



Editor: Eli Vidhammer [eli.vidhammer@uib.no](mailto:eli.vidhammer@uib.no)

Newsletter No. 5, Vol. 3 — 21.12.2016

## DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

During 2016, we have had challenges but also significant achievements in CCBIO. At this point I would like to thank all of you - scientific and administrative personnel as well as many collaborators - for playing your part in this effort and for promoting our goal - to establish an excellent research center and stimulating environment. Especially, I would like to point out Agnete Engelsen and Elisabeth Wik for organizing the CCBIO Junior Scientist Symposium. This has turned out to be an inspiring training tool for young scientists. Also, congratulations to Agnete for landing a prestigious mobility grant from the Research Council.

I hope you all find this newsletter informative, and do not forget to send us input. Merry Christmas and best wishes for 2017!

Best regards, Lars A. Akslen, Director



## BUILDING THE WORLD WE WANT TO LIVE IN



Caroline Engen is a CCBIO PhD candidate who presented at the S.Net conference in Bergen. We asked Caroline to walk us through a medical researcher's perspective of the conference and the use of new technologies.

"When we take on the adventure of discovering new things about health and disease by taking a closer look, unravelling the details, by studying composite parts of the human biological system, we are essentially fragmenting and reducing the human condition to the sum of its parts. It is in this setting crucial that we remember how all the pieces connect together," Caroline explains.

[Read the complete article here.](#)

## CONTACT INFORMATION



**[www.ccbio.no](http://www.ccbio.no)**

### Centre Director:

Prof. Dr. Med Lars A. Akslen  
+ 47 55 97 31 82 [lars.akslen@uib.no](mailto:lars.akslen@uib.no)

### Administrative Leader:

Geir Olav Løken  
+ 47 55 58 54 36 [geir.loken@uib.no](mailto:geir.loken@uib.no)

### The eight Principal Investigators:

Lars A. Akslen (Director)  
Bjørn Tore Gjertsen (Co-Director)  
Donald Gullberg  
Anne C. Johannessen  
Karl Henning Kalland  
James Lorens  
Rolf Reed  
Oddbjørn Straume



Established by the Research Council of Norway



# BROADER INTERNATIONAL NETWORK DURING 2016

CCBIO has been in the process of formalizing its international network during 2016, mainly in the form of employing high ranking researchers within various fields in 10% adjunct professor and researcher positions.

The aim of this network is for CCBIO to establish a team of experienced advisors regarding scientific projects, collaboration and networks, and research strategy, as well as to perform joint research in the forefront and facilitate the transfer of knowledge. Another aim is to enable CCBIO's Research School to have research based courses on a high level and to enable co-supervision and exchange of research- and postdoctoral fellows.

By the end of 2015, we were proud to include Professors Arne Östman and Jean Paul Thiery to our network. So far during 2016, we have added another 10 highly ranked international affiliated investigators to our network, and have already experienced very fruitful collaboration and experience exchange. The 10 are the following:

- Frederic Amant, KU Leuven
- Rameen Beroukhim, Broad Institute / Dana Farber Cancer Institute
- Rolf Brekken, UT Southwestern Graduate School
- Hani Gabra, Imperial College London
- Ritva Heljasvaara, University of Oulu, COE Matrix biology
- Mark Labarge, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory
- Klaus Pantel, Uniklinikum Hamburg-Eppendorf
- Thorsten Schlomm, Uniklinikum Hamburg-Eppendorf
- Therese Sørli, University of Oslo
- Randolph Watnick, Harvard Medical School

## NEW CCBIO ASSOCIATE INVESTIGATOR



We are happy to announce that Ole Frithjof Norheim is now connected to CCBIO as new Associate Investigator.

