SPOKE 3. University education, industrial PhD courses, internationalization.



**Open calls for undergraduated excellent students**

**NELL'A.A. 2024-25 BORSE DI STUDIO ROME  
TECHNOPOLE PER STUDENTI E STUDENTESSE  
ISCRITTI A LAUREE MAGISTRALI O LAUREE  
MAGISTRALI CICLO UNICO DELLA FACOLTA'**

### Spoke 5 - Out-reach, public engagement, lifelong learning



**PROGETTO IN VIA DI PERFEZIONAMENTO  
DI CORSI INTEGRATI  
PER LIFELONG LEARNING  
SULL'ANTIBIOTICO RESISTENZA**



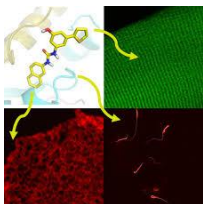
**ATTIVITÀ DI JOB ORIENTATION,  
CO-DESIGN DI TRAINING  
ACTIVITIES CON INDUSTRIE ED  
ENTI STAKEHOLDERS DI ROME  
TECHNOPOLE.**



**PROMOTION AND FOSTERING,  
VALORIZATION, DISSEMINATION, AND  
TRANSFER OF KNOWLEDGE, KNOW-HOW,  
AND  
TECHNOLOGIES FOR SOCIAL CHANGES**

**SETTEMBRE 2024 PARTECIPAZIONE A EVENTO  
EDUCATIVO PER DIVULGARE IL PROBLEMA  
DELL'ANTIBIOTICO RESISTENZA**

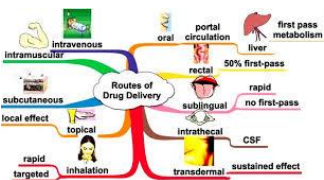
• **Obiettivi Specifici e Risultati Attesi : Linea 4 – FP7 Therapeutic and diagnostic innovation: new bio-active antimicrobials, targeted drug delivery and genomic-based approach to monitor the emergence of drug resistance**



**SO1. Identificazione di candidati preclinici e adiuvanti costituiti da piccole molecole di origine sintetica o naturale in grado di ripristinare la sensibilità batterica ai farmaci antimicrobici e/o ostacolare la crescita dei batteri MDR.**

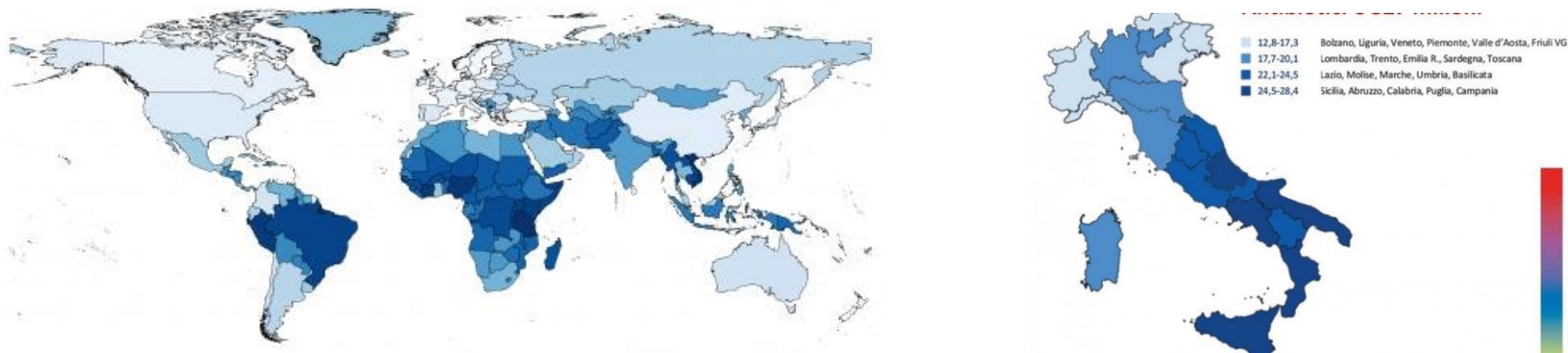


**SO2. Comprensione dei meccanismi molecolari e genetici della resistenza ai farmaci a più livelli.**



**SO3. Sviluppo di nuove strategie di somministrazione di farmaci per ottenere una maggiore efficienza di intrappolamento delle molecole attive e buone caratteristiche fisico-chimiche tenendo conto della modalità di somministrazione.**

- **Impatto previsto a breve e lungo termine, su economia, ambiente, società:  
Linea 4 – FP7 Therapeutic and diagnostic innovation: new bio-active antimicrobials, targeted drug delivery and genomic-based approach to monitor the emergence of drug resistance**



## Beneficiari:

- **Cittadini**
- **Studenti universitari coinvolti in tema Salute e Biofarma**
- **Ricercatori**
- **Aziende**
- **Enti di Ricerca**

# Contatti utili: Informazioni per chi volesse approfondire o collaborare con il Dipartimento di Chimica e Tecnologie del Farmaco nell'ambito del progetto FP7

## Attività di Spoke 1:

Francesca Ghirga [francesca.ghirga@uniroma1.it](mailto:francesca.ghirga@uniroma1.it)

Silvia Cammarone [silvia.cammarone@uniroma1.it](mailto:silvia.cammarone@uniroma1.it)

Carlotta Marianecchi [carlotta.marianecchi@uniroma1.it](mailto:carlotta.marianecchi@uniroma1.it)

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## Attività di Spoke 5:

Andrea Calcaterra [andrea.calcaterra@uniroma1.it](mailto:andrea.calcaterra@uniroma1.it)





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Foto: Stefania Sepulcri (Stampa e comunicazione)



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## **Iniziative PNRR nella Facoltà di Farmacia e Medicina.**

Rome Technopole - Advanced and automated innovation labs for diagnostic and therapeutic biopharma solutions

Linea Tematica: Therapeutic and diagnostic innovation: new bio-active antimicrobials, targeted drug delivery and genomic-based approach to monitor the emergence of drug resistance

# Obiettivi della Linea Tematica

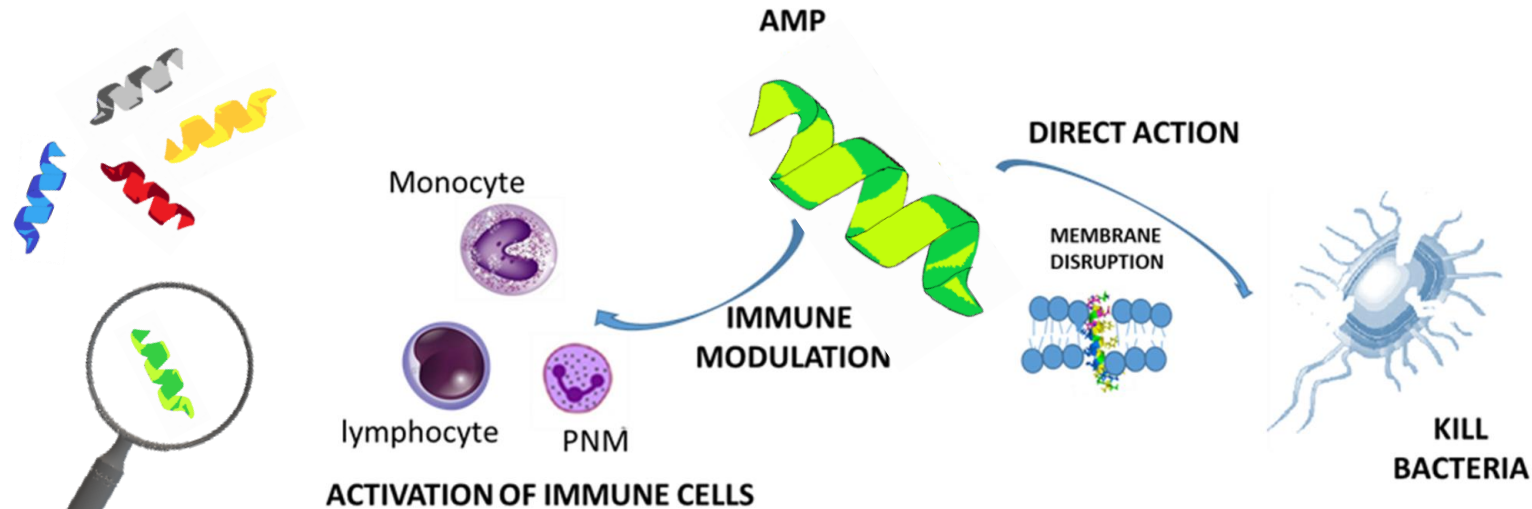
Therapeutic and diagnostic innovation: new bio-active antimicrobials, targeted drug delivery and genomic-based approach to monitor the emergence of drug resistance

1. Identification of pre-clinical candidates and adjuvants from small molecules of synthetic or natural origin capable of restoring bacterial susceptibility to antimicrobial drugs and/or impairing the growth of MDR bacteria

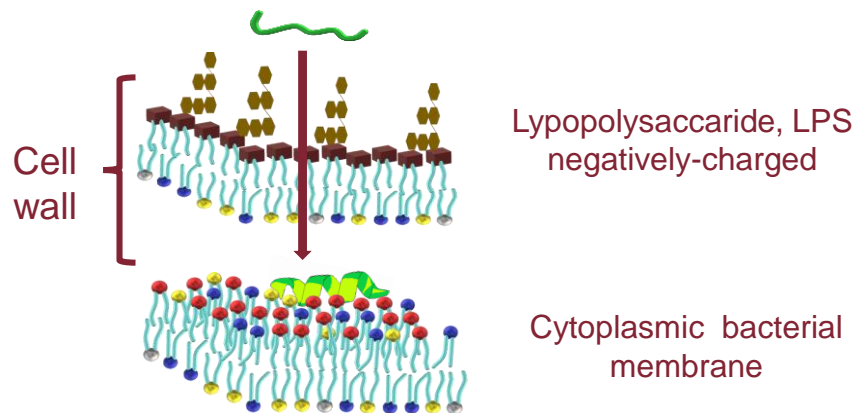
2. Understanding of the molecular and genetic mechanisms of drug resistance at multiple levels.

3. Development of novel drug delivery strategies to achieve higher active molecule entrapment efficiency, good physical chemical features taking into account the way of administration.

# Contributo del Dipartimento di Scienze Biochimiche «A. Rossi Fanelli»



## Identification and characterization of antimicrobial peptides



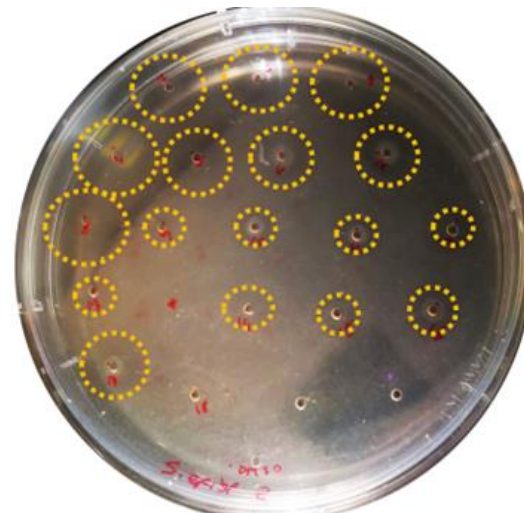
van der Does AM et al, *Adv Exp Med Biol*. 2019;1117:149-171

# Contributo del Dipartimento di Scienze Biochimiche «A. Rossi Fanelli»



- In vitro screening for
  - Antimicrobial activity
  - Cytotoxicity
  - Mechanism of action

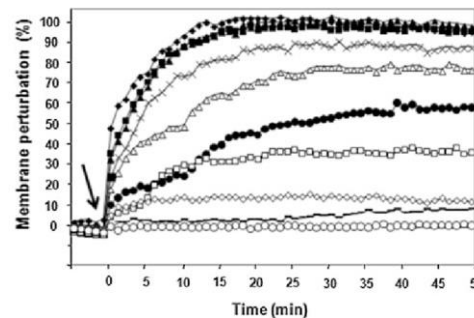
Microbiological assays



Colorimetric assays



Fluorimetric assays





# Risultati attesi e impatto previsto



- Discovery of HIT compounds as alternative or adjuvant of conventional antibiotics



- Drug rescue
- New antimicrobial drugs
- New adjuvant drugs



## IMPATTO ECONOMICO



## IMPATTO SOCIALE



## Contatti

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- [bruno.casciario@uniroma1.it](mailto:bruno.casciario@uniroma1.it)



Partecipanti Dip. Rossi Fanelli,  
linea tematica:

- **Maria Luisa Mangoni;**
- Bruno Casciario;
- Beatrice Vallone;
- Francesca Cutruzzolà.



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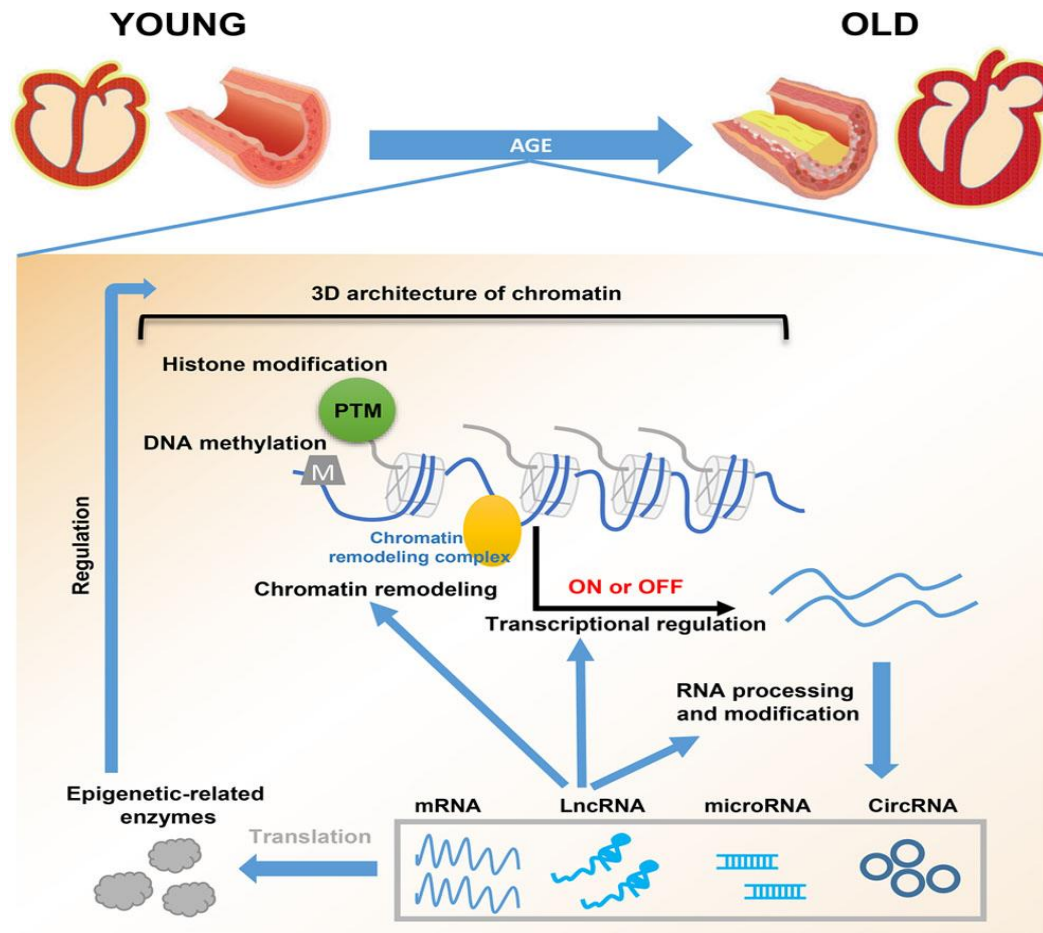
## Iniziative PNRR nella Facoltà di Farmacia e Medicina.

Prof. Elena De Falco

Rome Technopole, Flagship 7-Line 3:

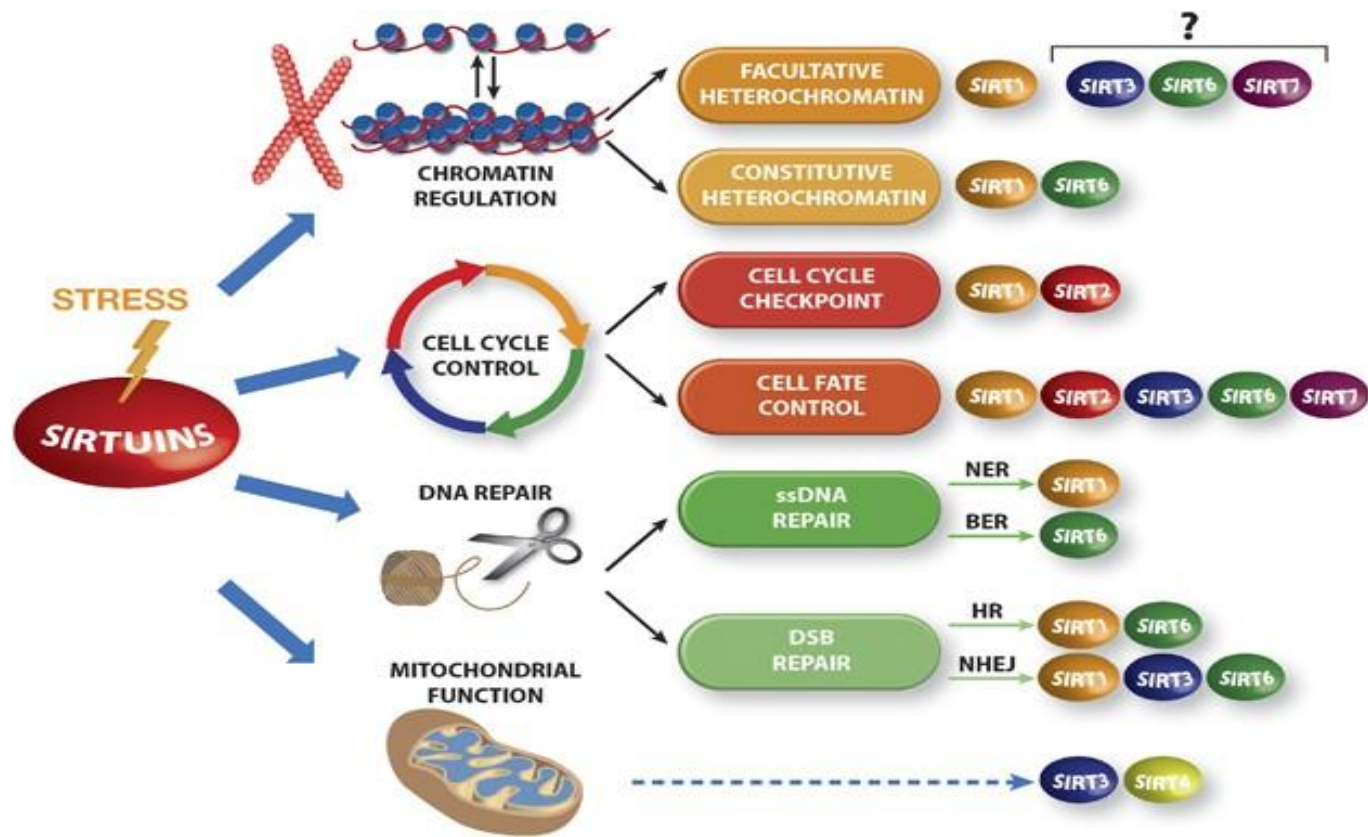
«Targeting autophagy and fibrosis-related Epigenetic  
Regulators in Cardiovascular Diseases»

# Contributo del Dipartimento di Scienze e Biotecnologie Medico-Chirurgiche: «the cardiovascular challenge»



Zhang et al. *Circulation Research* 2018

# Contributo del Dipartimento di Scienze e Biotecnologie Medico-Chirurgiche: «the cardiovascular challenge»

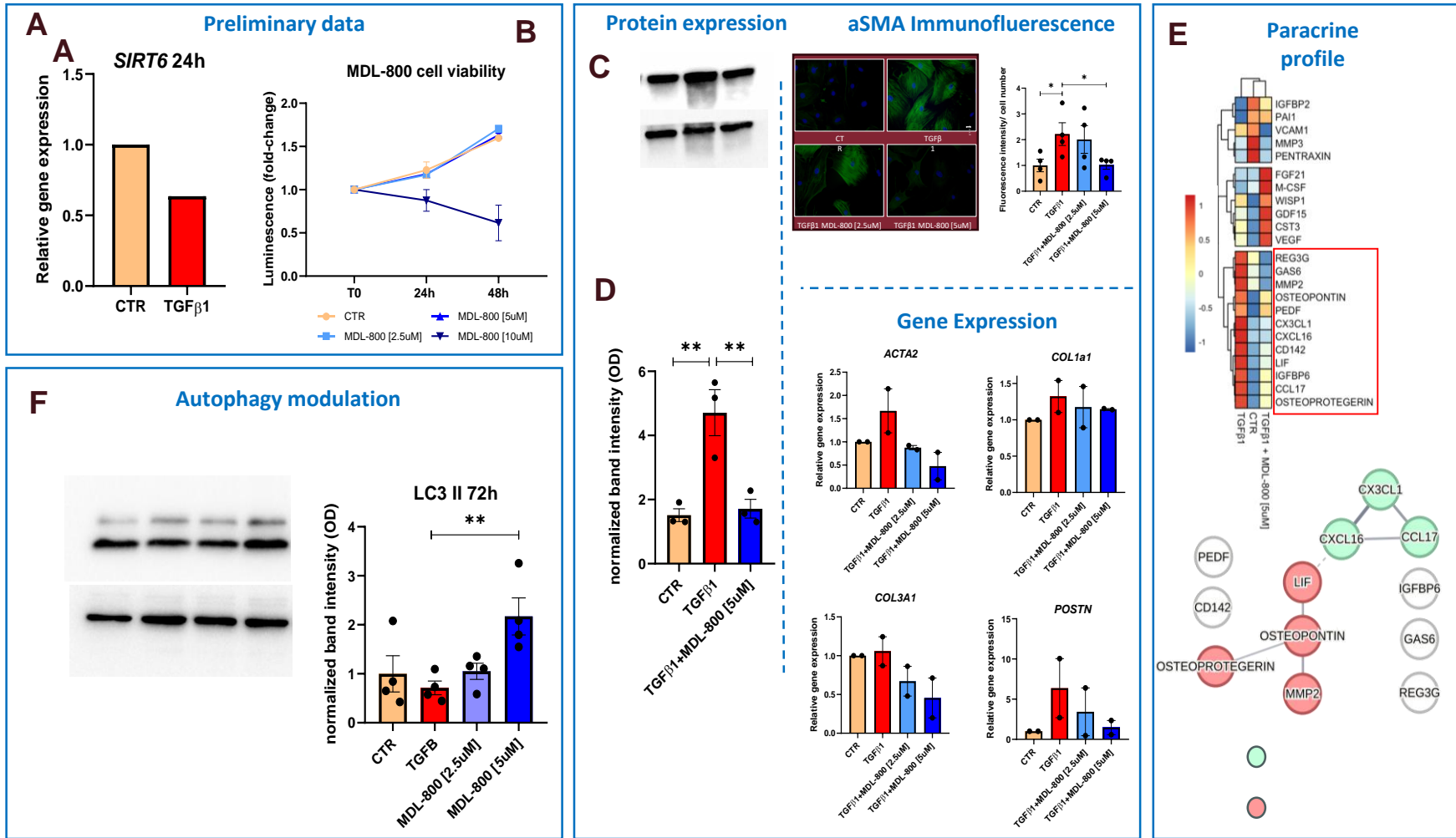


# Obiettivi

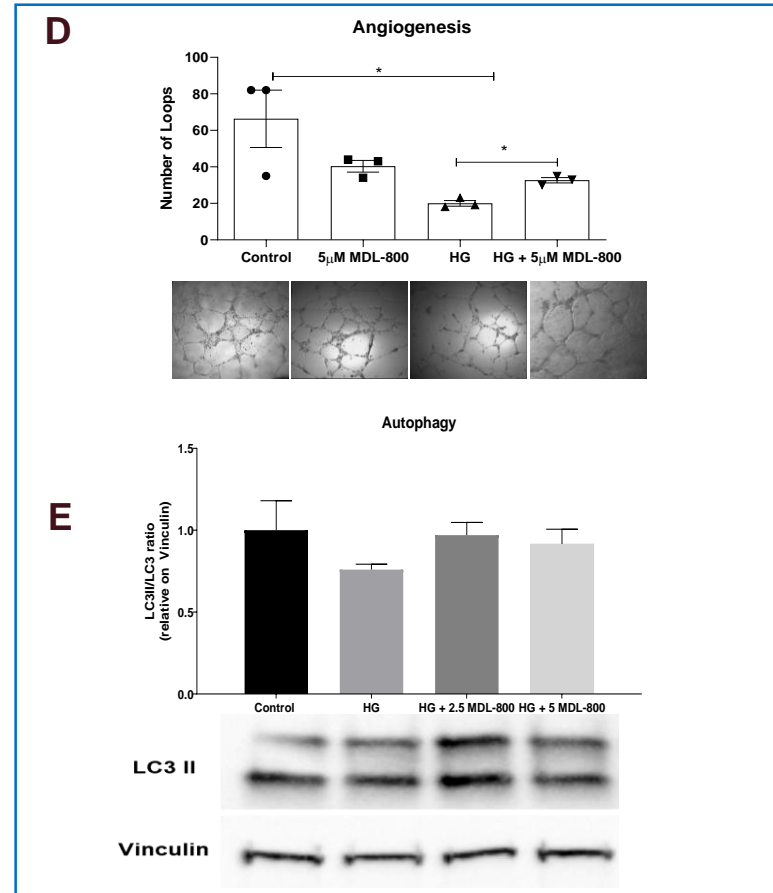
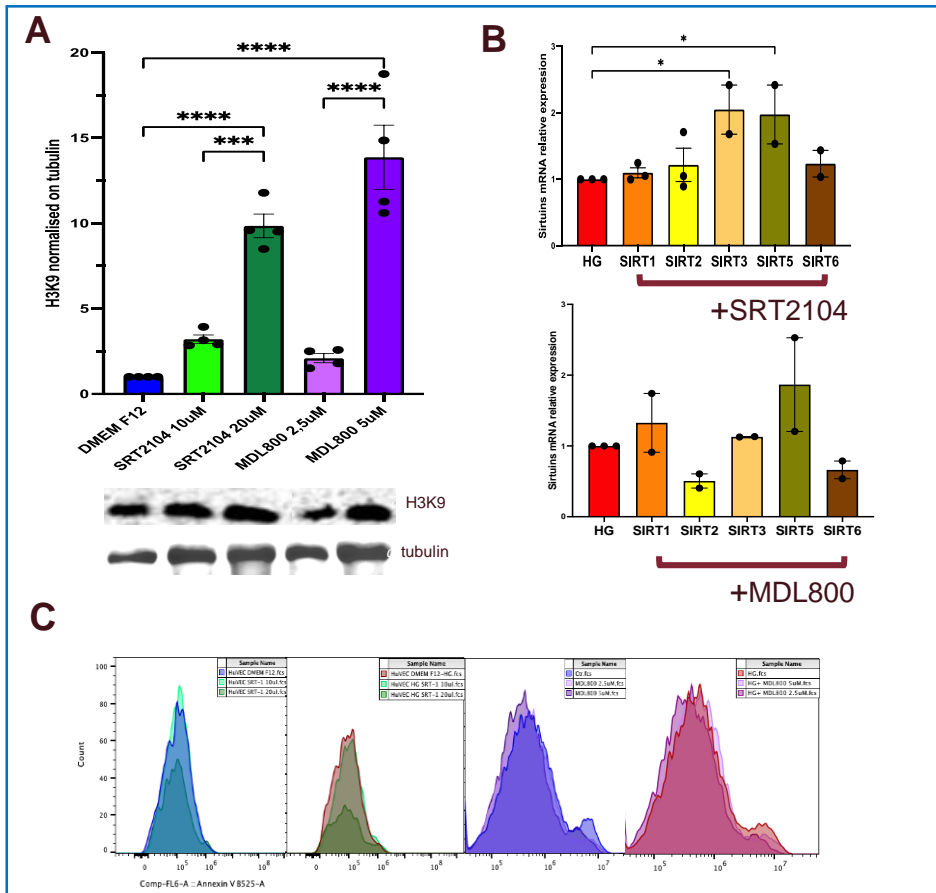
- **Activity 1 (Spoke 1, Task 1.1):** development of new isoform-selective SIRT1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 modulators and in vitro evaluation on cardiac stromal cells and endothelial cells.
- **Activity 2 (Spoke 1, Task 1.1 and 1.3):** in vivo preclinical testing of the best performing cocktail in a murine model of progressive heart failure.
- **Activity 3 (Spoke 3, Task 3.1 and 3.5):** integration of the novel research topic of epigenetic drugs in cardiovascular medicine in the educational offer of Sapienza University.

# Risultati attesi

## Anti-fibrotic effects of the SIRT6-activator MDL-800 in cardiac stromal cells



# Risultati attesi

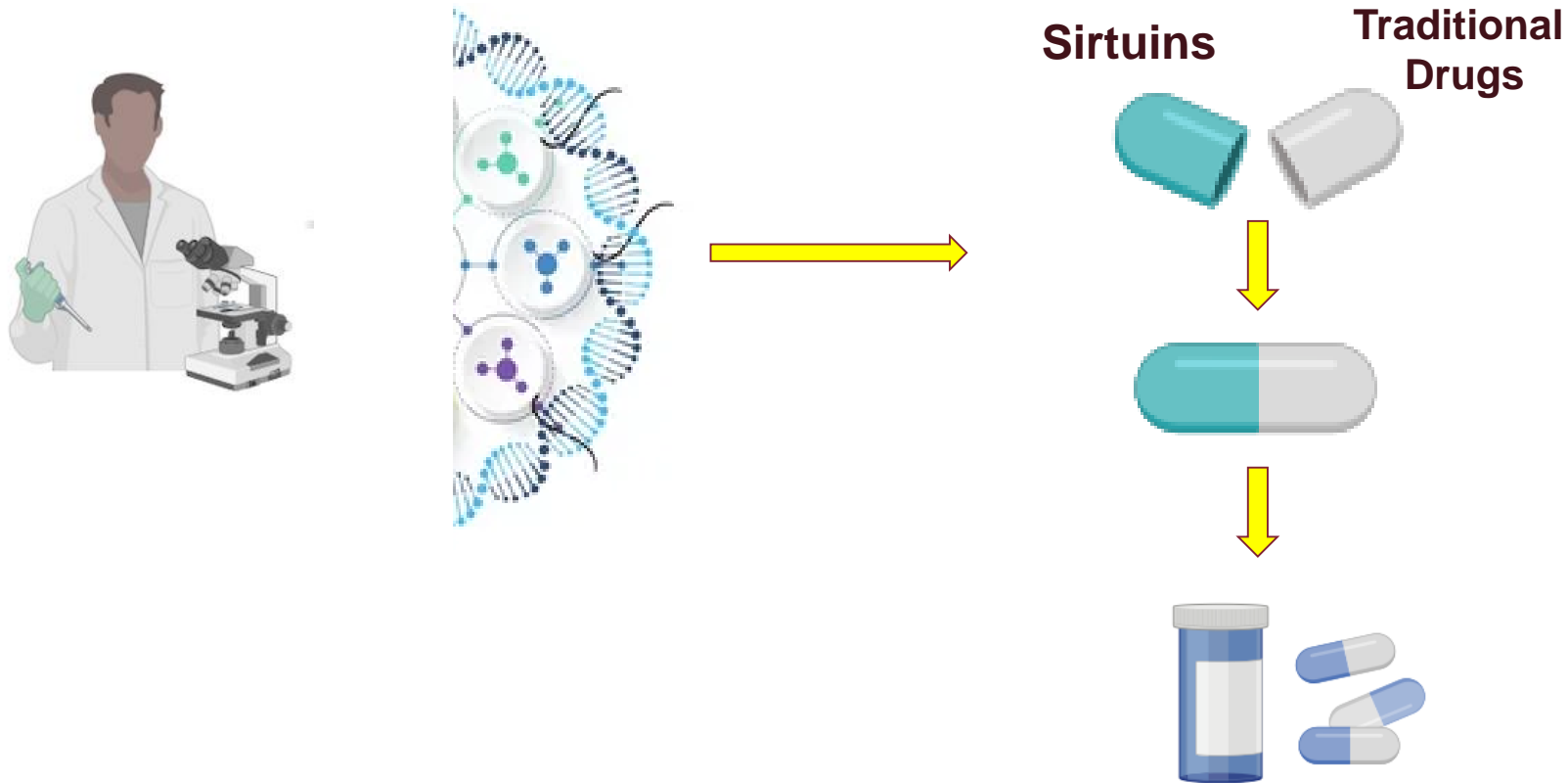


# Impatto Previsto





# Impatto Previsto



## Contatti utili



**Dip. Scienze e Biotecnologie Medico-Chirurgiche**



**Dip. di Chimica e Tecnologie del Farmaco**

*Prof. Elena De Falco*  
*Prof. Giacomo Frati*  
*Prof. Elena Cavarretta*

*Prof. Antonello Mai*  
*Prof. Sergio Valente*  
*Prof. Alessia Ciogli*  
*Prof. Dante Rotili*





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## **Iniziative PNRR nella Facoltà di Farmacia e Medicina.**

**PNRR Salute: M6/C2 Innovazione, ricerca e  
digitalizzazione del servizio sanitario nazionale**

# The Gut Microbiota as a Biomarker and pharmacological target in Epilepsy (GUMBLE Study)



 <i>Ministero della Salute</i> Direzione generale della ricerca e dell'innovazione in sanità <b>PNRR: M6/C2_CALL 2023 Full Proposal</b>	 <b>Finanziato dall'Unione europea</b> NextGenerationEU
<b>Project Code: PNRR-MCNT2-2023-12377846</b> <b>Call section: Malattie Croniche non Trasmissibili (MCnT2) ad alto impatto sui sistemi sanitari</b>	

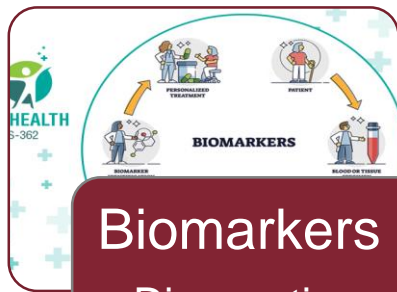
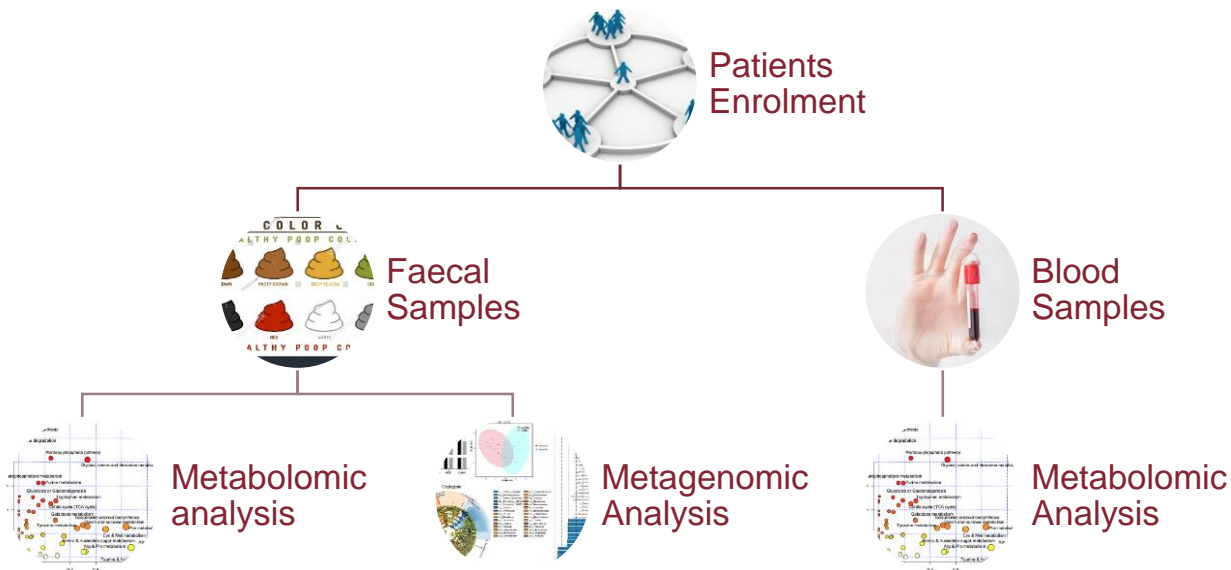


# Finanziamento Assegnato

Descrizione Costi	U01 Capofila	U02 Università Federico II Napoli	U03 IRCCS Gaslini Genova	U04 Università La sapienza Roma	totale Budget
<b>CUP</b>	<b>J63C24000260006</b>	<b>E63C24000860006</b>	<b>G33C24000260006</b>	<b>B53C24003000006</b>	
<b>Referente</b>	<b>P.I. Prof. Emilio Russo</b>	<b>prof. Roberto Russo</b>	<b>Prof. Pasquale Striano</b>	<b>prof.ssa Eleonora Palma</b>	
<b>Staff Salary</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Reaserchers' Contracts</b>	240.000,00	80.000,00	80.000,00	80.000,00	480.000,00
<b>equipment ( leasing-Rent)</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>equipment (buying)</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>supplies</b>	39.000,00	131.000,00	80.000,00	86.500,00	336.500,00
<b>Model Costs</b>	-	-	-	9.000,00	9.000,00
<b>Subcontracts</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Patient Costs</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>IT services anda data bases</b>	10.000,00	-	10.000,00	-	20.000,00
<b>Travels</b>	8.000,00	4.000,00	4.000,00	2.500,00	18.500,00
<b>Publication coast</b>	8.000,00	10.000,00	6.000,00	6.000,00	30.000,00
<b>Dissemination</b>	10.500,00	7.500,00	6.000,00	6.000,00	30.000,00
<b>Overheads</b>	24.500,00	17.500,00	14.000,00	10.000,00	66.000,00
<b>Coordination costs</b>	10.000,00	-	-	-	10.000,00
	<b>350.000,00</b>	<b>250.000,00</b>	<b>200.000,00</b>	<b>200.000,00</b>	<b>1.000.000,00</b>

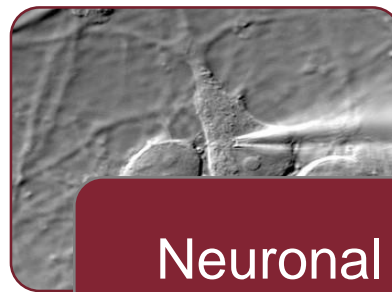


# Struttura del Progetto

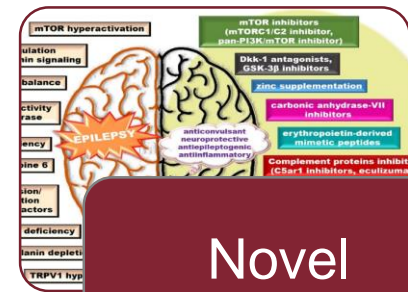


## Biomarkers

- Diagnostic
- Prognostic
- Safety



## Neuronal Excitability Evaluation



## Novel Therapeutic Targets

# Hypothesis and Significance

- **Hypothesis:** Microbiota-gut-brain axis contribute to the development, progression and clinical aspects of epilepsy in patients representing therefore a system by which specific biomarkers can be defined to several purposes
- **Significance:** the definition of clinically relevant biomarkers has an extremely important clinical value in terms of personalised and optimised therapy while also raising the opportunity to define new potential therapeutic targets and develop new therapeutical approaches

## Obiettivi

- **Aim 1:** Identification of biomarkers
  - Diagnostic Biomarkers
  - Predictive/prognostic biomarkers
  - Safety Biomarkers
- **Aim 2:** Study of the effects of circulating metabolites belonging to the microbiota-gut-brain axis on neuronal excitability
- **Aim 3:** Creation of a biobank of faecal and blood samples for future studies and integration of data according to potential technological and knowledge advancements





# Responsabili del progetto e responsabilità principali

## Principal Research Collaborators

Key Personnel Name	Operative Unit	Role in the project
1 - GAMBARDELLA ANTONIO	University Hospital Dulbecco of Catanzaro	Coordination, adult patients recruitment, clinical evaluation
2 - Striano Pasquale	IRCCS Gaslini Genova	pediatric patients recruitment, clinical evaluation, data interpretation
3 - Russo Roberto	University of Naples Federico II	in vitro sample analysis, data interpretation and integration
4 - Palma Eleonora	University of Rome Sapienza	in vitro evaluation of molecules linked to microbiota brain axis on neuronal excitability
5 - Aviello Gabriella	University of Naples Federico II	in vitro sample analysis, data interpretation and integration
6 Under 40 - MORANO ALESSANDRA	University of Rome Sapienza	patients recruitment, clinical evaluation, data interpretation
7 Under 40 - MUSANTE ILARIA	IRCCS Gaslini Genova	sample analysis, metabolic studies, data interpretation and integration



# Responsabili del progetto e responsabilità principali



**Emilio Russo**  
Project Coordinator



**Antonio Gambardella**  
Coordination, adult patients  
recruitment, clinical  
evaluation



**Pasquale Striano**  
pediatric patients  
recruitment, clinical  
evaluation, data  
interpretation



**Ilaria Musante – U40**  
sample analysis,  
metabolic studies,  
data interpretation  
and integration



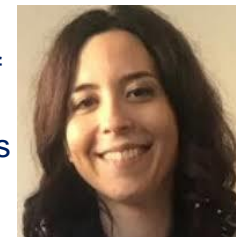
**Roberto Russo**  
in vitro sample  
analysis, data  
interpretation and  
integration



**Gabriella Aviello**  
in vitro sample  
analysis, data  
interpretation and  
integration



**Eleonora Palma**  
in vitro evaluation of  
molecules linked to  
microbiota brain axis  
on neuronal  
excitability



**Alessandra Morano – U40**  
patients recruitment, clinical  
evaluation, data  
interpretation



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## **Iniziative PNRR nella Facoltà di Farmacia e Medicina.**

Progetto «Digital Driven Diagnostics, prognostics and  
therapeutics for sustainable Health care» **D<sup>3</sup> 4 Health – Spoke 3**

# Contributo del Dipartimento di Medicina Molecolare: sintesi delle sfide alla base del contributo al progetto

Il gruppo del Prof Fabio Babiloni (Dipartimento di Fisiologia e Farmacologia) sfruttando la consolidata esperienza nell'analisi dei **segnali cerebrali** ed **autonomici** permetterà di fornire **dati neurocognitivi** per la costruzione del **Digital Twin**. Nello specifico il protocollo sperimentale, permetterà di acquisire in presenza e da remoto grazie alla tecnologia acquisita con i fondi PNRR, dati neurofisiologici dei pazienti **in resting state** e **durante task cognitivi ad hoc**.

✓ Sistema Mindtooth, indossabile autonomamente, costituito da un avanzato device per EEG, **Mindtooth** (*Mindtooth Project H2020-EIC-FTI-GA950998*)



✓ Research Ring per segnali autonomici (HR, EDA)



**Monitoraggio neuroscientifico** del paziente per identificare correlati di stati psicofisici spesso compromessi nei pazienti focus del progetto D34H (es. attenzione, stress, affaticamento cognitivo).

Inoltre, una batteria di **questionari psicometrici** somministrati da remoto (Qualtrics) permetterà di effettuare *ongoing* una valutazione cognitiva durante il percorso terapeutico, offrendo un **contributo multifattoriale** alla definizione del Digital Twin.



# Obiettivi specifici



Valutare e monitorare in modo innovativo ed interdisciplinare marker neuro-fisio-cognitivi nei pazienti attraverso sia *batterie cognitive* che *analisi di biosegnali* attraverso sistemi intelligenti e non invasivi durante task cognitivi in presenza e da remoto per contribuire alla creazione del gemello digitale il più possibile personalizzato sul paziente:

1) Sviluppo delle soluzioni tecnologiche e identificazione dei biomarcatori cognitivi;



2) Validazione delle soluzioni tecnologiche proposte;

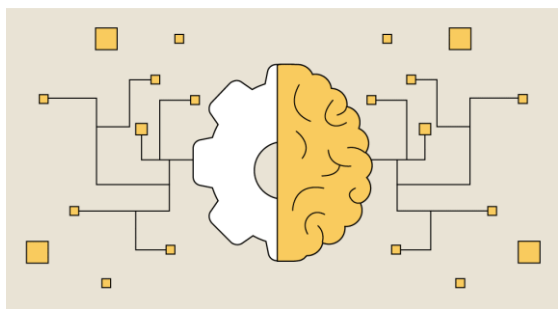
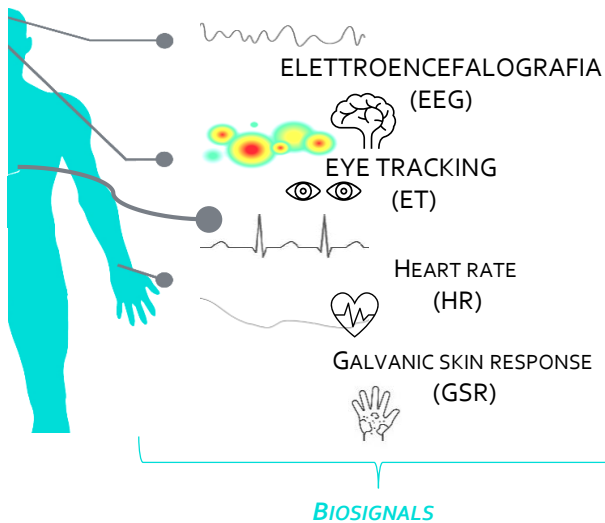


3) Contributo al design del gemello digitale - basato su biosegnali e marker cognitivi.



Impiego di **dispositivi medici mini (non)-invasivi** in grado di supportare il processo decisionale clinico, il benessere dei pazienti e la raccolta continua di dati per la progressione/generazione dello sviluppo del gemello digitale.

# Nel concreto....



Innovativi Modelli  
di Machine Learning



**STATO PSICOFISICO  
DEL PAZIENTE**



## Impatto previsto

**-Clinica:** lo sviluppo e la validazione di soluzioni interdisciplinari tecnologiche per la valutazione delle risorse cognitive, permetteranno di promuovere **approcci di cura personalizzati al paziente**, in base ai fattori fisiologici, cognitivi e personologici individuali.



**-Scientifico:** Nuove **evidenze scientifiche innovative** sulla valutazione dello stato cognitivo ed affettivo del paziente, con la definizione di migliori percorsi assistenziali. Progettazione metodologica multidisciplinare innovativa e sperimentazione nella pratica clinica, producendo evidenze per le comunità scientifiche e i decisori politici.

**-Impatto sociale:** Implementazione di approcci innovativi e sostenibili per l'assistenza sanitaria e il benessere, migliorando **l'inclusività sociale**; promuovendo l'accessibilità alla diagnosi clinica ed al monitoraggio; cooperazione con prestazioni ospedaliere con diverse aree di specializzazione in una specifica area patologica.





**Prof Fabio Babiloni**

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 **biancams.inguscio@uniroma1.it**

**Dr Giulia Cartocci**

 **giulia.cartocci@uniroma1.it**





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## **Iniziative PNRR nella Facoltà di Farmacia e Medicina.**

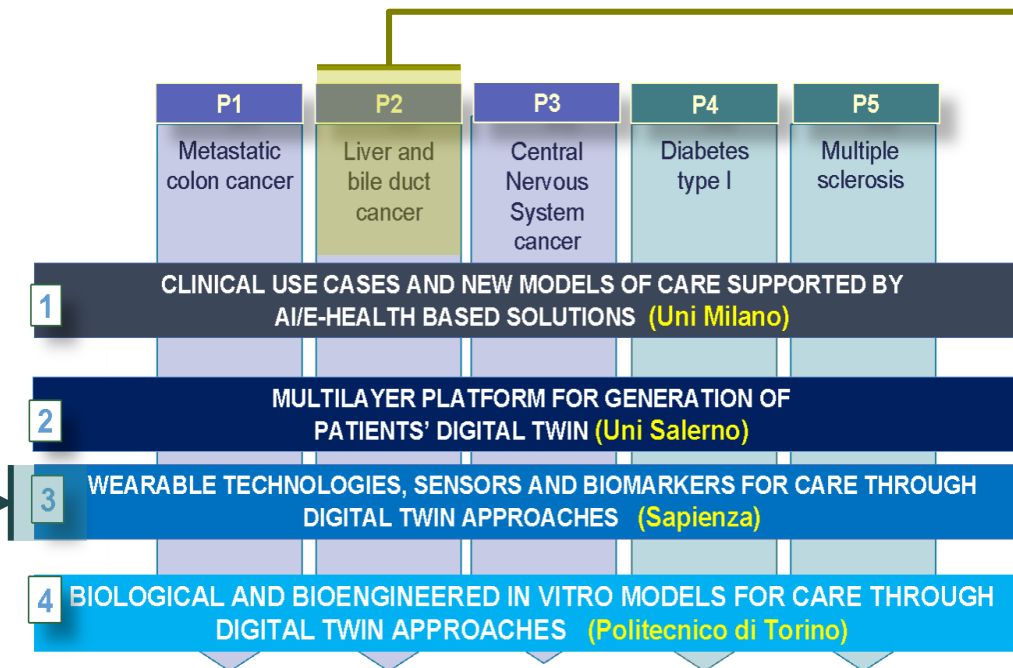
PNC Salute/D34 - Health Digital Driven Diagnostics,  
prognostics and therapeutics for Sustainable Health care

# PNC Salute/D34 - Health Digital Driven Diagnostics, prognostics and therapeutics for Sustainable Health care

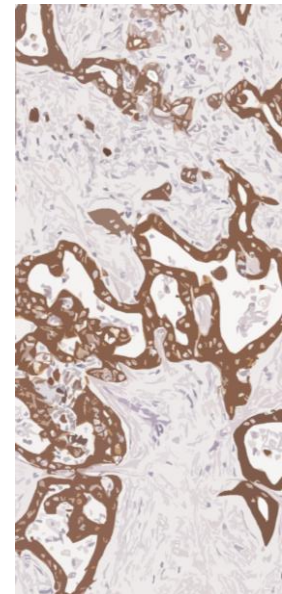
*Contributo del Dipartimento di Scienze Anatomiche, Istologiche, Medico Legali e dell'Apparato Locomotore*

**N. 3 - Spoke 3 \_Task 3.4, 3.6**

**Title:** Digital Twins construction: Advanced **imaging diagnostics** & biomarkers for **tissue characterization**



**Biliary Tract Cancer - CCA**

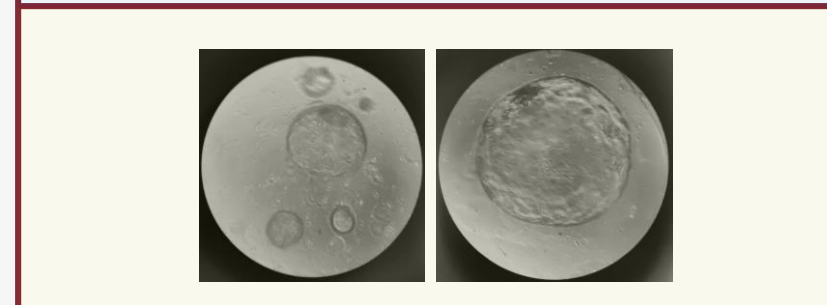
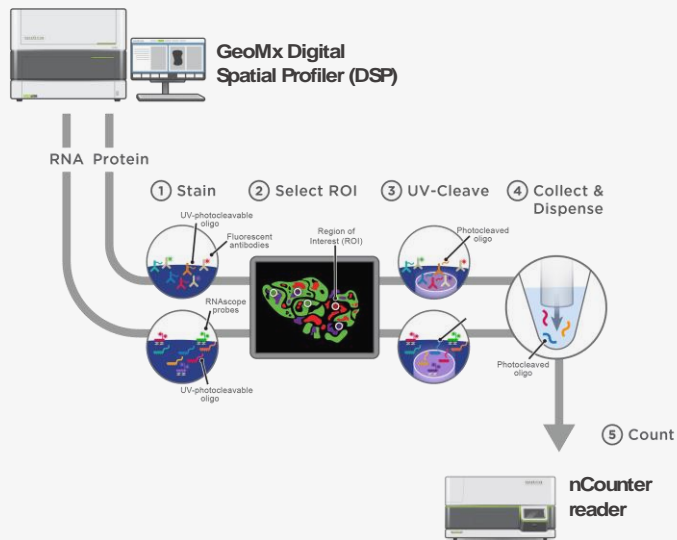


# PNC Salute/D34 - Health Digital Driven Diagnostics, prognostics and therapeutics for Sustainable Health care

*Contributo del Dipartimento di Scienze Anatomiche, Istologiche, Medico Legali e dell'Apparato Locomotore*

## Obiettivi specifici

- Istologia Digitale e AI tool
- Profilo molecolare spaziale (Spatial –omics)
- In vitro modelling (2d and 3d)



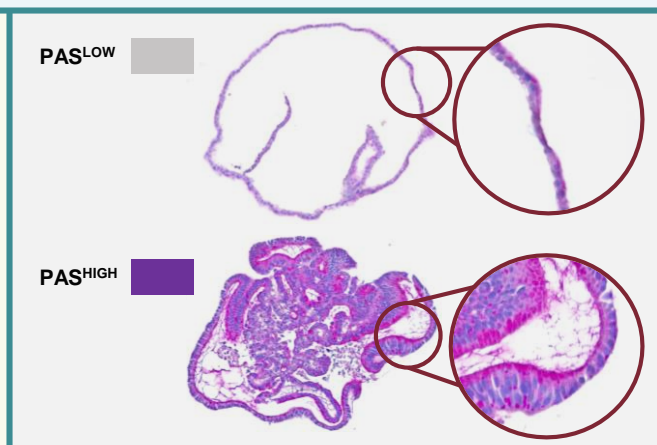
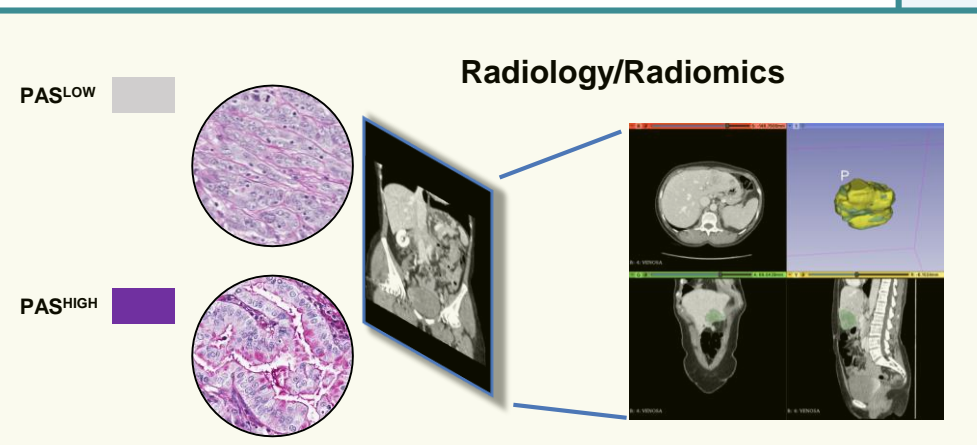
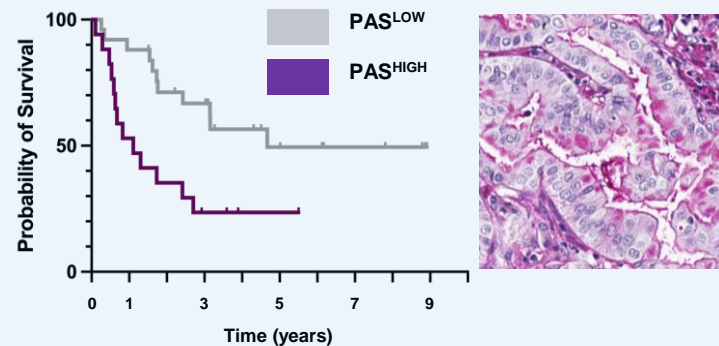


# PNC Salute/D34 - Health Digital Driven Diagnostics, prognostics and therapeutics for Sustainable Health care

Contributo del Dipartimento di Scienze Anatomiche, Istologiche, Medico Legali e dell'Apparato Locomotore

## Risultati attesi in linea con i pilastri del PNRR

- Individuazione di specifici **biomarcatori**
- **AI** per caratterizzazione istologica del CCA
- Caratterizzazione morfo-molecolare spaziale
- **Digital twin**: correlazioni morfologiche, cliniche e radiologiche
- **Biological twin**: modellizzazione *in vitro*



# PNC Salute/D34 - Health Digital Driven Diagnostics, prognostics and therapeutics for Sustainable Health care

*Contributo del Dipartimento di Scienze Anatomiche, Istologiche, Medico Legali e dell'Apparato Locomotore*

## Contatti utili



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**Guido Carpino**

[guido.carpino@uniroma1.it](mailto:guido.carpino@uniroma1.it)

DIPARTIMENTO DI SCIENZE ANATOMICHE  
ISTOLOGICHE  
MEDICO LEGALI  
E DELL'APPARATO LOCOMOTORE



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### PNC SALUTE – D<sup>3</sup> 4 Health

Construction of a predictive model of the behavior of primary liver tumors cholangiocarcinoma (CCA) and hepatocarcinoma (HCC) in terms of progression survival and disease recurrence in response to treatments performed.

Prof. Massimo Rossi

Dott.ssa Manuela Garofalo

# TRANSPLANT ONCOLOGY

## Metroticket 2.0 Model for Analysis of Competing Risks of Death After Liver Transplantation for Hepatocellular Carcinoma

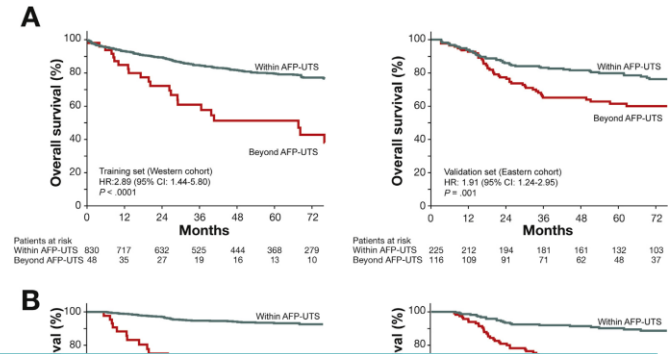
Vincenzo Mazzaferro,<sup>1</sup> Carlo Sposito,<sup>1</sup> Jian Zhou,<sup>2,3</sup> Antonio D. Pinna,<sup>4</sup> Luciano De Carlis,<sup>5</sup> Jia Fan,<sup>2,3</sup> Matteo Cescon,<sup>4</sup> Stefano Di Sandro,<sup>5</sup> He Yi-feng,<sup>2,3</sup> Andrea Lauterio,<sup>5</sup> Marco Bongini,<sup>1</sup> and Alessandro Cucchetti<sup>4</sup>



**Table 4.** Accuracy of  $\alpha$ -Fetoprotein Adjusted-to-Hepatocellular Carcinoma Size Criteria Compared With Current Criteria for Liver Transplantation in Hepatocellular Carcinoma Tested in the External Validation Cohort

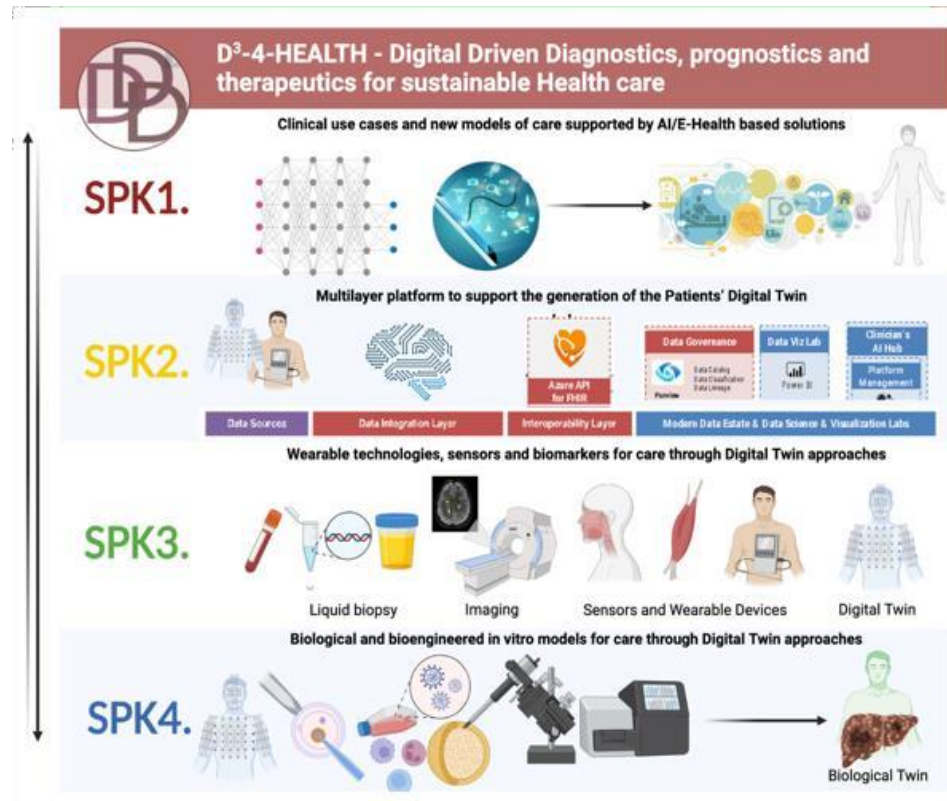
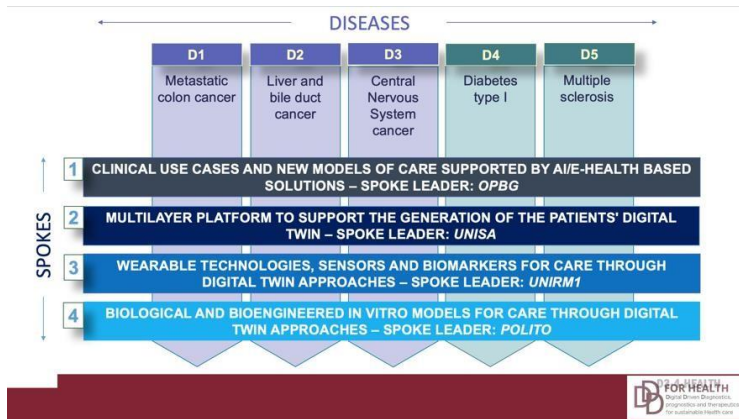
Transplant criteria	Harrell's c-index (95% CI)	P value (Harrell's)	Wolbers c-index (95% CI)
Current model	0.721 (0.648–0.793)	—	0.698 (0.640–0.756)
AFP French model <sup>24</sup>	0.672 (0.613–0.731)	.044	0.639 (0.575–0.703)
UCSF <sup>11</sup>	0.621 (0.566–0.676)	.001	0.582 (0.513–0.651)
Up-to-7 <sup>10</sup>	0.620 (0.569–0.671)	.001	0.585 (0.517–0.653)
Milan <sup>9</sup>	0.602 (0.541–0.663)	.001	0.558 (0.487–0.629)
Shangai-Fudan <sup>25</sup>	0.600 (0.551–0.649)	.001	0.569 (0.499–0.639)

**Figure 2.** HCC-specific survival at 5 years after liver transplantation, according to variations in Number of nodules + diameter of the largest nodule and AFP (A) with the derived AFP-adjusted-to-HCC-size criteria (B). (A) HCC-specific survival estimates



[www.hcc-olt-metroticket.org](http://www.hcc-olt-metroticket.org)

# D3-4-HEALTH





# SPOKE 1 (D<sup>3</sup>-4-HEALTH)

## obiettivi principali

- ✓ Creazione di un dataset estratto dall'attività di data mining da una coorte di pazienti affetti da HCC e CCA.
- ✓ Elaborazione di dati clinici, strumentali, di laboratorio e istologici al fine di identificare fattori predittivi per la costruzione di algoritmi che abilitino un percorso di diagnosi e cura più accurato e standardizzato con il supporto dell'intelligenza artificiale (AI).
- ✓ Identificazione delle variabili che definiscono le popolazioni a più alto rischio di recidiva di malattia al fine di ottenere biomarcatori che rendano il follow-up meno invasivo.
- ✓ Impiego delle variabili per la fase di addestramento dei modelli di Machine Learning (ML).
- ✓ Convalida di nuovi modelli di assistenza supportati da soluzioni innovative basate sull'intelligenza artificiale/e-health per garantire una rapida consegna delle evidenze a breve termine.

# Risultati attesi ed impatto

- Realizzazione di modelli predittivi simulati (Digital Twins);
- Personalizzazione terapeutica (schemi immunosoppressivi);
- Maggiore accuratezza prognostica post trattamento (locoregionale o chirurgico);
- Supporto decisionale affidabile, efficace ed efficiente per l'assistenza e la cura del paziente.

[massimo.rossi@uniroma1.it](mailto:massimo.rossi@uniroma1.it)  
[manuela.garofalo@uniroma1.it](mailto:manuela.garofalo@uniroma1.it)



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## **Iniziative PNRR nella Facoltà di Farmacia e Medicina.**

**CN3 centro nazionale per la terapia genica  
e farmaci ad RNA**

- *PNRR M4C2-Investimento 1.4- CN00000041 ” finanziato dall’Unione europea – NextGenerationEU*  
Finanziamento totale PNRR: Importo assegnato 324 Meuro.
- Meccanismi fondamentali della terapia genica e a RNA e le loro applicazioni terapeutiche per tradurle in prodotti farmacologici.



# ://www.rna-genetherapy.eu

## SPOKE 1 | Genetic Diseases

University of Modena and Reggio Emilia

## SPOKE 2 | Cancer

Sapienza University of Rome

## SPOKE 3 | Neurodegeneration

Italian Institute of Technology

## SPOKE 4 | Metabolic and Cardiovascular Diseases

University of Padua

## SPOKE 5 | Inflammatory and Infectious Diseases

University of Siena

## SPOKE 6 | RNA Drug Development

National Research Council of Italy

## SPOKE 7 | Biocomputing

University of Bari Aldo Moro

## SPOKE 8 | Platforms for RNA/DNA Delivery

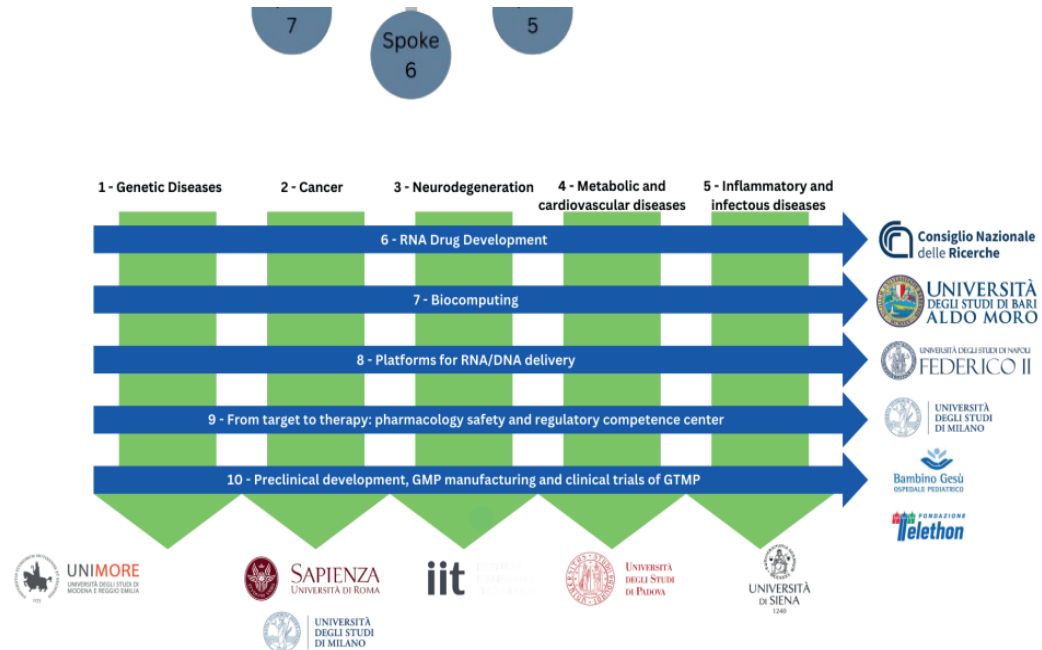
University of Naples Federico II

## SPOKE 9 | Competence Center on RNA Drug Pharmacology

University of Milan

## SPOKE 10 | Pre-clinical Development, GMP Manufacturing and Clinical Trials of GTMP

IRCCS Bambino Gesù Children's Hospital in Rome



# CN3 Spoke 2 "Cancer"

**16 UNIVERSITIES**  
 (UROM, UNIMI, UMG, UNIPD, UNIBA, UNINA, UNIPI, UNIBO, UNIFI, UNISI, UNICT, UNITS, UNIBS, UNIMORE, UNICAMP, UNITO)

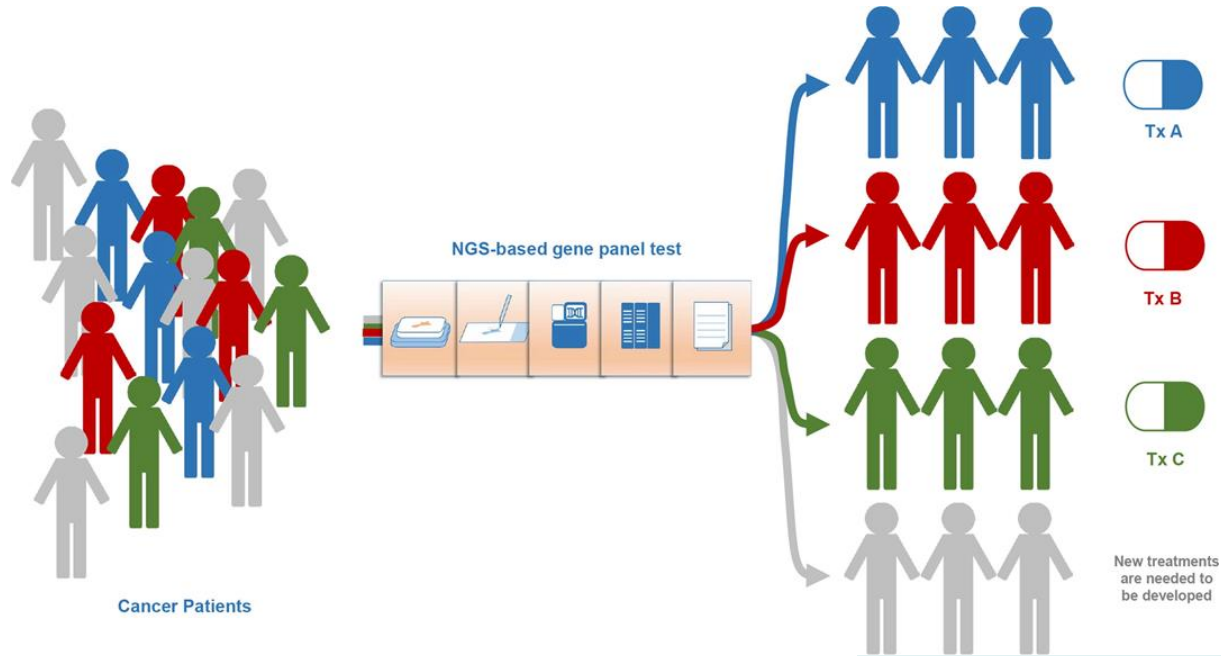
**2 CNR Institutes**  
 (IASI, IEOS)

**2 Pharma companies**  
 (SANOFI, (IRBM)

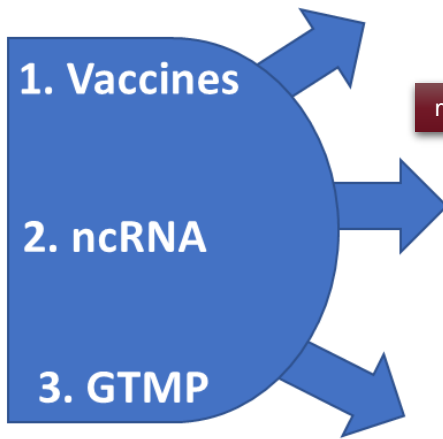
**1 Financial Institution** (Intesa San Paolo).



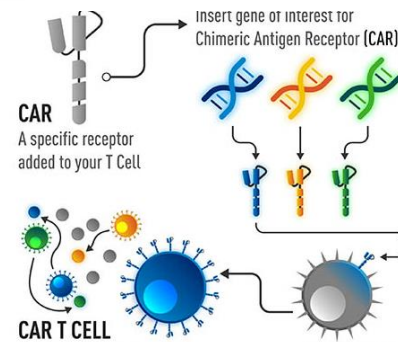
# Spoke 2 " Cancer " Overview



*In cooperation with H-spokes*



miRNA, siRNA, ASO etc.





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## **Iniziative PNRR nella Facoltà di Farmacia e Medicina.**

**CN3 “SVILUPPO DI TERAPIE GENICHE E FARMACI A  
BASE DI RNA”– Spoke 2 Cancer**

**RNA-therapy to target cytotoxic genes in Glioblastoma**



# CN3 Spoke 2: NOVEL RNA THERAPEUTICS IN TUMORS: FROM DISCOVERY TO PRE-CLINICAL STAGE

## 4 WORKPACKAGES:

**WP1 IDENTIFICATION OF NOVEL TARGETS FOR RNA THERAPEUTICS**

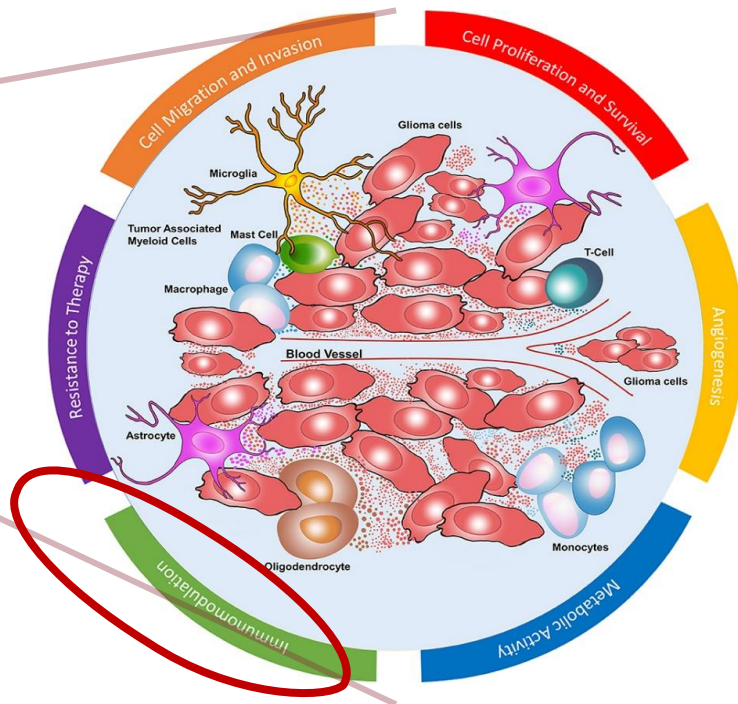
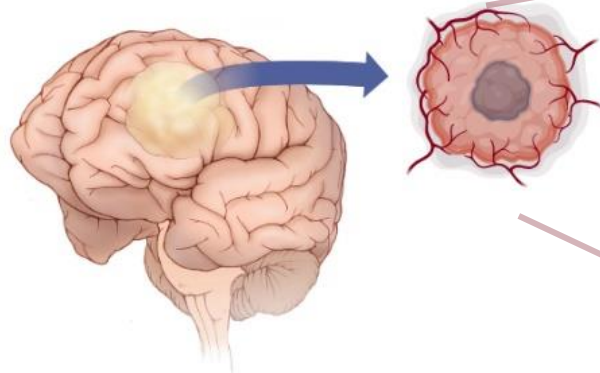
**WP2 PRIORITIZATION AND VALIDATION OF TARGETS TOWARDS CLINICAL APPLICATIONS**

