



Newsletter – VAAM Focus Group Biology and Biotechnology of Fungi

Dear colleagues and members of the Focus Group,

First of all, we want to say a big THANK YOU for your participation in the past "Molecular Biology of Fungi" conference of our VAAM Focus Group in Kaiserslautern. Special thanks go out to Matthias Hahn and his superb team for realizing such a wonderful, inspiring and cooperative event! The reports of the conference were published in "[Biospektrum](#)" and on the [VAAM site](#).

The next conference of our group will take place in 2024 in Kiel and will be organized by Frank Kempken and his team. We are very much looking forward to this and will keep you updated!

Section "Good News for Fungal Research"

Within the recent months, we received some excellent news related to the support and funding of German fungal research and researchers that we would like to share:

We congratulate:

1. **Michael Feldbrügge** (Düsseldorf), as spokesperson, for having acquired funding for the collaborative research consortium **MibiNet** (SFB1535) addressing microbial networking on multiple levels. Find more information on available positions [here](#).
2. **Slavica Janevska** (HKI Jena), who is now leading a [newly established junior group](#) addressing "**(Epi)Genetic Regulation of Fungal Virulence**" at the Hans-Knöll-Institute. Find more information on available positions [here](#) and [here](#).
3. **Eva Stukenbrock** (Kiel University and Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Biology), for having been awarded an ERC Consolidator grant on "[FungalSecrets: The role of plant microbiota in the evolution of fungal pathogens and their repertoires of secreted proteins](#)", studying the role of effector proteins in the interactions of pathogens and the microbiomes of the infected host plants.
4. **Thorsten Langner** (Norwich), for securing an ERC starting grant ([PANDEMIC](#)) aiming at improving our understanding of wheat blast disease and preparing crops for better defense against this pathogen.

Section "Noteworthy & Miscellaneous"

Our term as speakers of this Focus Group is already coming to an end and we will need to have a **speaker election**, which will take place *within the next weeks* (online). We (Philipp and Kai), as current speaker team, would offer to run as candidates to fulfill this position for another two years. However, if you would like to candidate as well, please contact us!

We will also need to **re-apply our Focus Group at the VAAM** this year (regular procedure). The renewal requires at least 25 signatures of (non-student, sorry!) members of the Focus Group. Both events will be conjoined and performed via an online voting / access system of the VAAM.

More information will follow soon!

Speakers of the Focus Group:

J. Philipp Benz – Technische Universität München – benz@hfm.tum.de

Kai Heimel – Georg-August-Universität Göttingen – kheimel@gwdg.de



Section "Upcoming conferences"

- **16th European Conference on Fungal Genetics (ECFG 16) Innsbruck**
 - o 05. – 08.03.2023
 - o registration and virtual attendance still possible
 - o <https://www.ecfg16.org/>

- **International Symposium on Molecular Plant Microbe Interactions (IS-MPMI) Rhode Island**
 - o 16. – 20.07.2023
 - o <https://www.ismpmi.org/Events/2023Congress/Pages/default.aspx>

- **Annual Conference of the VAAM**
 - o 10. – 13.09.2023; Göttingen
 - o <https://www.vaam-kongress.de/>
 - o We plan to have a **Focus Group Minisymposium** again – stay tuned!

- **Neurospora 2023 Conference**
 - o 01.-04.10.2023
 - o Camp Allen Conference Center, TX, USA
 - o <https://neurospora.org/>

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