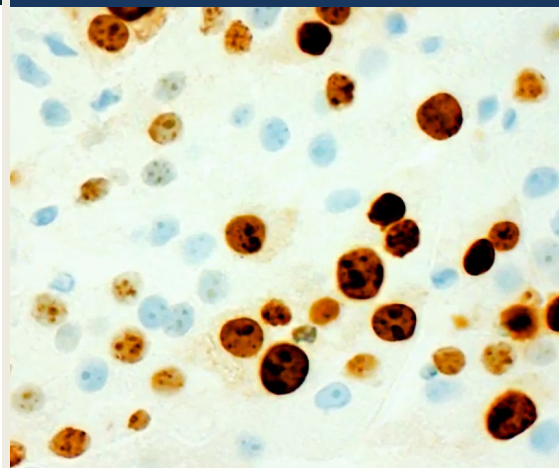
[Ole Frithjof Norheim](#) is a physician and professor in medical ethics, Department of Global Public Health and Primary Care, UiB, and adjunct Professor at the Department of Global Health and Population, Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health. Norheim's wide-ranging research interests include the ethics of priority setting in health systems and how to achieve Universal Health Coverage and the Sustainable Development Goal for health. Norheim was also chair of the Norwegian governmental expert group on public health prioritization who submitted its final report "Open and just - priorities in the Norwegian healthcare services". With Norheim on our team, we wish to further explore biomarkers as tools for smarter knowledge, leading to better targeted treatment.

## COMING CCBIO EVENTS

- 26.01.17, CCBIO Seminar, speaker: [Norman J. Maitland](#)
- 23.02.17, [CCBIO Junior Scientist Symposium](#).
- 23.02.17, CCBIO Seminar, speaker: still open
- 16.03.17, [CCBIO Seminar](#), speaker: [Klas Wiman](#)
- 19-20.04.17, the [CCBIO Annual Symposium 2017](#).
- 27.04.17, [CCBIO Seminar](#), speaker: [Robert Lafayatis](#)
- 11.05.17, [CCBIO Junior Scientist Symposium](#).
- 11.05.17, [CCBIO Seminar](#), speaker: [Ulf Landegren](#)
- 15.06.17, [CCBIO Seminar](#), speaker: [Ryan Driskell](#)



- 18-21.06.17, The [3rd International p53 Isoforms Conference](#) in Bergen. *Pre-registration is open.*





## VALUABLE INPUT AND LIVELY DISCUSSIONS

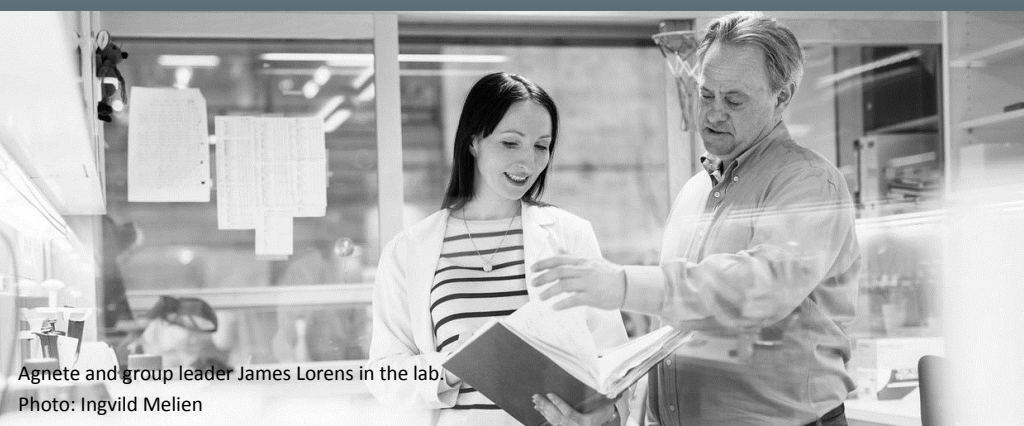


This semester's last CCBIO Junior Scientist Symposium took place December 8th. More than 40 researchers participated at the seminar where Professor Arild Raaheim from the Department of Education, UiB, started the day with the lecture "Supervision. Challenges and possibilities".

Professor Raaheim talked about various aspects of being a supervisor and about deep learning. Professor Curtis C. Harris, who came all the way from the National Cancer Institute in Maryland, USA, shared parts of his vast research experience with the junior scientists. The PhD candidates who presented their projects at this seminar were challenged with questions when presenting projects on molecular effect of Resazurin in AML, associations between visceral fat content, tumor features and outcome in endometrial carcinoma, and results from real-world data indicating a cancer protective effect of a Vitamin K antagonist. The junior researchers at the seminar took actively part in the discussions after each presentation, with lively discussions.

Read an [article about the seminar here](#).

