

BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES GROUP



Vice-Rector of the Biomedical Sciences Group,
Prof. Chris Van Geet

Founded in 1425, the University of Leuven is a European top-ranking university. It is organized in three groups: the Group of Science and Technology, the Group of Humanities and the Group of

Biomedical Sciences. The latter consists of 14 departments and three Faculties (Medicine, Pharmaceutical Sciences, and Kinesiology and Rehabilitation Sciences). The Biomedical Sciences Group focuses on human health and disease, and pursues excellence in its three main tasks: research, education and service to society in the area of health and patient care.

As a member of the League of European Research Universities (LERU), the University of Leuven intends to perform research that meets the highest standards. Top research in the field of biomedical sciences is one of its priorities, and ranks it among the best of Europe. Research in the Biomedical Sciences Group is interdisciplinary and international, and involves molecular and cellular investigations, the study of disease models and of normal physiology, the development of novel therapies, epidemiology and health care.

Through its Faculties of Medicine, Pharmaceutical Sciences and Kinesiology and Rehabilitation Sciences, the Group of Biomedical Sciences offers training at the Bachelor, Master and Master-after-Master level. These schools provide education for nearly 10,000 students.

The University Hospitals and Group of Biomedical Sciences form an integrated unit, and are located at the Health Sciences Campus Gasthuisberg in Leuven. In its translational research programmes, basic research of the Biomedical Sciences Group is linked with the high-level clinical research performed at the University Hospitals. Together with the University Hospital, the group offers specialized training programmes in all fields of medicine. Intensive postgraduate programmes insure continued education in medicine, dentistry, pharmacy and rehabilitation.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Biomedical Sciences Group comprises three faculties and fourteen departments. The Faculties of Medicine, Pharmaceutical Sciences, and Kinesiology & Rehabilitation Sciences organize the teaching activities. Research is carried out in the departments and networks. The Health Sciences Campus at Gasthuisberg is host to UZ Leuven and the Biomedical Sciences Group, bringing together more than 10.000 researchers, faculty, medical staff and personnel at its site.

RESEARCH PROFILE

The Biomedical Sciences Group at KU Leuven provides a stimulating environment for all types of research, from fundamental to applied, and from individual projects to large-scale, international research consortia. The Group has a strong international profile. Many come through the highly competitive and prestigious Odysseus and European Research Council (ERC) programmes. Health Axis is a strategic alliance between the biomedical clusters Cambridge (UK), Leuven (Belgium), and Heidelberg (Germany).

Research is organized within a number of departments & networks. Each department contains several research groups that explore specific topics under a global strategic departmental vision. A number of interdisciplinary research networks and institutes run across different departments, such as the Leuven Institute for Neurodegenerative Disorders, the Leuven Cancer Institute, the Medical Imaging Research Center (MIRC), the Rega Institute for Medical Research, the Stem Cell Institute Leuven (SCIL) and the Leuven Bioinformatics Interest Group (BIG).

Through core facilities researchers have access to state-of-the-art technologies. Core facilities aim to push the boundaries of the technologies in areas such as genomics and next-generation sequencing, imaging and animal models.

The Biomedical Sciences Group has a rich partnership with the VIB, dedicated to basic research in the life sciences, and VIB researchers are active in a number of departments. A recent partnership between the KU Leuven, VIB and the IMEC is Neuroelectronics Research Flanders (NERF), which aims to unravel the neuro-circuitry of the human brain.

At the Biomedical Sciences Group translational research is highly encouraged. In several research areas a comprehensive network exists between researchers from the Biomedical Sciences Group, the University Hospitals Leuven (UZ Leuven) and other disciplines. Within UZ Leuven, clinical research activities are coordinated by the Clinical Trial Center (CTC), which supports all medical and paramedical patient-related research.

LRD, the knowledge and technology transfer office of the KU Leuven, supports biomedical researchers in their interactions with industry. Cooperation with the industry includes contract research and joint development of new products and therapies. Joint ventures have led to the creation of successful spin-off companies in the biomedical area such as Thrombogenics, Tigenix and others (www.lrd.kuleuven.be).

EDUCATION

KU Leuven offers high-quality education. Study programmes are research-based and organised within an innovative interdisciplinary framework. The programmes are flexible and use state-of-the-art ICT tools. The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) quality label guarantees that all credits obtained are transparent and fully transferable within Europe.

The university's vision of teaching and learning emphasizes the close link between research and education: study programmes are research-based, thus enabling students to acquire academic competences, including thorough knowledge and skills in the discipline, coupled with a broader interdisciplinary perspective, and a critical and research-oriented attitude. Moreover, students integrate these academic competences within a broad ethical, cultural, and social formation.

The Biomedical Sciences Group offers an extensive range of three-year Bachelor's and two- or three year Master's programmes. English programmes exist mostly at the Master's and doctoral level.

Health Sciences Education Research develops and validates evidence-based and innovative learning methods and studies new emerging technologies in secondary and higher education.

DOCTORAL SCHOOL BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES

Doctoral training and research are structured around twelve interdisciplinary programmes led by internationally recognized scientists and supported by state-of-the-art research facilities. Each programme organizes a set of training activities that stimulate PhD researchers to broaden their scientific horizon and to gain specific expertise in their domain. Lectures by top-level international speakers and directed at PhD researchers ensure first-hand experience with cutting-edge research.

The doctoral school aims to encourage PhD researchers to explore the fundamentals of living systems at all levels and to apply that knowledge to improve human health. