

PhD position - leukocyte proteases as key mediators and targets in inflammation

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Company: KU Leuven

Location: Kortrijk

Category: other-general

Essential requirements:

A Master degree in biomedical sciences, bioscience engineering, biochemistry, biology or other relevant discipline

A passion for immunology and a strong background in cell biology, molecular biology, biochemistry, or related fields

You are motivated to contribute to education within the bachelor's programs in biomedical sciences and medicine, in particular the courses Biostatistics and Immunology

You are willing to work with patient samples and animal models

You can work with R and are motivated to acquire additional training in R if needed

Strong academic writing and communication skill

You can work both independently as well as in team

You have a critical mind and are creative

Considered as 'a plus':

Proven experience in immunological research and/or proteolysis research

FELASA B certification

Experience with cell culture techniques

Inflammation is a process that is primarily known as a defence mechanism against infections and injuries. Molecular signatures associated with microbes or tissue damage are sensed by local cells which react by secreting several types of mediators of inflammation such as proteases. These mediators convey chemotactic signals and recruit leukocytes, which contribute to pathogen killing, phagocytosis, activation of adaptive immune responses and healing. Persistent or heightened inflammation leads to inflammatory diseases. Therefore, a finely balanced inflammatory response is essential, culminating in the resolution of inflammation. We have evidence for a new mechanism of protease regulation during inflammation and tissue healing. This process is essential to macrophage function and has the potential to result into new targets for immunomodulation. We are looking for a highly motivated PhD candidate who will embark on this project. Methodologies will include isolation and activation of primary macrophages/microglia, protease assays and models for neuroinflammation/ neurodegeneration. KU Leuven campus Kortrijk is an academic community where education and research go hand in hand. Hence, the candidate is also expected to provide teaching support. This includes support with student supervision, exercise and practical sessions for students in Biomedical Sciences and Medicine. More specifically, the candidate will be assigned to the basic biostatistics and immunology courses for bachelor's students. The PhD candidate will join the research group of Prof. Jennifer Vandooren who investigates the role of immune cell proteases and their impact on local and systemic inflammations such as neuroinflammation, lung inflammation and sepsis. The laboratory is located at KU Leuven campus Kortrijk and is embedded in the Department of Microbiology, Immunology and Transplantation. The group functions in a highly collaborative setting, fostering strong ties within the Biomedical Sciences groups both at campus Kortrijk (e.g. tissue engineering lab, LATRON group and Data Driven Healthcare) and at campus Leuven (e.g. Immunology groups). Furthermore, the research group is imbedded within the Interdisciplinary Research Facility Life Sciences. This facility serves as a dynamic hub, facilitating collaboration among researchers from diverse disciplines. It promotes research that crosses disciplinary boundaries, drawing in participants from different University Faculties.

A full-time employment opportunity for a PhD researcher. The initial appointment will be for one year, with the possibility of extension based on a positive evaluation.

Conduct immunological research in a young and dynamic team

To be part of a research environment that fosters collaboration

Collaborate with experts at the intersection of biology, biochemistry, and molecular immunology

An professional work environment that promotes a healthy research culture

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