



SCITopic

To maintain a network means maintaining influence

In late April, the Ministry of Health of the Czech Republic had announced a new public call within the Programme of support of applied health research 2024–2030, in particular its Subprogramme 4: Support of national authorities in priority areas of healthcare research. The call is focused on period 2026–2030 and its ambition is to support long-term functioning of national expert platforms dedicated to healthcare research.

"It needs to be stressed – and I am very sorry to have to say it – that this call is not primarily intended for financing research as such. It is aimed mainly at coordination, organisation, strategic,

and integration activities," is written in today's issue of the Newsletter by NICR director Aleksi Šedo, who adds: "Nevertheless, it is not merely an administrative episode after the ending of the project phase of the EXCELES programme. It is actually an important test of the ability to maintain the continuity of newly created structures and transfer it into the next stage of development. For NICR, it is also an opportunity to demonstrate that the network it built was not just a one-off project linked to a particular source of financing, that is did become a stable part of Czech cancer research environment."

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SCIGeneration



Lenka Kotrchová: We are in a vicious circle

I view the system of evaluation of science financing with a degree of humility. I have been fortunate in that I am part of a successful and established group, so I do not need to deal with existential issues linked to grants on a daily basis. Still, I cannot shake off the feeling that, as scientists, in a vicious circle: unless you are a 'big name', have years of experience abroad and completed at least one big successful project, it is almost impossible to get into the system.

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Lenka Hernychová: A marathon run at a sprint pace

Czech science is a little bit like a marathon that is run like a sprint. If I could, I would boost stable financing of research departments, improve the chances of high-quality grant applications, and reduce the administrative burden on scientists. Science needs competition, not permanent exhaustion. A well-functioning system should not test who can deal with the most stress, but who is bringing the best ideas, honest work, and courage to look for new ways of doing things.

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SCIPapers

<p>Single Cell RNA Transcriptomics of Mantle Cell Lymphoma Reveals the Presence of Treatment-Resistant Subclones at the Time of Diagnosis.</p> <p>Manakov D, Klanova M, ..., Trnety M, Klener P.</p> <p>American Journal of Hematology 2026 March</p> <p>DOI: 10.1002/ajh.70270 PMID: 41802856</p>	<p>Autophagy revealed as a targetable vulnerability in senescent cells by cell painting phenotypic profiling: a mechanistic study of MCOPPB and related compounds.</p> <p>Lacey M, Beresova L, ..., Nencka R, Mistrik M.</p> <p>GeroScience 2026 April</p> <p>DOI: 10.1007/s11357-026-02258-z PMID: 42062708</p>	<p>Translational control of AMPK activity in melanoma</p> <p>Vadovičová N, Lešková A, ... Souček K & Uldrijan S.</p> <p>Cell Communication and Signaling 2026 April</p> <p>DOI: 10.1186/s12964-026-02901-4 PMID: 42050705</p>
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SCICommunity



Even cellular anarchists make mistakes under stress

"Tumour cells are even on their own a rather irritated and stressed system, so if you poke them in just the right way, then – just like a really cross choleric person – they will start

making mistakes incompatible with their survival," says Martin Mistrík, head of the Laboratory of genome integrity at the Institute of Molecular and Translational Medicine of Palacky University and University Hospital Olomouc. His research team focuses on identifying the mechanisms of cellular stress, replication, and DNA repairs, and investigates how errors in these processes in cancer cells could be used in therapy. He explains why stress adaptation mechanisms could be the Achilles heel of cancer cells, how complex is the journey from basic research to clinical practice, and why trust among research teams is so crucial for the future of Czech science. He also considers the importance of being able to talk about complex biological processes in ways which are clear – and sometimes even a little playful.

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SCIIndicators

Indicators and targets during the sustainability period...

One of the main commitments of NICR – aside from developing excellent cancer research – is its integration into the national biomedical 'macro-environment' with overlaps into healthcare, education, and creation of public policies in collaboration with state institutions, as well as coordination of research capacities in the Czech Republic. The goal of NICR is to overcome the long-term fragmentation of cancer research and create a functional national platform that

connects universities, academic institutions, hospitals, and state administration. At the same time, its aim is also to make sure that research results do not just stay in the academic sphere, i.e., that they be reflected in clinical recommendations, organisation of care, education of experts, and strategic documents. Our experts participate in expert boards, consultation bodies, and workgroups both on national and European level.