**WP3 DISCOVERY OF NOVEL IMMUNE RNA THERAPEUTICS**

**WP4 MAXIMIZING THE IMPACT**

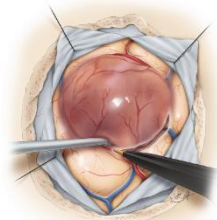
# WP2 PRIORITIZATION AND VALIDATION OF TARGETS TOWARDS CLINICAL APPLICATIONS

## Glioblastoma

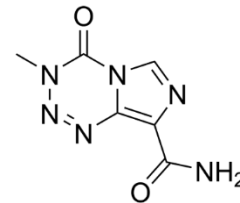


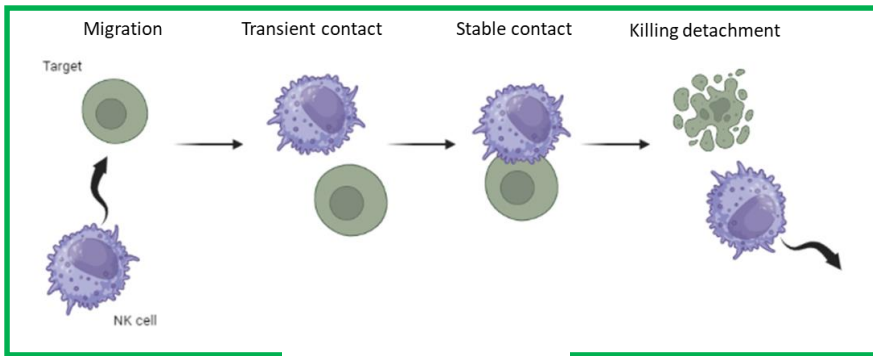
Current treatments

GBM surgery

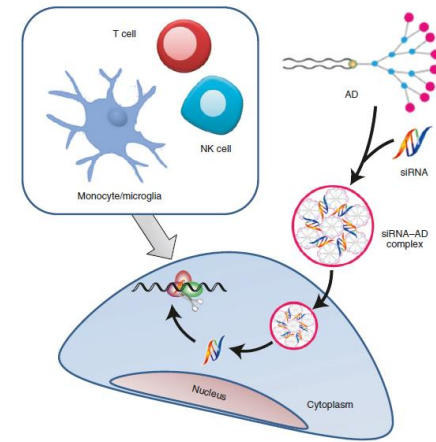
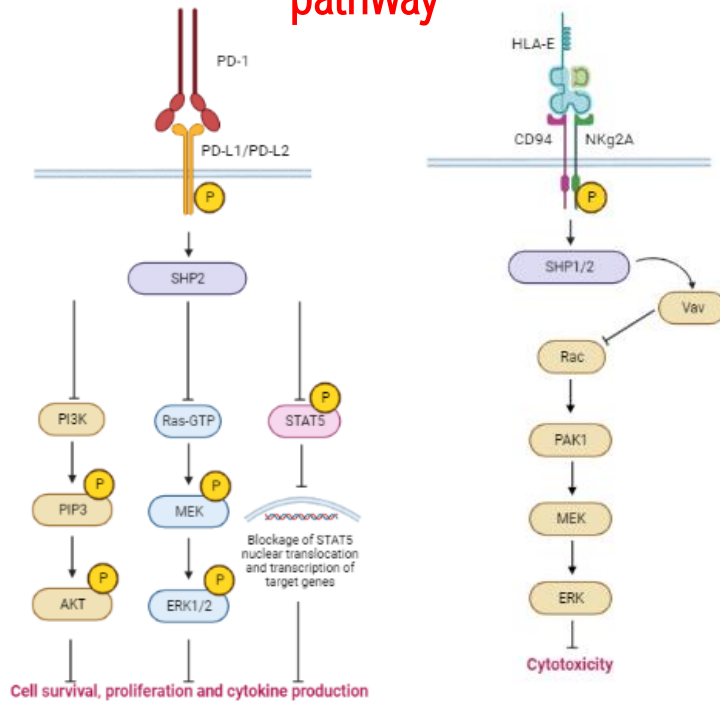


Temozolomide therapy





## Inhibitory pathway



siRNA delivery mediated by the amphiphilic dendrimer

**Main Objective:** to modulate target genes and RNA molecules through siRNA.

We aim **to disrupt the GBM immunescape** by the delivery of siRNA targeting the checkpoint inhibitors NKG2A and PD-1 receptors.



Preclinical animal models

i.P. or/and i.v. D-siRNA NKG2a/PD1



## Tasks:

- *Task 1 Specific shutdown of key proteins, RNA modification and gene editing*
- *Task 2 In vitro and in vivo efficacy tests and delivery of RNA based therapies*
- *Task 3 Validation of Diagnostic, Prognostic and Response to therapy biomarkers in preclinical models*

## Deliverables:

- Novel gene inactivation protocols; Silencing RNA targeting proteins.
- *In vitro* and in vivo validated therapeutic siRNAs.
- Identification of novel targets for cytotoxic genes in glioblastoma and methods of targeted delivery suitable to further preclinical testing. Assessment and selection of the most effective and powerful targeted **nanosystems**.

## Useful contacts:

Information for those who would like to learn more or collaborate

**Prof. Stefano Garofalo**

**mail: stefano.garofalo@uniroma1.it**

### Main REFERENCES:

- Mormino A, et al., Histone-deacetylase 8 drives the immune response and the growth of glioma. *Glia*. 2021 Nov;69(11):2682-2698.
- Chen J, et al., Synthesis and use of an amphiphilic dendrimer for siRNA delivery into primary immune cells. *Nat Protoc*. 2021 Jan;16(1):327-351.
- Garofalo S, et al., Natural killer cells modulate motor neuron-immune cell cross talk in models of Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis. *Nat Commun*. 2020 Apr 14;11(1):1773.

### siRNA Targets:

1. NK cell lectin-like receptor subfamily C member 1 subtype A – **NKG2a**
2. Programmed cell death protein 1 – **PD1**



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# Iniziative PNRR nella Facoltà di Farmacia e Medicina

**PNRR CN3\_spoke 2 Cancer**

National Center for Gene Therapy and Drugs based on RNA Technology



# NextGenerationEU DD. 3175/2021 E DD. 3138/2021 CN\_3: National Center for Gene Therapy and Drugs based on RNA Technology

Codice Progetto CN 00000041

## Responsabile progetto:

PI: Alberto Boffi

Co-PI: Lucia Di Marcotullio

## Personnel

RTDA: Francesca Bufalieri

PhD Student: Gennaro Adabbo

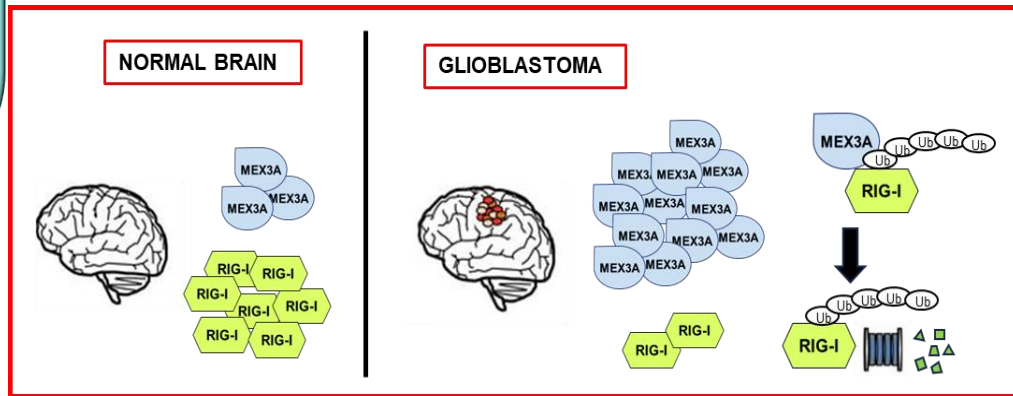
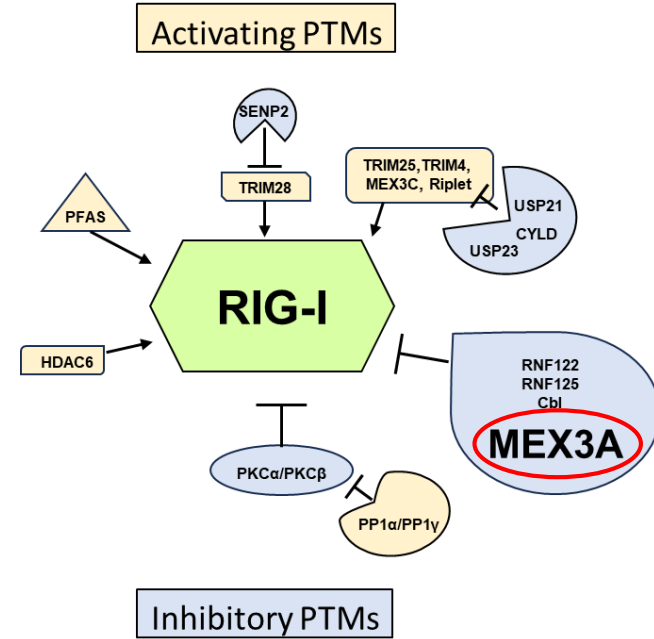
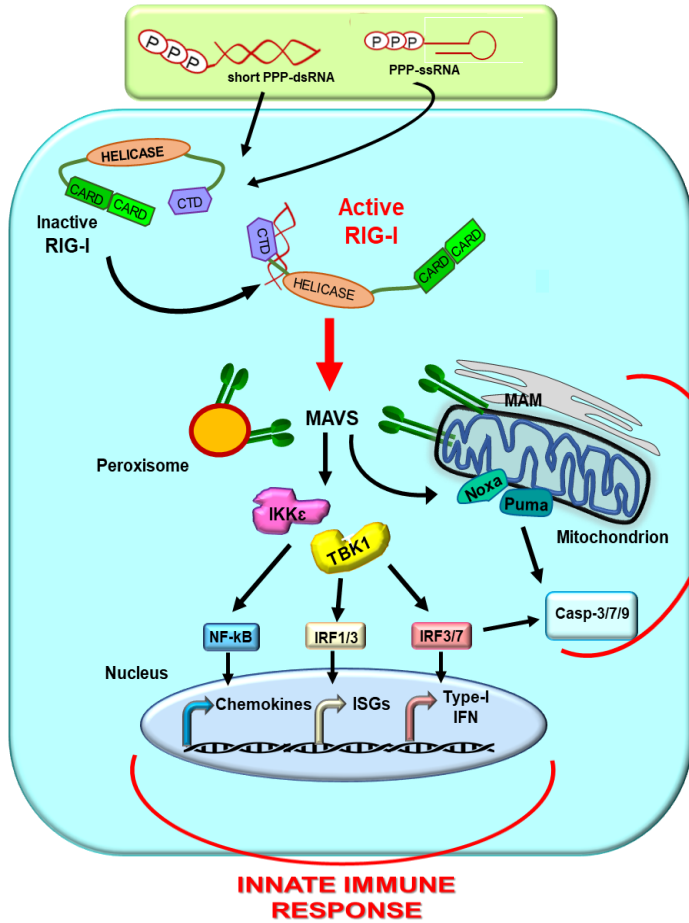
## Collaborators

Luca D'Angelo, Giulio Caracciolo, Clara Nervi

## Amount

€155.310,00

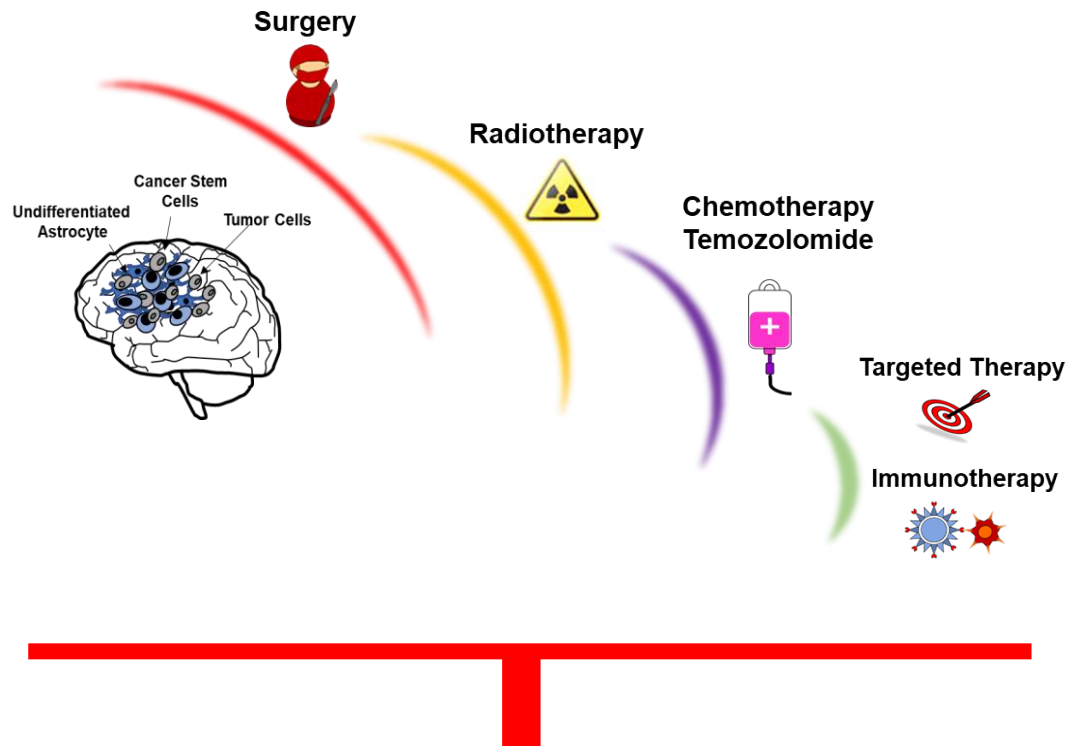
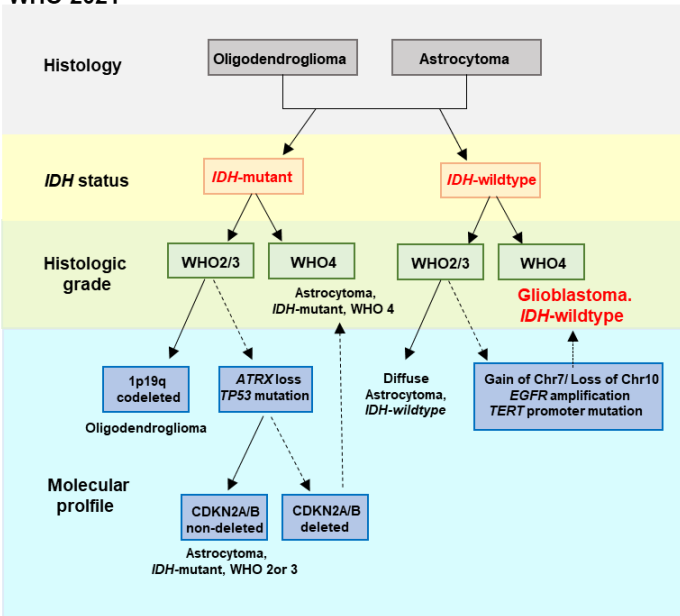
# Acid Nucleic Sensing Pathway: the relevance of RIG-I





