



StemNet

Third International StemNet Meeting

Bologna, Italy • 12-13 March 2026

Zanhotel Europa, Via Cesare Boldrini 11



For last updated version visit:
<https://stemnet2026.azuleon.org/>



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WELCOME

Welcome to the third International StemNet Meeting that will take place at the Zanhotel Europa, Bologna (Italy) on March 12-13, 2026.

StemNet is a federation of the four main associations of stem cell research in Italy (FIRST, GSM, IPLASS, SCRI) that share and synergize experiences to enhance both the quality and the impact of research in this advancing field. This meeting marks the constructive relationship among our associations and aims to improve the exchange of relevant and up-to-date information in the field of advanced cell therapy.

The six sessions of the meeting will spotlight relevant progress in basic and translational research. The meeting also includes discussions on critical aspects of biomedical communication and research valorization and will include a “next generation session” organized by young scientists. A faculty of national and international experts and renowned speakers will foster exciting and inspiring debates of the challenging scientific program.

The best three posters will be awarded with the “Young Investigator Award” (500 € / each) to encourage the attendance of the youngest members of our community.

Sincerely,

The StemNet President and the local organising committee.



PROGRAMME

First day: Thursday, 12 March 2026

9:00-10:30
Registration

10:30-11:00
Welcome and opening of the meeting

11:00-12:30
Session “Innovative Trends in Science Communication (in Italian)”
Chairs: Augusto Pessina (Milan, Italy), Umberto Galderisi (Naples, Italy)

11:00
Emanuele Frontoni (Macerata, Italy)
Lo storytelling della scienza nell’epoca della intelligenza artificiale

11:20
Samuele Negro (Padua, Italy)
Alla scoperta dei meccanismi della rigenerazione nervosa: la mia ricerca raccontata attraverso i Social Media

11:40
Round table and discussion

13:00-14:00
Lunch

14:00-16:00
Session “StemNet Next Generation”
Chairs: Pasquale Marrazzo (Urbino, Italy), Federico Divincenzo (Turin, Italy)

14:00-14:20
Valentina Bugani (Meldola, FC, Italy)
Training and development strategies in healthcare research organizations

14:20-14:40
Filippo Piccinini (Bologna, Italy)
Scientific medical writing with Artificial Intelligence

14:40-15:00
Akos Diosdi (Szeged, Hungary)
Patenting microscopy technologies: a case study

15:00-15:15
3rd winner “StemNet Next Generation – Contest 2026”
Domitilla Mandatori (Chieti, Italy)



Effects of mesenchymal stromal cells and human recombinant Nerve Growth Factor delivered by bioengineered human corneal lenticule on an innovative model of diabetic retinopathy

15:00-15:15

2nd winner “StemNet Next Generation – Contest 2026”

Angelo Canciello (Teramo, Italy)

Graphene oxide accelerates TGF β -mediated epithelial-mesenchymal transition and stimulates pro-inflammatory immune response in amniotic epithelial cells

15:00-15:15

1st winner “StemNet Next Generation – Contest 2026”

Domenico Aprile (Naples, Italy)

Lineage specification into GABAergic, glutamatergic, dopaminergic, and astrocytic phenotypes using MUSE stem cells: a novel approach for modeling neurodegenerative and psychiatric disorders

15:45-16:00

Award Ceremony “StemNet Next Generation – Contest 2026”

16:00-16:30

Coffee break

16:30-18:00

Session “Innovation, Sustainability and Market Access for ATMPs”

Chairs: Laura Calzà (Bologna, Italy), Lorenza Lazzari (Milan, Italy)

16:30

Simona Guidi (Leiden, The Netherlands)

Innovative technologies, decentralized model versus centralized model in ATMPs manufacturing, the state of the art

16:50

Claudio Jommi (Novara, Italy)

Sustainability and market access for medicines: general issue and focus on ATMPs

17:10-17:30

2 Talks selected from submitted abstracts

17:30

Discussion

18:00-19:00

General Assembly

19:30

Standing aperitif-style light dinner (Apericena)

21:00



Social Event and Dancing, the event will include a bachata lesson with DJ Set and group dances



