

SDDN 2026 PROGRAM

SATELLITE SESSION – WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2026

Within the framework of the Annual Congress of the Spanish Drug Discovery Network (SDDN), which will be held on October 22 and 23 at the University of Navarra, this preliminary day is organized with the aim of making the biotechnology ecosystem from Navarra visible, with special focus on the field of research and development of new drugs.

The event, organized by SDDN and CIMA / Universidad de Navarra, in collaboration with Navarra Health Cluster, is designed as an opportunity for congress attendees – primarily researchers from both academic and business backgrounds – to learn firsthand about the scientific, technological and industrial potential of the environment in Navarra, from both a public and private perspective.

This activity is free and is included with the congress admission.

DAY 1 – THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2026

09:00 – 09:30 **Welcome and presentation of the XVIII SDDN Meeting**

09:30 – 11:00 **Session 1 : Drug Discovery Stories I**

Moderator: Ignacio Sancho (INBISTRA).

Speakers

Juan Buela. Manager, SunRock BioPharma

Anabel Pérez, Managing Partner INBISTRA

Ángel Lucio, CEO TetraNeuron

11:00 – 11:30 **Coffee and networking / One-to-one meetings session**

11:30 – 12:00 **Session 1 round table: Drug Discovery Stories II**

Round table with the 3 speakers of Session 1, moderated by Ignacio Sancho (INBISTRA)

12:00 – 13:15 **Presentations by SDDN partners and event sponsors I**

Moderator: TBA (SDDN)

13:15 – 14:30 **Lunch and networking / One-to-one meetings session**

14:30 – 16:30 **Session 2: Advanced Therapies**

Moderator: Juan José Lasarte (University of Navarra)

Speakers

Marc Güell (Universitat Pompeu Fabra)

Pablo Menéndez (Instituto Josep Carreras - Sant Joan de Déu Hospital)

Alena Gros (Vall d'Hebron Institute of Oncology)

Juan José Lasarte (University of Navarra)

16:30 – 18:00 **Presentations by SDDN partners and event sponsors II**

Moderator: TBA (SDDN)

18:00 – 19:30 **Poster Session, Speed mentoring and Networking in the exhibitors' area (Coffee and refreshments)**

Moderator: Rosario Fernández Godino (Medina Foundation)

Accelerate your future: Fast-track mentoring for early-career scientists.

Join our fast-track mentoring session to connect for a few minutes with experts from academia and industry, get personalized advice, and accelerate your career with new ideas and connections.

18:30 – 20:00 One-to-one meetings session

All SDDN 2026 attendees will be invited to engage in one-to-one meetings, organized through a partnering platform

20:30 - SDDN 2026 **Conference dinner**

DAY 2 – FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2026

9:00 – 10:00 Lessons from Young Leaders in Science and Innovation

A round table with early-career scientists, startup founders, and industry leaders who achieved remarkable success at a young age. Discover the decisions, challenges, and opportunities that shaped their journeys and what you can apply to your own career.

Moderator: Rosario Fernández Godino (Medina Foundation)

Speakers

Leire Escudero-Ibarz (AstraZeneca)

Aritz Lasarte (CIMA, Universidad de Navarra)

Francisco Ciriza (Quorum Biomedical)

10:00 – 10:30 Oral presentations of the selected posters.

10:30 – 11:00 Coffee break / One-to-one meetings session

11:00 – 13:00 Session 3 : Target and Biomarker Discovery

Moderator: Leire Escudero-Ibarz (AstraZeneca)

Speakers

Julen Oyarzábal, Partner & CSO, Columbus Venture Partners

Lorena Boquete, Galaria EPSS,

Luis Serrano, Center for Genomic Regulation (CRG)

Leire Escudero-Ibarz (AstraZeneca)

13:00 – 14:00 Presentations by SDDN partners and event sponsors III

Moderator: TBA (SDDN)

14:00 – 14:30 Closing remarks, poster awards ceremony, and announcement of the SDDN 2027 meeting

14:30 – 15:30 Lunch and networking

SPEED MENTORING

Speed Mentoring activity designed to facilitate focused and time-efficient conversations between early-stage researchers and experienced professionals. Join this session to connect for a few minutes with experts from academia, industry, and the regulatory sector. Get personalized advice, and accelerate your career with new ideas and connections

Poster and Networking Session

In parallel, the Exhibitor Hall offers a dynamic platform for attendees to engage with cutting-edge research, connect with established researchers in the field of drug discovery, and expand their professional networks. This session will feature a wide variety of scientific posters, fostering enriching scientific dialogue and collaboration.