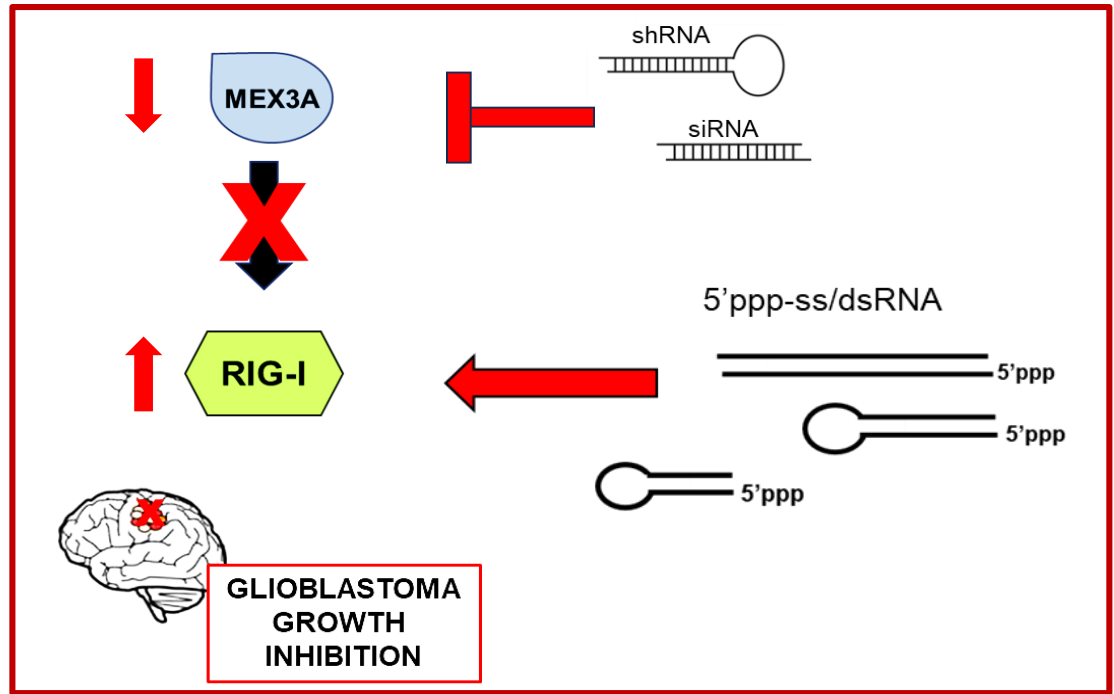
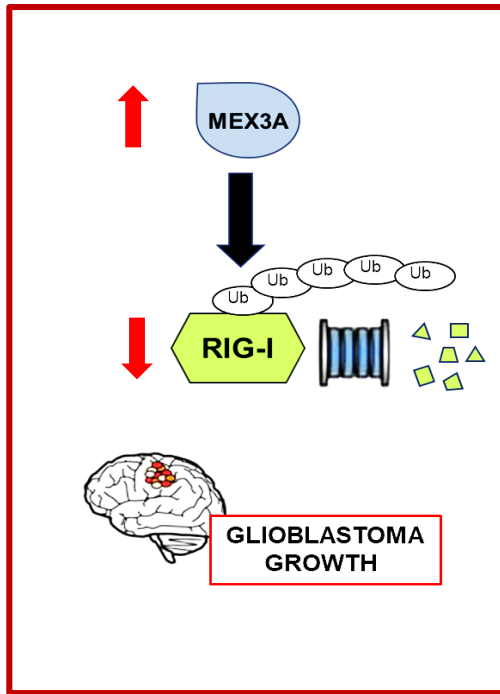
# Glioblastoma

## WHO 2021



**Residual GB cells**  
**Tumor heterogeneity**  
**Immunosuppressive TME**

# Project strategy

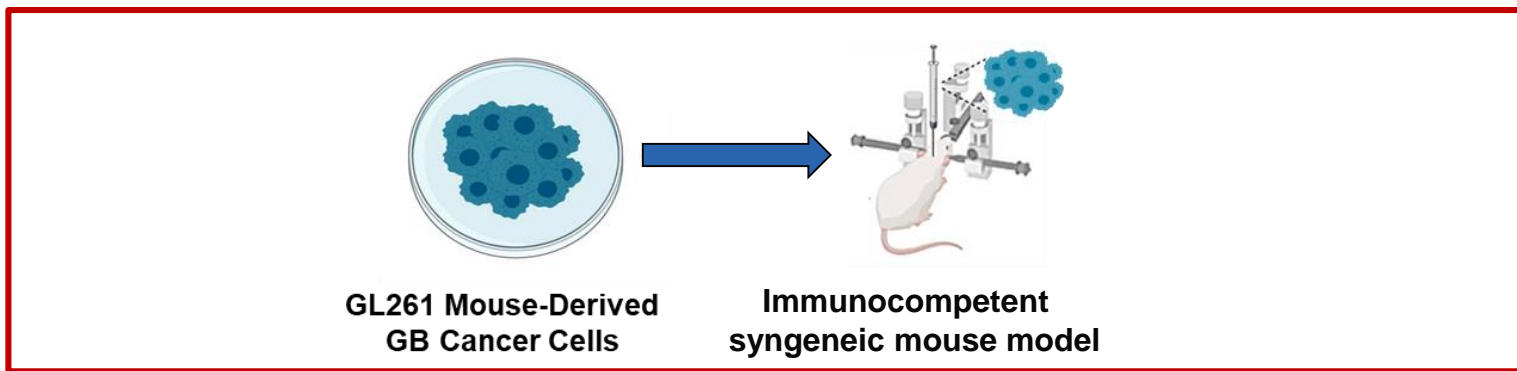
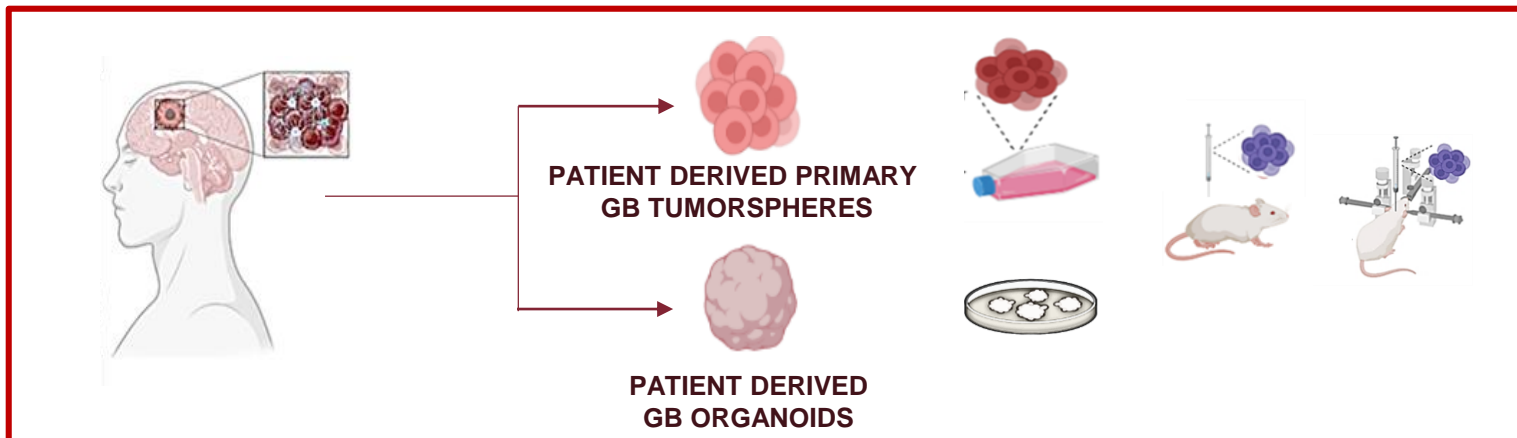
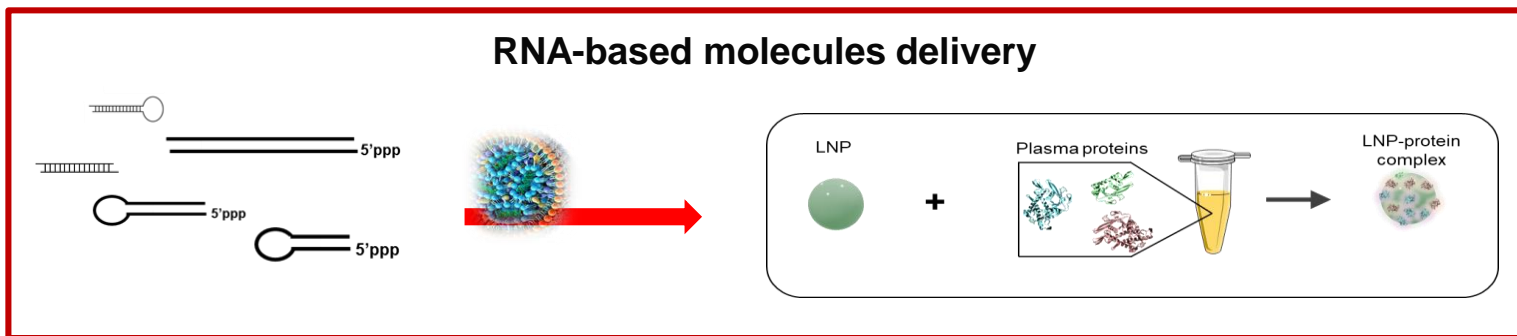


**AIM1** → Design and synthesis of small synthetic RNA molecules to restore the expression and/or to activate RIG-I

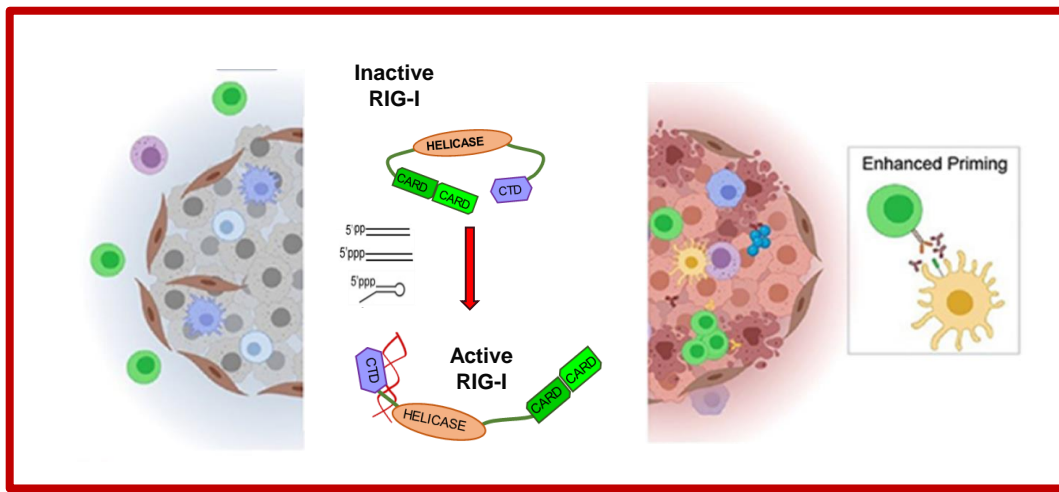
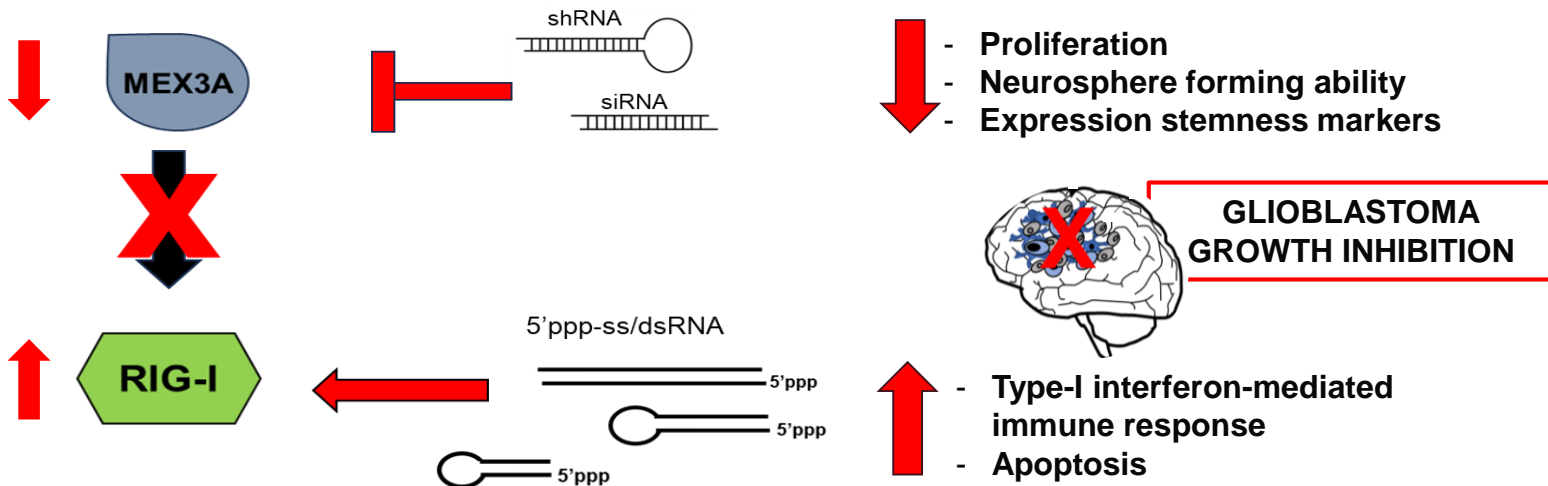
**AIM2** → *In vitro* efficacy and delivery strategies of RNA-based agonists

**AIM3** → Evaluation of the immune-mediated anti-tumor effect of selected RIG-I agonists in *in vivo* preclinical models