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Czech Annual Cancer Research Meeting

November 23–25 2026 | Olomouc, CZ

Abstract submission is OPEN!

Deadline for abstracts is September 15, 2026

www.cancermeeting.cz

SCIMedia



New approaches to brain cancer treatment: Electrical fields, targeted molecules, and immunotherapy

Sciencemag.cz, 17 March 2026
"Tumours emerge, based on very concrete changes at the molecular level in cancer cells but also based on the behaviour of other cells in their microenvironment. If we get to know these mechanisms in detail, we could identify new therapeutic targets and develop treatments that would target the very cause of the disease, not just its symptoms. Progress in science therefore precedes progress in clinical medicine," emphasises Aleksi Šedo, Director of NICR.

Genetic code: The secret of health and disease

Téma, 27 March 2026
Genome sequencing is one of the greatest breakthroughs in modern biology and medicine; it opens the doors to the vast amount of information hidden in our DNA. "From genome analysis, we can find whether a person has predispositions to performance or endurance sports, how resistant one is to various additions, but above all it can reveal innate predispositions to diseases," says Marián Hajdúch, medical Director of NICR and initiator of the CzechGenome project.

Introducing NICR researchers

Aktuální témata v onkologii očima českých lékařů, March 2026
This issue of a popular journal newly introduces NICR's research teams. In the March edition, readers can learn more about Lenka Bešše and her group at the Institute of Biology of the Faculty of Medicine of Masaryk University, where they study immunotherapy of tumours, about Petr Džubák's group in the Laboratory for early diagnostics and therapy of tumours of the Institute of Molecular and Translational Medicine of the Faculty of Medicine of Palacky University and University Hospital Olomouc, or about the Laboratory of cancer cell biology at Institute of Biochemistry and Experimental Oncology of the First Faculty of Medicine of Charles University, which is headed by Aleksi Šedo.

Researchers found a non-coding RNA that regulates the aggressivity of lymphoma

Medical Tribune, 8 April 2026
New findings from Marek Mráz's laboratory open the way to therapeutic targeting of CD40 signalling in transformation of follicular lymphoma. In their study, recently published in the prestigious Leukemia journal, the authors have conducted the first pair-wise analysis of the expression of messenger RNA (mRNA) and short non-coding RNA (miRNA) in samples of patients with follicular lymphoma. The samples were taken once before their disease became transformed and after it. Analysis helped identify different expression patterns in 1,075 mRNAs and 19 miRNAs, including a downregulation of the entire family of miR-29.

How to discover tumours' helpers

Vesmír, 27 April 2026
Scientists from NICR's research team Cancer microenvironment have identified, together with colleagues from the Institute of Molecular Genetics of the Czech Academy of Sciences and Institute of Pathology of the First Faculty of Medicine of Charles University and University Hospital in Prague, a new protein that could help scientists to better detect cells that significantly influence the behaviour of cancerous tumours. "A thorough analysis of gene activity had shown that fibroblasts from different types of tumours often express also a different isoform of actin, so-called γSMA," adds Michal Španko, the main author of the study that was recently published in the Histochemistry and Cell Biology journal.

After a new treatment, there are fewer tumour cells. Young sportsman believes that miracles do happen

iDnes.cz, 5 May 2026
Three years ago, the talented floorball player Adam Choma was stopped in his tracks by a brain tumour. After treatment, he wanted to start training again, but cancer had returned and spread into his bones. He was saved by paediatric oncologists in Brno. Now, he is trying to help them improve care for young adults who suffer from tumours typical for paediatric patients. "In children, tumours have a different biology, usually grow much faster than in adults, and metastasise earlier, but also mostly respond better to anti-tumour treatment if it is started quickly and correctly," says Jaroslav Štěrba, Science Director of NICR and head of the Department of Paediatric Oncology of the Faculty of Medicine of Masaryk University and University Hospital Brno.



Magdaléna Houdová Megová: What I look for in young colleagues is curiosity

Medical Tribune, podcast Second opinion, 18 March 2026
She is a scientist, university teacher, and an oncogeneticist. Her research focuses on possibilities of therapeutic modifications of tumour microenvironment in glioblastoma. Dr Houdová Megová is also active in efforts to improve the position of women in science. She believes it is crucial to maintain one's curiosity. "So far, I am not losing my curiosity. It is also the first thing I look for in young colleagues – and there are still enough young curious people," she adds.