Second day: Friday, 13 March 2026

9:00-10:30

Session “Biofabrication and Bioengineering Tools for Tissue Repair”

Chairs: Maria Letizia Focarete (Bologna, Italy), Laura Mercatali (Bologna, Italy)

9:00

Gianluca Cidonio (Rome, Italy)

Skeletal stem cell 3D bioprinting for the functional engineering of bone tissue

9:20

Dario Carugo (Oxford, United Kingdom)

Ultrasound-mediated stimulation of biological systems for enhanced drug delivery and tissue repair

9:40-10:00

2 Talks selected from submitted abstracts

10:00

Discussion

10:30-11:00

Coffee break

11:00-12:30

Session “Stem Cells in Cartilage (Tissue) Repair”

Chairs: Gina Lisignoli (Bologna, Italy), Eleonora Iacono (Bologna, Italy)

11:00

Serena Duchi (Melbourne, Australia)

Stem cell cartilage tissue engineering for post post-traumatic osteoarthritis prevention: advancing equity in regenerative medicine

11:20

Leonardo Ricotti (Pisa, Italy)

Stimulation of cartilage healing with ultrasound stimulation of stem cells

11:40-12:00

2 Talks selected from submitted abstracts

12:00

Discussion

12:30-13:30

Lunch

13:30-14:30

Poster Session



14:30-16:00

Session "Omic Studies for Stem Cell Biology"

Chairs: Kristina Buzas (Szeged, Hungary), Roberta Piva (Ferrara, Italy)

14:30

Giada Pietrosi (Palermo, Italy)

The application of perinatal stem cells in advanced liver disease: results and future perspectives

14:50

Nereo Kalebic (Milan, Italy)

Glioblastoma stem cell morphotypes convey distinct cell states and clinically relevant functions

15:10-15:30

2 Talks selected from submitted abstracts

15:30

Discussion

16:00-17:00

Session "Cancer Stem Cells"

Chairs: Francesco Alviano (Bologna, Italy), Gianandrea Pasquinelli (Bologna, Italy)

16:00

Ilio Vitale (Turin, Italy)

Immune escape by cancer stem cells: mechanisms and therapeutic opportunities

16:20-16:40

2 Talks selected from submitted abstracts

16:40

Discussion

17:00-17:30

Poster Award

18:00

Conclusions



IMPORTANT DATES

Registrations open: 30 October 2025

Abstract submission deadline: 21 January 2026

Payment with early bird discount: 30 January 2026

Online Registration and payment deadline: 20 February 2026

StemNet Next Generation Contest deadline: 16 January 2026



REGISTRATION AND COSTS

	Early Bird Registration (until 26 January 2026)	Late Registration (until 20 February 2026)
StemNet Societies member	€ 170	€ 220
Regular participant (not member)	€ 220	€ 270
Student*	€ 120	€ 150
One day only	€ 140	€ 140

* Up to and including Ph.D. student level; no other categories can benefit from this reduced rate. A confirmation must be provided by the direct supervisor (further details are available during the registration procedure).

The full registration fee entitles participants to the following:

- Access to all scientific sessions and poster viewing.
- Congress kit.
- Coffee breaks, lunches, and dinner on 12 March.

PAYMENT

The early bird discount applies to payments received until 30 January 2026. Registrations will remain open until 20 February 2026 at the regular price.

N.B. Payments must be received within each deadline indicated (if you are paying through your administration, please ensure that it is initiated in due time).

Payment is possible by bank transfer only. Further details about the payment procedure is available through the personal “myArea” at: <https://stemnet2026.azuleon.org/>

CANCELLATION POLICY

Cancellations with a refund request must be sent by e-mail (STEMNET.2026@azuleon.org) to the secretariat and must be accompanied by a valid justification. Refunds will be decided case by case by the organising secretariat. If accepted, cancellations by 20 February 2026 will be refunded fully minus an administrative charge; no refunds will be provided after 20 February 2026.

WARNING

Unfortunately, there is an increasing number of fraudulent websites and email promotions claiming to offer registration and accommodation services. Please be advised that payment for your STEMNET 2026 attendance can only be processed according to the instructions available in your personal “myArea” at: <https://stemnet2026.azuleon.org/>, after you sign up for an account. Also, the STEMNET 2026 Organisers are in no way responsible for arrangements that you make. Please be aware of possible scams.