The open and interactive format encourages interdisciplinary exchange and is designed to support both early-stage scientists and established professionals in advancing their work and building lasting relationships.

SUMMARY OF THE SCIENTIFIC SESSIONS

Session 1

Drug Discovery Stories (Chair: Ignacio Sancho, INBISTRA)

Drug Discovery Challenges and Opportunities: Surviving the Gap Between Discovery and the Clinic

Translating a breakthrough into a viable asset requires more than just good science; it demands a strategic “de-risking” mindset. This session explores the evolution of the biotech startup, focusing on the transition from academic

innovation to investment-ready pipelines. We will dissect the current landscape of early-stage funding, the strategic utility of non-dilutive vs. dilutive capital, and the necessity of aligning preclinical milestones with clinical value inflection points .

Through a lens of operational discipline, we'll discuss how founders can move beyond the “business plan” to build a dynamic strategic roadmap that survives market corrections and attracts the right partners. Whether you are navigating your first seed round or preparing for an IND, this session provides the playbook for bridging the gap between the bench and the bank.

Session 2 :

Advanced Therapies (Chair: Juan José Lasarte, University of Navarra)

Next-Gen Advanced Therapies : Where AI Meets Synthetic Biology and Immunology

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is revolutionizing the development of new cancer immunotherapies, transforming traditional discovery into a high-precision engineering discipline. By leveraging deep learning and structural bioinformatics, AI allows researchers to navigate the complexity of the immune system with unprecedented accuracy, shifting the paradigm toward highly optimized and personalized therapeutic strategies. A primary application of AI is the design of personalized cancer vaccines. Computational algorithms are now essential for identifying tumor-specific neoantigens and predicting their binding affinity to MHC molecules. This enables the creation of bespoke vaccines tailored to a patient's unique mutational landscape, maximizing immunogenicity while minimizing off-target effects.

Furthermore, AI is pivotal in the optimization of chimeric receptors for adoptive cell therapies. By refining receptor-antigen interactions and simulating synthetic logic gates, AI helps engineer CAR-T and TCR-T therapies that are more potent and resilient within the immunosuppressive tumor microenvironment. Finally, the design of optimized bispecific antibodies has been significantly accelerated by computational foresight.

This session will address these novel and rapidly evolving fields, which will likely define the development of future, optimized cancer therapies. By integrating computational intelligence into the drug discovery pipeline, we are setting a new standard of care in the global fight against cancer.

Session 3 :

Target and Biomarker Discovery (Chair: Leire Escudero-Ibarz, AstraZeneca)

Advancing Target and Biomarker Discovery: Multiomics Integration and Complex Model Systems in the Age of AI

The convergence of multiomic technologies, complex disease models, and artificial intelligence is transforming target and biomarker discovery. This session explores how integrated approaches combining molecular profiling with functional validation in physiologically relevant systems enable identification of therapeutic targets and precision medicine biomarkers. Multiomic profiling provides an unprecedented resolution of disease biology.

However, extracting actionable insights requires advanced integration strategies. AI and machine learning prioritize targets by identifying convergent evidence across molecular layers and patient data, while CRISPR screening in complex model systems enables functional validation of gene function.

This session will showcase disease-agnostic platforms and methodologies that bridge computational power with experimental validation. By demonstrating the synergy between multiomic integration, AI-driven analytics, and scalable functional genomics, the session will highlight how these approaches are accelerating novel therapeutic discoveries, enabling precision medicine strategies, and ultimately improving patient outcomes across diverse therapeutic areas.