



**Number 12/July 2024**

**Dear Friends of the DRFZ,**

It has been a busy few months for the institute, involving several large-scale events. In June, the Long Night of Science attracted around 1,300 guests to the DRFZ. In July, the Berlin Symposium 'From INNATE to ADAPTIVE Immunity - a question of memory' hosted 350 scientists from Germany and abroad, reflecting the appeal of Berlin to the international scientific community. In the second half of the year, further important scientific events are scheduled for which preparations are already underway.

## Event in the spotlight



### **Berlin Symposium From INNATE to ADAPTIVE Immunity - a question of memory**

More than 350 participants from 17 countries made the Berlin Symposium 2024 'From INNATE to ADAPTIVE Immunity - a question of memory' on 1 and 2 July 2024 an outstanding event. Thank you to all the speakers, poster presenters, sponsors and partner organisations, without whom these two days of intensive scientific exchange and valuable networking would not have been possible.

[To Event](#)

## More Events



## TARISMA Final Symposium 23.4.2024

The final symposium of the BMBF-funded TARISMA research network took place at the DRFZ. From 2020 to 2023, four groups from the DRFZ Epidemiology department, BIPS Bremen and the Institute of Community Medicine at Greifswald University Hospital investigated gaps in care for particularly vulnerable people and ways to improve interdisciplinary care.

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## Graduate students & Postdoc Day 16.7.2024

More than 40 PhD students, postdocs and invited speakers came together to get to know the research of early-career scientists at the DRFZ and gain valuable inspiration for their own work. Special thanks are owed to Miltenyi Biotec for making this event possible as part of the Rocket Science Tour. Congratulations to the poster prize winner Agata Konopka, from Ahmed Hegazy's lab, and to Marina Bondareva, from Andrey Kruglov's group, for the best presentation.

[To Event](#)



## Day of Immunology 29.4.2024

29 April is the Day of Immunology, an initiative of the European Federation of Immunological Societies (EFIS).

Once again this year, 53 pupils from 6th and 9th grade visited the DRFZ to learn more about the immune system and conduct their own experiments. They extracted DNA from saliva and



## Long Night of Science 22.6.2024

For the 26th time, more than 1,300 curious visitors came to the DRFZ for the Long Night of Science, this year organised together with MPIIB and MPUSP. Thanks to all the staff who worked tirelessly with the guests until midnight. Doctors from the Immanuel Hospital Berlin (Wannsee and Buch), the Park-Klinik Weißensee and the Clinic for Rheumatology of the Charité,

stained blood cells, which they then examined under a microscope.

It was clear that the children all had a lot of fun - as did the teachers and employees!

To Event



### Diversity Day 23.5.2024

The DRFZ celebrated diversity at the institute in May to mark the UNESCO World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development. Speaker Zarahlena F. Yrizar from Berlin gave an inspiring talk on diversity, privilege and inclusion.

A diversity bingo game during the international buffet full of delicacies, which employees conjured up themselves, was the starting point for many exciting conversations.

To Event

as well as the Rheuma-Liga Berlin e.V. and the Morbus Bechterew e.V. were once again present - thank you very much for the great and committed support of the evening.

To Event

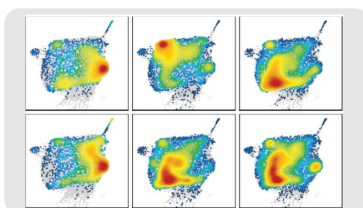


### Cycling for the climate 27.6.2024

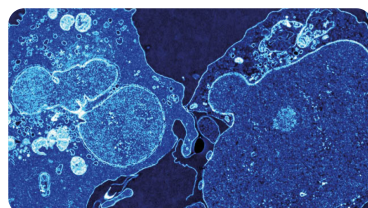
In 2024, DRFZ employees once again put their pedals to the metal in the city cycling event: 20 cycling enthusiasts covered 6,684 km in 21 days, working out at roughly 303.8 km per person. In return, there were well-deserved non-alcoholic beers for everyone. Cycling for the Climate is a Germany-wide competition where the aim is to cycle as many everyday journeys as possible by bike in order to collect kilometres as a team and thus reduce CO2 emissions.

