



NEXT GEN LIVER IMMUNOLOGY: BRIDGING BASIC SCIENCE AND CLINICAL PRACTICE

February 5-6, 2026

Symposium
FREIBURG, GERMANY



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An application has been made to the UEMS EACCME® for CME accreditation of this event. The number of credits awarded will be printed in the final program.

PREFACE

Welcome to the symposium NEXT GEN LIVER IMMUNOLOGY: Bridging Basic Science and Clinical Practice that brings together scientists, rising stars and clinicians dedicated to advancing the understanding of hepatic immunology across key disease areas. By integrating basic and translational research with clinical perspectives, this meeting aims to foster meaningful dialogue and collaboration across disciplines and career stages.

Central topics include **viral and autoimmune hepatitis, steatotic liver diseases, liver cirrhosis** and **hepatocellular carcinoma** (HCC). These conditions exemplify the complex immunological mechanisms that underlie liver pathology and demand innovative therapeutic strategies. As the field continues to evolve, insights into immune regulation, tolerance, inflammation, and tissue remodeling are becoming increasingly relevant for clinical translation.

A particular emphasis of this symposium lies in supporting early-career researchers. By offering a platform for young scientists to present their findings and engage with peers and senior experts, the event promotes the development of the next generation of liver immunologists and clinician-scientists.

A big thank you goes to all speakers and participants whose work and engagement shape this symposium for scientific exchange and future collaboration. Your contribution is key to advancing basic and translational liver immunology.

I am looking forward to welcoming you in the heart of the Black Forest, in Freiburg, a city blessed with more sunshine than any other German city and renowned for its academic tradition on hepatology and liver immunology that provides an ideal environment for focused exchange and new collaborations.

See you soon!

Robert Thimme

NEXT GEN LIVER IMMUNOLOGY: BRIDGING BASIC SCIENCE AND CLINICAL PRACTICE

February 5-6, 2026

Scientific Organization:

Prof. Dr. Robert Thimme
Director Klinik für Innere Medizin II
Universitätsklinikum Freiburg
Hugstetter Straße 55
79106 Freiburg
Germany

Congress Venue:

Konzerthaus Freiburg
Konrad-Adenauer-Platz 1
79098 Freiburg im Breisgau
Germany

For admission to scientific events your name badge should be clearly visible.

Accompanying persons are not permitted during the conference at any time.

Call for Posters:

An ePoster session will be held.
For details see page 10.

Start of Registration:

Thursday, February 5, 2026
12:00 – 18:00
At the congress office

Publication Date of the Final Program:

February 2026

The final program will be available on the website www.falkfoundation.org one week before the start of the symposium.

Thursday, February 5, 2026

12:00 Registration

13:00 Welcome
Robert Thimme, Freiburg

SESSION I

Viral and autoimmune hepatitis

Chairs: *Maike Hofmann, Freiburg; Christoph Schramm, Hamburg*

13:10 Inducible Hepatic-Associated Lymphoid Tissue (iHALT):
liver as a surrogate secondary lymphoid organ
Arash Grakoui, Atlanta

13:35 T cell immunity in HEV infection
Tobias Böttler, Freiburg

14:00 Immunology of HBV: Novel perspectives for immunotherapy
Matteo Iannacone, Milan

14:25 NK cells and biliary tract inflammation in PSC
Britta Zecher, Hamburg

14:50 Hepatic orchestration of local versus systemic T cell responses
Georg Gasteiger, Würzburg

15:15 **Coffee break with ePoster session**

SESSION II

Steatotic liver diseases

Chairs: *Natascha Röhlen, Freiburg; Frank Tacke, Berlin*

15:55 Modulation of the microbiome in steatotic liver diseases
Kai Markus Schneider, Dresden

16:20 Macrophages and MASLD
Charlotte Scott, Ghent

16:45 Spatial multiomics in MASLD
Paul Horn, Berlin

17:10 Intermittent fasting in MASH and liver cancer
Suchira Gallage, Tübingen

17:35 Liver specific determinants of antigen-specific immunity
Percy A. Knolle, Munich

18:00 **Networking and ePoster session with light refreshments**

Friday, February 6, 2026

SESSION III

Liver cirrhosis and portal hypertension

Chairs: *Marcus Cornberg, Hannover; Magdalena Filipowicz Sinnreich, Basel*

08:45 Systemic inflammation in liver fibrosis and cirrhosis
Thomas Reiberger, Vienna

09:05 ILCs in liver fibrosis and cirrhosis
Jakob Nattermann, Bonn

09:25 Immune cells in cirrhotic ascites: Friend or foe?
Christian Niehaus, Hannover

09:45 Novel immunotherapies for liver cirrhosis
Stuart Forbes, Edinburgh

10:05 Hepatic stellate cells: Novel functional aspects and therapeutic implications
Robert F. Schwabe, New York

10:25 **Coffee break with ePoster session**

SESSION IV

Liver cancer

Chairs: *Tom Lüdde, Düsseldorf; Charlotte Rennert, Freiburg*

11:00 HCC spatial single cell immune scoring system
Bertram Bengsch, Freiburg

11:20 Immune therapy of liver cancer
Matthias Pinter, Vienna

11:40 MAIT cells and HCC
Benjamin Ruf, Tübingen

12:00 Novel immune approaches in HCC
Anna Pasetto, Oslo

12:20 Presentation of poster awards

12:30 **Lunch with ePoster session**

13:15 **Opening of the annual meeting of the GASL**

LIST OF SPEAKERS, MODERATORS AND SCIENTIFIC ORGANIZERS

Prof. Dr. Dr. Bertram Bengsch

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Universitätsklinikum Freiburg
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Prof. Dr. Tobias Böttler

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Prof. Stuart Forbes

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Dr. Suchira Gallage

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Anna Pasetto, PhD

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Prof. Dr. Kai Markus Schneider, MD, PhD

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Dr. Britta Zecher

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ePOSTER SESSION

ePosters will be displayed on our ePoster screens on February 5-6, 2026. We kindly ask the authors to be present during coffee and lunch breaks on both days to discuss their work.

