14th International Workshop
IMMUNOTHERAPY 2022

"Designing the next generation of cancer Immunotherapies II"

October 19th-23rd, 2022

Varadero Beach, Cuba
Venue: Iberostar Selection Varadero

Organized by:

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What is the 14ᵗʰ Immunotherapy Workshop about?

The 14ᵗʰ edition of Immunotherapy Workshop was originally proposed to take place on 2020. Due to the COVID19 pandemic, the workshop could not be held until now, moment at which the tradition of celebrating this event is resumed. Immunotherapy 2022 is the continuity of a more than two decades of biannual international workshops in Havana, Cuba, organized by the Center of Molecular Immunology (CIM). The main goal of these meetings has been to promote intensive discussions on how to build a bridge between basic science and clinical immunotherapy. Presentations and discussions have covered different topics on immune system regulation, tumor immunology and inflammatory disorders, seen not as isolated phenomena, but integrating them into a systemic vision. Experimental and clinical cancer immunotherapy updates have also been key topics of these workshops.

What distinguishes IT-meetings from others in the same field?

All oral presentations at IT-workshops are given by invited speakers only and therefore of very high quality. As a main distinctive feature, we make sure we have a lecture space with enough time for discussion. This characteristic, in fact, has become the main attractor for frequent attendees. In our tradition, participants are encouraged to share their ideas about the scientific discussion topics, and thus can actively influence on the final structure of the workshop. IT2022 will therefore allow for an intensive exchange of ideas about trending research topics.

There will be specialized sessions with oral presentations, followed by a time to debate and exchange ideas. These discussions will also be strongly "future-oriented", focusing on future research that should and can be done.

What will be the particular focus of IT2022?

For almost three years, the scientific community has accumulated an important knowledge related to the nature and physiology of COVID-19. The understanding of the pathology highlights the inflammatory response as a major determinant of disease severity. Once again inflammation emerges as a common feature of multiple pathologies including infectious diseases and cancer. What can we learn from the COVID-19 related inflammation that can be useful for other inflammatory diseases such as cancer and how can we design novel immunotherapies focused on the inflammation to get better clinical benefits for patients, are important questions that need to be addressed.

The advent of immune checkpoint inhibitors (ICIs) over the last years has revolutionized therapy in the field of oncology. There are currently multiple US FDA approved agents targeting PD-1, PD-L1 and CTLA-4. These immunotherapies induce long lasting objective responses, which significantly impact patient clinical outcome. Several drugs of this class, have reached FDA approval for the treatment of advanced tumors; and some have already moved into first line treatment, displacing the traditional chemo and/or radiotherapy. The most enthusiastic oncologists predict that ICIs will become front line therapies for many different tumors in the near future.

However, clinical and preclinical studies in the last years have clearly established that ICIs are only effective in a subset of tumors and patients. The

composition of the tumor microenvironment (TME) and the inflammatory response inside the tumor are key determinants of the efficacy of ICIs in patients. Therefore, the identification of early biomarkers of non-response or hyper-progression with ICIs is extremely necessary. Results of currently ongoing studies on checkpoint blockade could expand the use of ICIs to additional patient populations (e.g. new tumor entities, perioperative use or use in special patient populations) and might identify new combination partners for these therapies. Due to the large number of available ICIs and its potential combination with chemo /radiotherapy /vaccines /adoptive cell therapy (ACT)/ immunomodulators, well-designed clinical trials are necessary to identify optimal strategies for combinations and treatment sequences.

Another breakthrough in cancer immunotherapy is the use of chimeric antigen receptor (CAR) T cells and other cell-based therapies (CBT). Several studies confirmed safety and efficacy of CBT. Recently reported studies on cellular therapy mainly addressed two important questions: (a) How good is the "real world" experience regarding toxicity and efficacy of CBT? and (b) Can the striking success of CAR T cells in hematological malignancies be translated to solid malignancies?

IT2022 meeting will focus on the current strategies for the discovery and development of next generation of immunotherapies that complement and enlarge the clinical success of the current ICIs and CBT.

Which are the most plausible ones:

a) repositioning of old drugs such as antibodies, targeted therapies, vaccines and chemo or radio therapies in combination with ICI?;

b) searching for drugs with antitumor effect in large established tumors which are primarily resistant to ICI?;

c) understanding and specifically targeting hurdles in TME, which impair the efficacy of ICI or cellular therapies?;

d) characterizing the mechanism of action and of acquired resistance in patients treated with ICI?;

e) developing novel immune therapeutic platforms as ACT, personalized vaccines and oncolytic viruses?;

f) identifying novel non-classical Checkpoints, with high throughput technologies?

g) stimulating other effectors of the immune system beside CD8+T cells? or

h) Identifying novel biomarkers of response to therapy?

We invite you to share with us your preferred strategies and current developments.

MAIN TOPICS FOR PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

This IT2022 edition will be organized in 6 sections:

1. Assessing possibilities of therapeutic interventions on tumor-associated inflammation and immune regulatory circuits.

2. Protein engineering approaches to get better weapons against cancer, inflammatory and infectious diseases.

3. Design of novel cancer vaccines, adoptive cell therapies and immuno-therapeutic combinations.

4. Decrypting the tumor biology to design more effective treatments and biomarkers of its efficacy.

5. Application of in vivo imaging, computational biology and high throughput technologies to identify the right targets, the right effectors and the right tumor.

6. What can we learn from COVID-19 experiences and what can be relevant for cancer control.

Call for presentations

If you are willing to attend the meeting, we would highly appreciate receiving a confirmation by May 31st, 2022. Submission of abstracts for oral presentations by email or on-line should be done before July 30th, 2022.

Opportunities for Conference Attendees

For Researchers:
1. Speaker Presentation
2. Poster Display
3. Poster Competition (Winner will get Best Poster Award)

For Sponsors:

1. Sponsor Fee: 6000 euros (four participants with all included) or 3000 euros (two participants with all included)

2. Sponsorship Opportunities (announcement, sponsor logo, lecture/workshop, commercial poster)

3. Product Launch

4. Workshop Organizing

5. Marketing and Networking with Clients

6. CIM organized two congresses to be held during the same period and venue (IT and BIOMIT). Specialists will have the opportunity to decide in which event they would like to participate (For more information you could ask the IT 2022 Organizing Committee).

Registration fees, Travel and Accommodation

Options	Cost per participant (€)
Single room + transportation by congress bus	650
Single room + transportation by taxi	700
Double room + transportation by congress bus	530
Double room + transportation by taxi	580

The registration fees include the access to all sessions of the congress, the program and abstract book, the attendance and Speaker/Poster certificates, the coffee breaks during the congress days, accommodation, meals and all scientific and social activities organized by the congress or hotel. Travel expenses are covered by the participants.

The transportation includes the movement from the airport to the hotel and from the hotel to the airport. The transportation by congress bus will include several delegates.

Delegates who are considering to travel with accompanying persons please contact the

organizing committee for further details.

Passports and Visas

Participants are advised to check on their individual requirements before attending IT2022 meeting. Visa applications should be filled at the nearest Cuban Embassy in the country in which you are resident.

Letters of Invitation

Letters of invitation to attend IT2022 meeting will be issued upon request by the participants.

Liability and Insurance

The IT2022 Organizing Committee will not assume any responsibility whatsoever for damage or injury to persons or property during the meeting period. Participants are advised to arrange their own personal travel and health insurance.