To Event

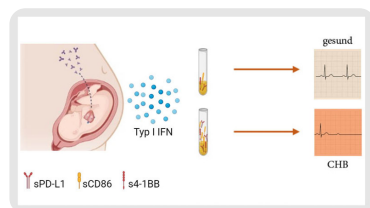
## Research Highlights



Key findings on plasma cells and long-lasting immunity



Molecular switch for reprogramming immune cells decoded



New biomarkers identified for

The study by Mir-Farzin Mashreghi, Thomas Dörner, Andreas Radbruch and colleagues published in *Nature Communications* reveals new findings on the role of interleukin 21 (IL-21) in long-term immunity after vaccination.

[To News](#)

A research team led by Max Löhning and Ahmed Hegazy has discovered that T helper cells differ in the extent to which they are characterised as Th1 or Th2 cells and can be reprogrammed from one type to the other with varying degrees of success.

[To News](#)

### **autoimmune congenital heart block**

Ana-Luisa Stefanski and colleagues from the group of Thomas Dörner, DRFZ and Charité, have identified new biomarkers and possible causes of autoimmune congenital heart block in cooperation with the Department of Obstetrics.

[To News](#)

## Interviews



### **Quitting smoking is beneficial for rheumatic diseases**

**Dr. Johanna Callhoff in MDR**

On World No Smoking Day, 31 May, Johanna Callhoff, Head of the Health Services Research Group, made it clear in an interview with MDR AKTUELL that smoking is not only a risk factor for rheumatic diseases, but also that medication is less effective for smokers.

[To News](#)



### **How does our microbiome work?**

**Lisa Budzinski in Leibniz Magazine**

In the May issue of Leibniz Magazine, PhD student Lisa Budzinski from Hyun-Dong Chang's research group provides fascinating insights into the myriad of gut-microbial inhabitants, which appear to be increasingly involved in shaping our daily lives. She explains the impressive diversity of bacteria that colonise our gut and shows how they help us to digest food and train our immune system.

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## Awards & Prizes



## Licence agreement between DRFZ and APE 16.5.2024

The DRFZ and the Berlin-based company Angewandte Physik und Elektronik GmbH (APE) have signed a licence agreement.

The technology developed by the DRFZ enables simple and cost-effective sterilisation of liquid waste as well as sterile cell sorting in flow cytometers.

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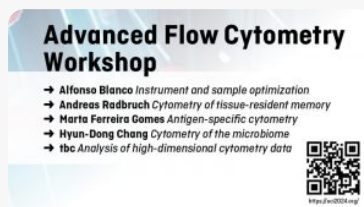


## Poster prize for DRFZ doctoral student 02.07.2024

Congratulations to Katerina Sterigioula, far left, from Antigoni Triantafyllopoulou's research group who won a poster prize at the Berlin Symposium 2024. She was one of three award winners whose outstanding posters were selected from over 90 contributions.

[To News](#)

## Save the date



### Advanced Flow Cytometry Workshop 01.9.2024

The Satellite Workshop, which is organised by DRFZ colleagues, will take place as part of the ECI 2024 in Dublin.

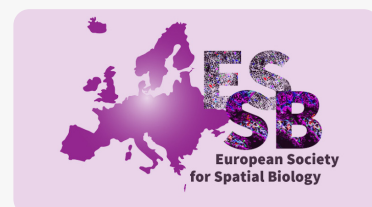
[To Workshop](#)



### 34th DGfZ Meeting 10.-13.9.2024

The conference of the German Society for Cytometry (DGfZ) is once again being organised by the DRFZ in Berlin this year.

[To Meeting](#)



### ESSB Society Meeting 12. - 13.12.2024

The founding conference of the European Society for Spatial Biology (ESSB) will take place in Berlin in December. The DRFZ is involved in the organisation.

[To Conference](#)

## Retirement Farewells



**Andreas Grützkau**  
**26.04.2024**

After more than 20 years at the DRFZ, Andreas Grützkau, Head of the Immunomonitoring Technology Platform, has retired. Andreas set up the Regine von Ramin laboratory and established mass cytometry at the institute together with Henrik Mei. He was committed to personalised medicine and brought the diagnostic marker Siglec-1 for SLE to the Berlin laboratory.



**Marion Nowak**  
**8.07.2024**

Another veteran is leaving the DRFZ: after more than 30 years, Marion Nowak retired. From her first day at the institute until her departure, she was responsible for contracts, travel expenses and everything else that goes to make an institute function. Everyone at the DRFZ said farewell with a smile and a tear in their eyes.

## Research Needs Funding



*Dr. Christiane Stehle, Chiara Romagnani's lab, Photo: J. Hirscher*

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