## MOBILITY GRANT TO CCBIO POSTDOC



Agnete and group leader James Lorens in the lab.  
Photo: Ingvald Melien

Close to a billion NOK is distributed through Fripro funding this year, among other to young researchers and as mobility grants. Cancer researcher and CCBIO postdoc Agnete Engelsen at the Department of Biomedicine is one of the supported young talents.

This is reported in [a På Høyden article December 8th](#).

In all 32 grants for young researcher talents and 10 mobility grants is distributed in the fields of medicine, health and biology (FRIMEDBIO) and mathematics, natural science and technology (FRINATEK). Seven of these go to UiB researchers. On average, the young researcher talents receive 7.5 million NOK, whereas the mobility grants amount to about 3.3 million.

Read På Høyden's [interview with a very happy Agnete here](#).

## OTHER RECOMMENDED COMING EVENTS

### 26. January 2017: CANCER CROSSLINKS



Oslo Cancer Cluster invites to the Cancer Crosslinks Meeting 26 January 2017 at the Kaare Norum Auditorium, Oslo Cancer Cluster Innovation Park.

Cancer Crosslinks is the annual meeting point in oncology and hematology, and OCC is delighted to invite oncologists, hematologists and researchers to the 9th Cancer Crosslinks in their very own Oslo Cancer Cluster Innovation Park.

Cancer Crosslinks 2017 is divided in three scientific sessions:

- ⇒ Session 1 "Cancer and Inflammation – new insights and their clinical impact"
- ⇒ Session 2 "Today's cancer treatment: how individualized can it be?"
- ⇒ Session 3 "Classical endpoints vs. Real-world evidence – need to rethink?"

See [this link](#) for detailed program and registration.

Due to great interest in the meeting, we recommend you to register rather sooner than later if you wish to participate. The meeting will also be streamed live.

### 13 – 17 March 2017, PhD course, Numbers for policy: Practical problems in quantification

PhD course at the Centre for the Study of the Sciences and the Humanities, UiB. Advanced course directed towards PhD-candidates and postdoctoral fellows in quantitative sciences and in particular fields of research that produce evidence for public policy and decision making. 3 / 5 ECTS. PhD-candidates and postdocs are eligible to apply. Early bird before Jan.16th.



# AN ACTIVE YEAR FOR CCBIO DOCTORAL DEFENSES



2016 proved to be a record year for CCBIO when it comes to doctoral defenses affiliated to CCBIO. So far there has been ten disputations, compared to three in 2015 and six in 2014. See the last four below:



Does the environment affect our blood cells? André Sulen defended 09.12.16 his dissertation "Leukocyte p38 and p53 proteins after environmental exposure; variation, associations and applicability". [Read more here.](#) Photo: André Sulen here in the front, at the lab. Photographer: Ingvild Melien.



Biomarkers for treatment of metastatic melanoma Cornelia Schuster defended 22.11.2016 her dissertation "Investigation of predictive markers in patients with metastatic melanoma treated with bevacizumab". [Read more here.](#) Photo: From left: Silje Fismen, Per Øyvind Enger, Micaela Hernberg, Cornelia Schuster, Oddbjørn Straume and Lars A. Akslen.



Measuring the aggressivity of a tumor Lavina Ahmed defended 02.11.16 her dissertation "Axl as a Biomarker in Breast and Lung Cancer". [Read more here.](#) Photo, from left: Kathrine Skarstein, Sverre Torp, Emiel Janssen, David Micklem, Hawa Nalwoga, Lavina Ahmed, Odd Helge Gilja and Lars A. Akslen.

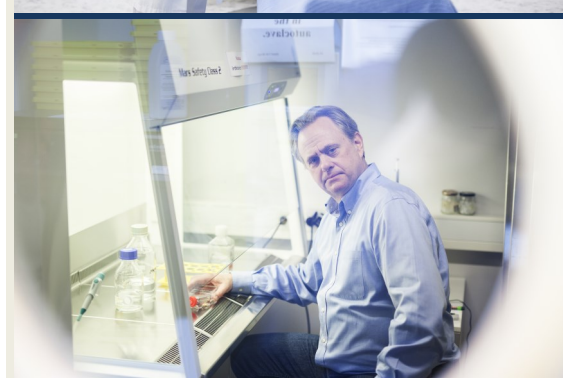


New biomarkers in breast cancer Gøril Knutsvik defended 31.10.16 her thesis "Biomarkers in breast cancer, with special focus on tumor cell proliferation". [Read more here.](#) Photo, from the left: Leiv M. Hove, Ingunn M. Stefansson, Gøril Knutsvik, Tibor Tot (Uppsala University Sweden), Nils Erik Gilhus, Anna Sapino (University of Turin, Italy) and Lars A. Akslen.