ABSTRACTS

Abstracts are accepted exclusively through this website, through your personal “myArea” at: <https://stemnet2026.azuleon.org/>. You will need to have an account to have access to the latter.

The abstract submission deadline is 16 January 2026. By submitting an abstract you accept to share your work either as a poster or oral presentation. The Scientific Committee will designate the format (oral or poster). The final acceptance decision is the exclusive right of the Scientific Committee.

Only registered participants can submit an abstract and each registered participant may submit a maximum of one abstract. Abstracts should be submitted by the presenting author only.

All submitted abstracts will be discarded if payment is not received by 20 February 2026.

Abstract format:

Title:

The title must start in uppercase and continue in lowercase, except for conventional terms (ATP, DNA, NFκB, etc). Example:

This title is written correctly
This Title is Not Properly Written
ALSO THIS TITLE IS WRONG

Abbreviations in the title will not be accepted. If used throughout the text, abbreviations must be indicated in their extended version the first time they are used.

Authorship:

If more than one author (but only in that case), underline your name (the presenting author, in whatever position you appear in the author list) and use commas to separate the author names; do not use 'and' before the last author. Write all authors name and surname in full. If more than one affiliation (but only in that case), use sequential superscript numbers to identify each institution. Example:

Mario Rossi¹, John Doe², Fred C. Bloggs^{1,2}
¹Dept Biomembranes, Golgi & Veratti University, Pavia, Italy
²Dept Bioblast Analyses, Altmann University, Leipzig, Germany

Text:

The abstract should be divided into 4 paragraphs:

- Objective: indicate primary purpose of study.
- Materiald and methods: description of data sources, subjects, design measurements and data analysis.
- Results: summary of the main findings.
- Conclusions: study conclusions and/or implication of the results.

Keep the abstract text to within 2500 characters, spaces included.

References should not be included in the abstract.



To take part in the Young Investigator Award, please check the YIA box in the abstract submission form. See further details in the dedicated section of the personal “myArea” at: <https://stemnet2026.azuleon.org/>

Posters:

Poster presenters are required to be available for discussion during the session on Friday at 13:30.

All posters can stay up for the entire duration of the meeting. You are expected to have your poster up the latest by 13:30 of Friday, 13 February. Posters should be taken down by the end of the meeting. Posters left behind will be removed and discarded by the venue personnel.

When preparing your poster please remember that the poster's maximum size is A0 (841 x 1189 mm; width x height).

Correct format: poster must be PORTRAIT, not LANDSCAPE.



STEMNET NEXT GENERATION – CONTEST 2026

Call for Abstracts

Award winners will also be invited as speakers at STEMNET 2026!

N.B. This Call for Abstracts is independent of the abstract submission guidelines provided above.

Introduction:

The speakers of the “StemNet Next Generation - Section”, within the framework of the conference “StemNet 2026” (Bologna, Italy, 12-13/03/2026), will be selected with the “StemNet Next Generation – Contest 2026”.

Award:

There will be 3 winners. They will be awarded with the “StemNet Next Generation – Contest 2026 – Award”, which consists of (I) a printed certificate, (II) a free registration to “StemNet 2026”, (III) an invitation for an oral communication during the conference “StemNet 2026” (approximately, 10 minutes of presentation and 5 minutes of questions). The other “StemNet Next Generation – Contest 2026” participants will be eligible for future webinars.

Rules:

Candidates must be researchers “under 40” (precisely, born no earlier than 01/01/1985). They must submit an abstract of a relevant scientific article in the field of stem cells. Eligible abstracts must be based on scientific articles published within the last four years (from 2022 fully included). Works that are currently under review are not eligible. The candidate must be First Author, co-First Author, Last Author, co-Last Author, Corresponding Author, or co-Corresponding Author of the scientific article. Each candidate may submit one abstract only, but they may be listed as authors of other abstracts submitted by different researchers. Winners of previous editions of the StemNet, FIRST, IPLASS, GISM, or Stem Cells Research Italy Next-Generation Contests are not eligible to apply. Candidates who participated in previous editions but were not selected as winners may reapply, provided they meet all other eligibility criteria. Abstracts related to scientific publications already presented by winners of previous editions of the StemNet, FIRST, IPLASS, GISM, or Stem Cells Research Italy Next-Generation Contests are not eligible. In the case of multiple applicants submitting the same abstract based on the same scientific publication, only the applicant obtaining the higher evaluation will be considered as the potential winner. Finally, in case of abstracts obtaining the same identical score, the one submitted by the older candidate will be scored as first.