# In vitro and in vivo validation in pre-clinical models



# Expected results



*Thanks  
for your attention*



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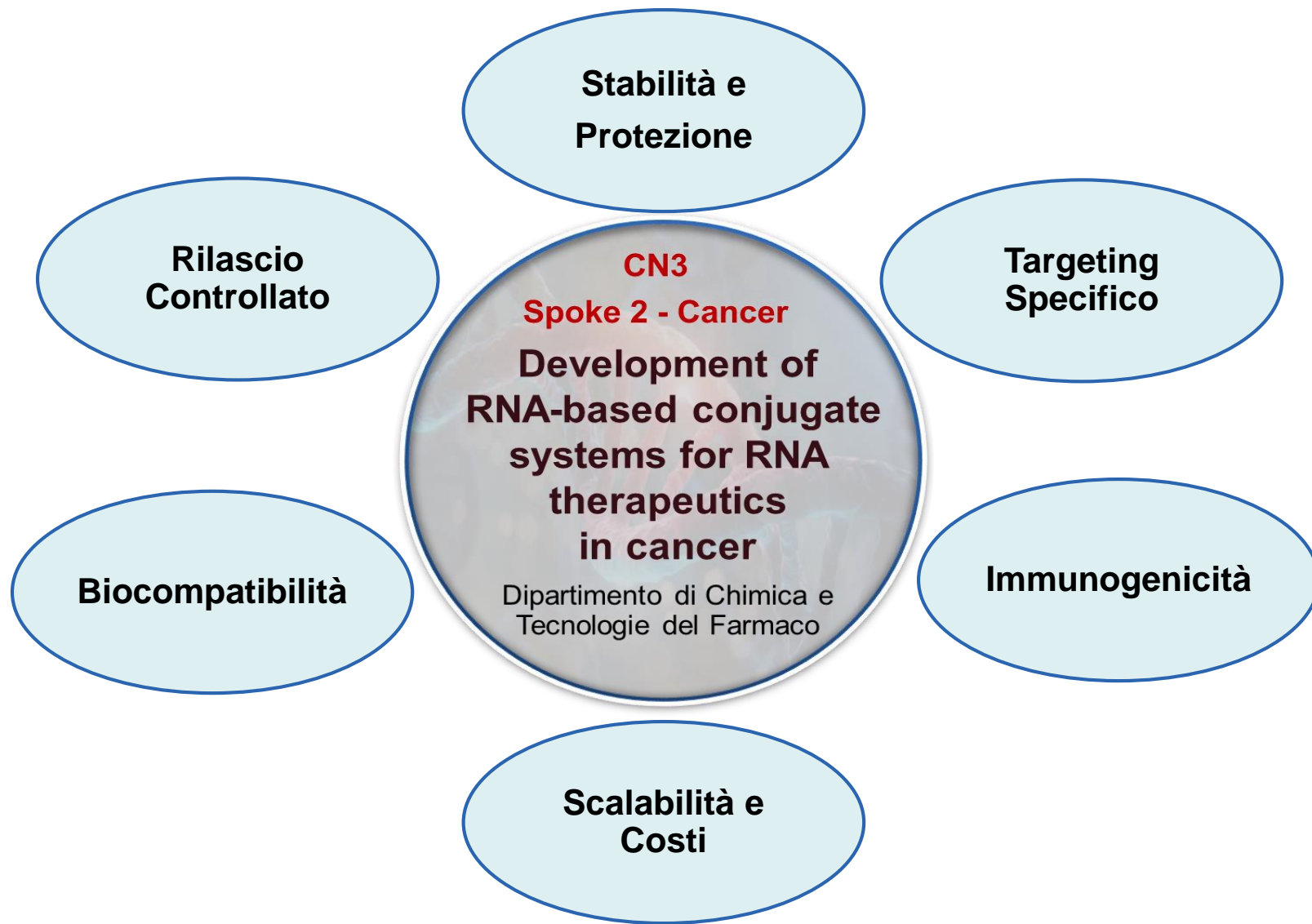


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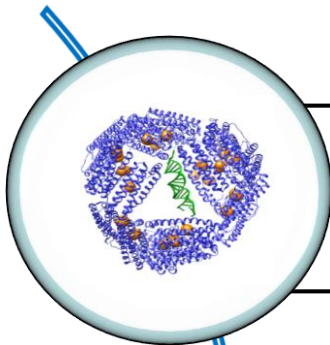
## **Iniziative PNRR nella Facoltà di Farmacia e Medicina.**

Centro Nazionale 3 - National Center for Gene Therapy &  
Drugs Based on RNA Technology

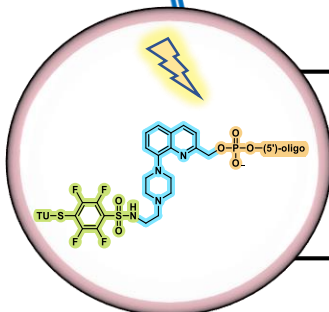
# Sfide nello Sviluppo di Bioconiugati per RNA Terapeutici



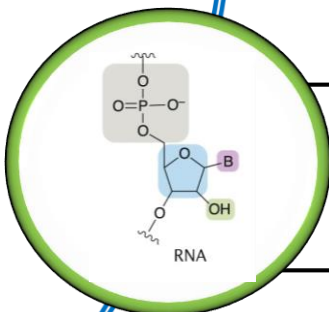
# Obiettivi specifici



Sviluppo di **bioconiugati** basati su molecole policationiche lineari o cicliche per migliorare l'affinità degli **RNA terapeutici** per la cavità interna di **proteine**



Sviluppo di **bioconiugati** sensibili alla luce nel vicino infrarosso (NIR), che permettono un **rilascio controllato** di **RNA terapeutici**



Sviluppo di **analoghi strutturali** di **RNA terapeutici** attraverso l'esplorazione dello spazio chimico dei nucleosidi e dello scheletro fosfato



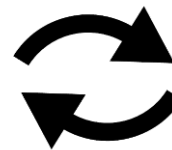
# Risultati attesi in linea con i pilastri del PNRR





# Impatto previsto

	A breve termine	A lungo termine
<b>Impatto Economico</b>	Crescita dell'industria biotecnologica	Riduzione dei costi per il trattamento dei tumori
<b>Impatto Ambientale</b>	Impatti minimi rispetto a trattamenti tradizionali	Miglioramento della sostenibilità nella produzione di bioconiugati
<b>Impatto Sociale</b>	Miglioramento delle opzioni terapeutiche per i pazienti	Maggiore accesso a terapie innovative



**Contatti utili:** Dott.ssa *Deborah Quaglio*, RTDB, Dipartimento di Chimica e Tecnologie del Farmaco, e-mail [deborah.quaglio@uniroma1.it](mailto:deborah.quaglio@uniroma1.it)



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## Iniziative PNRR nella Facoltà di Farmacia e Medicina.



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*National Center for Gene Therapy and Drugs based on RNA  
Technology –Spoke 2- Cancer (PNRR M4C2-Investimento 1.4-  
CN00000041 ” finanziato dall'Unione europea – NextGenerationEU*

*Francesca Cutruzzolà*

*Dipartimento Scienze Biochimiche A.Rossi Fanelli*

Foto: Stefania Sepulcri (Stampa e comunicazione)

RNA  
& GENETHERAPY

# Identification, validation of non-coding RNAs as therapeutic tools in cancer metabolism and delivery

## RATIONALE

- Metabolic reprogramming is a hallmark of cancer (**health pillar**)
- Explore the Druggability of RNA Binding Metabolic Enzymes (RBME)

## We aim to develop:

- Novel modulatory RNAs targeting RBMEs in cancer metabolism
- Novel delivery methods

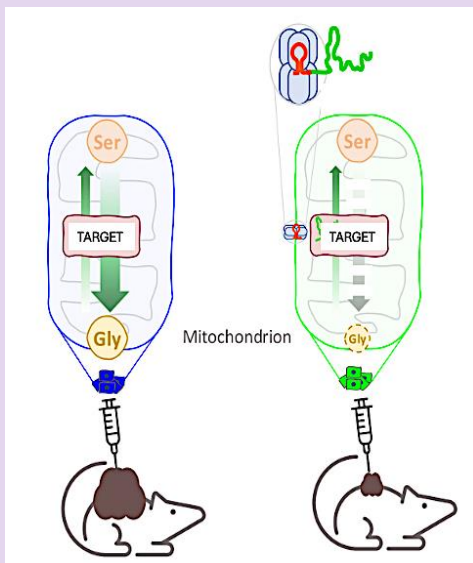
## The Department of Biochemical Sciences

Advanced expertise/instruments on

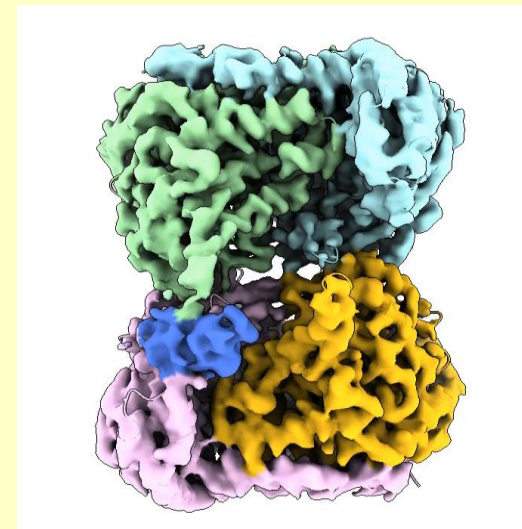
- Protein biochemistry
- Protein: protein interactions
- Protein:RNA interactions
  - Structural Biology
- Mitochondrial biochemistry
  - Cancer metabolism
- Protein based nanoparticles and novel delivery methods

# SCIENTIFIC RESULTS AND ADVANCES

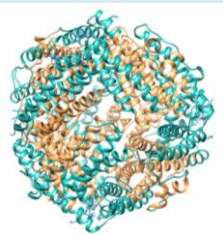
## Research4health Translational results



## Research4Education Knowledge



## Research4Economy Technology transfer

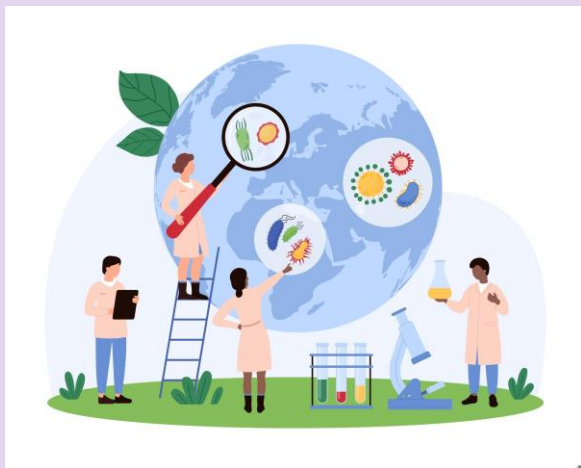


Nanoparticles



# BENEFICIARIES

## Research4health Citizen



## Research4Education University

### Young scientists in STEM



## Research4Economy Research Infrastructure (RNA formulation lab)



← Enterprises

## GROUP AND CONTACTS



**Cutruzzola Francesca**

**Boffi Alberto**

Rinaldo Serena

Arese Marzia

Paone Alessio

Giardina Giorgio

Baiocco Paola

*Sara Di Russo*

*Chiara Di Lucente*

*Roberta Piacentini*

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Federica Di Fonzo

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## **Iniziative PNRR nella Facoltà di Farmacia e Medicina.**

**PNRR-CN3\_Spoke 2**

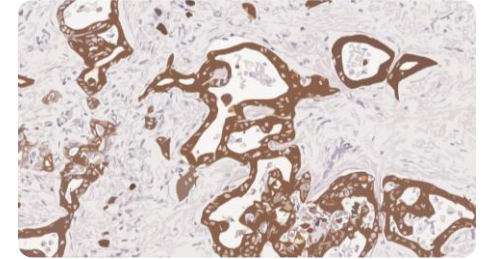
**Definition of RNA therapeutic targets and molecular pathways  
in Cholangiocarcinoma and Acute Myeloid Leukemia**



# Definition of RNA therapeutic targets and molecular pathways in Cholangiocarcinoma

## PNRR-CN3\_Spoke 2

### WP2.1 – Sapienza. Co-PI: Prof. E. Gaudio



#### Task 2.1.1. Identification of Novel RNA targets.

**Objective #1.** Identification of overexpressed miRNA in cholangiocarcinoma (CCA) to target with miRNA inhibitors and their identification of novel RNA and molecular (SHH, Notch) targets in the CCA (*proff. Gaudio, Carpino, Cardinale*).

**Objective #2.** Human carbonic anhydrases IX and XII (hCA IX and hCA XII) isoforms as targets for cancer treatment (*prof. Secci*).

**Objective #3.** Modulation of MIR Oncosuppressor (204-5p, 199b-5p, 579-3p) or Oncogene (miR-4443 and miR-4488) using LNP-miRNA (*prof. Mancini*).

#### Task 2.1.4. Identification of diagnostic, prognostic, response to therapy biomarkers

**Objective #4:** Definition of novel RNA therapeutic targets and biomarkers for predicting the therapeutic responsiveness in CCA and their identification in the tumor microenvironment (*proff. Gaudio, Carpino, Cardinale*).

# Definition of RNA therapeutic targets and molecular pathways in Acute Myeloid Leukemia

## PNRR-CN3\_Spoke 2

**WP 2.1** - Identification of novel targets for RNA-based therapeutics and biomarkers

**WP 2.2** - Prioritization and validation of targets toward clinical applications

In the past decade tremendous progress has been achieved in the development and clinical application of molecular targeted therapies for Acute Myeloid Leukemia (AML). However, **drug resistance** and **relapses** are still major issues rendering the rate of cure unsatisfying. This is mostly due to clonal selection and the **protective effect** of the **leukemic bone marrow microenvironment**.

We previously developed a strategy based **on a combination of drugs inducing proteotoxic and oxidative stress**. We demonstrated that it efficiently leads to cell death of AML cell lines and primary leukemic stem cells (LSCs) bearing the mutation FLT3-ITD, both *in vitro* and *in vivo*.

However, **bone marrow stromal cells (BMSCs) protect AML cells by** reducing the amount of oxidative stress generated by the treatment in a co-culture system, where the cells are in direct contact.

# Specific Objectives

Our main focus is to investigate the **mechanisms contributing to the protective abilities of the BMSCs**. Furthermore, aiming to **optimize the combination of drugs** to increase its translational potential, we are evaluating the efficacy of combining induction of **proteotoxic stress** with different drugs that are at the cutting edge in clinical trials for AML, among which the **BCL-2 inhibitor Venetoclax**.

- Identification of the **molecular pathways involved in the cross-talk** between Acute Myeloid Leukemia (AML) cells and bone marrow stromal cells (BMSCs) that by cell-cell contacts protect AML cells by reducing the amount of oxidative stress generated by the anti-leukemia treatments.
- Once characterized the molecular pathways modulated in BMSC the specific contribution of the identified pathways will be evaluated, by using **shRNA, siRNA, miRNAs, circRNAs or CRISPR-CAS9 technology**, to assess the capability of BMSC to still protect AML cells to treatments.
- Optimization of the RNA-based therapeutic strategy through an established technology based on autoassembling **ferritin nanoparticles**.

# Expected results and impact

Definition of the **mechanotransduction molecular network** as a possible RNA-based therapeutic target to sensitize AML cells to treatments.

Improvement of the **efficacy of a new combined therapeutic strategy** based on proteotoxic stress and the inhibition of the antiapoptotic protein BCL-2.

**Reduction of toxic off-target effects** by the combination of RNA-based therapeutic strategy and low doses of anti-leukemic drugs

**Reduction of healthcare costs** and **definition of novel targets** for precision therapies.

## Contacts

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