See the [complete 2016 CCBIO doctoral defense list here.](#)



## CCBIO SNAPSHOTS



Photos: Ingvild Melien



# CENTRE FOR DIGITAL LIFE IN NORWAY AT UIB

Centre for Digital Life Norway is a unique national centre for trans-disciplinary biotechnological research and innovation. It started up this year and is managed by NTNU in cooperation with UiO and UiB.

The initiative has been established due to a BIOTEK2021-grant from the Norwegian Research Council. In Bergen, CCBIO associated Professors [Inge Jonassen](#) and [Roger Strand](#) are involved in the workgroups *Competence and Infrastructure* and *Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI)*. [Read more here.](#)

## PUBLICATIONS

You can find the last publications [on this link](#). See the last 5 below.

- [Tunneling nanotube \(TNT\) formation is downregulated by cytarabine and NF- \$\kappa\$ B inhibition in acute myeloid leukemia \(AML\)](#). Omsland M, Bru-serud Ø, Gjertsen BT, Andresen V. Oncotarget. 2016 Dec 10.
- [High mRNA levels of 17 \$\beta\$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase type 1 correlate with poor prognosis in endometrial cancer](#). Cornel KM, Krakstad C, Delvoux B, Xanthouleas S, Jori B, Bongers MY, Konings GF, Kooreman LF, Kruitwagen RF, Salvesen HB; ENITEC., Romano A. Mol Cell Endocrinol. 2016 Dec 5.
- [Anti-proliferative activity of the NPM1 interacting natural product avrainvillamide in acute myeloid leukemia](#). Andresen V, Erikstein BS, Mukherjee H, Sulen A, Popa M, Sørnes S, Reikvam H, Chan KP, Hovland R, McCormack E, Bruserud Ø, Myers AG, Gjertsen BT. Cell Death Dis. 2016 Dec
- [Sonoporation with Acoustic Cluster Therapy \(ACT®\) induces transient tumour volume reduction in a subcutaneous xenograft model of pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma](#). Kotopoulis S, Stigen E, Popa M, Safont MM, Healey A, Kvåle S, Sontum P, Gjertsen BT, Gilja OH, McCormack E. J Control Release. 2016 Nov.
- [A human clinical trial using ultrasound and microbubbles to enhance gemcitabine treatment of inoperable pancreatic cancer](#). Dimcevski G, Kotopoulis S, Bjånes T, Hoem D, Schjøtt J, Gjertsen BT, Biermann M, Molven A, Sorbye H, McCormack E, Postema M, Gilja OH. J Control Release. 2016 Oct 12.

## RECENT CCBIO IN THE MEDIA

- 08.12.16, På Høyden, "[Sju unge UiB-forskarar får Fripro-støtte](#)". Agnete Engelsen.
- 01.12.16, Dagens Medisin 20/2016 page 15, "Presenterte ny studie". News item about Oddbjørn Straume's presentation at Onkologisk Forum of a new study on the drug BGB324 for treatment of malignant melanoma.
- 11.10.16, Dagens Medisin 16/2016 side 10, "Gammel kreftmedisin kan brukes på ny". Yi Qu, Xisong Ke and Karl-Henning Kalland.
- 11.10.16, Dagens Medisin, "[Ny behandling utsatte tilbakefall](#)". Line Bjørge.
- 11.10.16, Firdaposten, "[Forskar på kreft](#)". Amalie Svanøe.
- 10.10.16, Helse Bergen Innsiden, "Fikk pris for presentasjon". Amalie Svanøe.
- 04.10.16, ScienceNordic, "[Recycling approved drugs for cancer treatment](#)". Yi Qu, Xisong Ke and Karl-Henning Kalland.
- 30.09.16, Health Medicine Network, "[Recycling existing drugs may help fight several types of cancer](#)". Yi Qu, Xisong Ke and Karl-Henning Kalland.

### CCBIO VIDEO

And have you seen the latest [CCBIO presentation video](#)? In Norwegian so far.