Evaluation:

The abstracts will be evaluated by a panel of Referees (selected by the Scientific Committee), according to their novelty, significance and CV of the submitting candidate. The final acceptance decision is the exclusive right of the Scientific Committee, such as the definition of the 3 winners of the “StemNet Next Generation – Contest 2026”.

Instructions:

The “StemNet Next Generation – Contest 2026” is organised in 3 steps:

- First step: abstract submission; Deadline 16/01/2026: The submission of abstracts is free of charge and does not require membership to one of the StemNet societies.



- Second step: winners announcement; Deadline 01/02/2026: All the candidates will be notified by email.
- Third step: oral presentation at “StemNet 2026”: Winners must be present in person to obtain the award.

Disclosure:

The abstracts and the material collected during the “StemNet Next Generation – Contest 2026” will be made public on the StemNet’s websites (including the forming societies), Facebook/LinkedIn pages, YouTube channels and other media. By submitting an abstract, the authors accept to publicly share their material and then their work.

How to prepare the abstract:

Please, follow these instructions:

- Language: English. Font: Times New Roman; Font-size: 12 points; Text alignment: single-spaced, justified.
- Title: It must be a precise copy of the one of the related scientific article.
- Report the Author/s names and surnames in this format: Mario Rossi, Carla Bianchi, etc. They must be the same authors of the same related scientific article.
- Report the Author/s affiliations.
- Abstract: It must be a precise copy of the one of the related scientific article.
- Report the name of the scientific journal where the abstract and related scientific article have been published, together with year of publication.
- Report the day of birth of the candidate.
- Report the email of the candidate to be used for communications.
- Curriculum Vitae (CV): a brief biosketch reporting current position, main scientific appointments, and honours (minimum 100 words, maximum 250 words).

Abstract submission:

Save the Abstract and all the other info in a single Word/Writer/txt file with the following name: STEMNET-NGContest26_firstName_firstSurname of the candidate (e.g. STEMNET-NGContest26_Mario_Rossi.doc). The Abstract must be submitted to: stemnetng@gmail.com (please, check to receive an email confirming the receipt of submission).



GETTING THERE

Venue:

The Third International StemNet Meeting will be held at the Zanhotel Europa in Bologna:
Via Cesare Boldrini, 11, 40121 Bologna, Italy

How to get there:

- By train: Zanhotel Europa is only 5-minute walk from Bologna train station. Leaving the station behind you, turn right and then left (into Via Amendola) and turn right at the crossroads.
- By car: From the A14 motorway coming from Ancona exit at "San Lazzaro" and then get off the "tangenziale" (bypass) at exit n° 7; follow signs for "centro" (city centre).
 - From the A1 motorway coming from the north exit at "Borgo Panigale" and then get off the "tangenziale" (bypass) at exit n° 7; follow signs for "centro" (city centre).
 - From the A13 motorway exit at "Bologna Arcoveggio" and then get off the "tangenziale" (bypass) at exit n° 7; follow signs for "centro" (city centre).
 - From the A1 motorway coming from the south exit at "Bologna Casalecchio di Reno" and then get off the "tangenziale" (bypass) at exit n° 7; follow signs for "centro" (city centre).
- By plain: Zanhotel Europa is about 10-15 minutes taxi ride away from the "Guglielmo Marconi" airport. If you want to use public transportation, there is a regular shuttle service between the airport and Bologna central railway station. More information is available at: <https://www.marconiexpress.it/en/information/the-service>



OFFICIAL WEBSITE:

<https://stemnet2026.azuleon.org>

SEGRETERIA ORGANIZZATIVA

Azuleon
Meeting Management Systems

<https://azuleon.org>