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

Please submit your abstract by November 3, 2025, using our online submission system (<https://poster.falkfoundation.org>). The system will guide you through the submission process and provide further information on formatting requirements.

The abstracts will be reviewed by the scientific organizers, with preference given to those that align thematically with one of the meeting sessions. Accepted abstracts will be published in the final program.

Abstract submitters will be informed about acceptance and further instructions in December, 2025.

For the first author of an accepted abstract, registration fee and accommodation (February 5-6, 2026) will be covered during the Symposium. Travel expenses will not be covered.

POSTER AWARDS

Prizes of up to EUR 3,000, along with coverage of travel expenses, will be awarded for the best posters. Winners will be invited to give a short presentation (2-5 minutes) of their poster during the award ceremony.

REGISTRATION



You can register for the event via our homepage:

www.falkfoundation.org

Registration is only possible online.

You will receive an automatic confirmation of registration by e-mail.

Please transfer the congress fee to the bank account listed in the e-mail within two weeks.

CONGRESS FEES

Scientific Program of Symposium

EUR 150

Students (copy of student ID required)

EUR 75

The congress fees include:

- Refreshments during coffee breaks
- Lunch on Thursday, February 5 and Friday, February 6, 2026
- Snacks during scientific discussion on Thursday, February 5, 2026
- A copy of the final program

CONGRESS OFFICE AND REGISTRATION

Opening Hours:

Thursday, February 5, 2026

12:00 - 18:00 h

Friday, February 6, 2026

8:00 - 12:30 h

The Falk Foundation will take pictures during the meeting. Additionally, parts of the meeting might be recorded. By participating all attendees consent and agree with the recording and the photo shoots.

ARRIVAL

Konzerthaus Freiburg

Konrad-Adenauer-Platz 1
79098 Freiburg im Breisgau
Germany

By car

From north and south via A5 Frankfurt-Basel Rhine Valley motorway, exit Freiburg-Mitte. Follow the signs. From east via the A81 Stuttgart-Singen motorway and B31 Donaueschingen, Titisee-Neustadt. Pass Freiburg on Schwarzwaldstrasse in the direction to motorway A5 and follow the signs. There is a huge underground car park belonging to Konzerthaus and Freiburg main station.

By plane

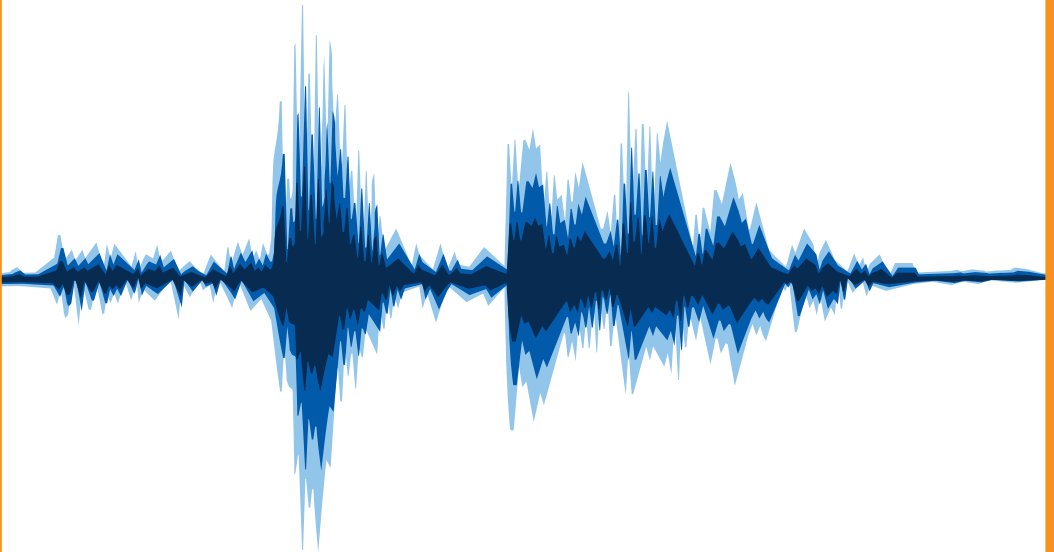
Basel-Mulhouse-Freiburg Airport (EuroAirport) is the nearest airport, just an hour's drive away. It offers international scheduled flights and charter flights. The airport bus runs directly to Freiburg main bus station, opposite the Konzerthaus. For more information see www.freiburger-reisedienst.de. Bigger airports like Zurich or Frankfurt offer good train connections to Freiburg main station.

By train

The Konzerthaus is ideally connected to public transport. Freiburg main railway station is directly opposite. The bus station and tram and bus stops are also located here. Taxis are available in front of the main entrance to the Konzerthaus Freiburg.



**Registration via www.falkfoundation.org
or simply scan and register.**



Together we know more. Together we do more.

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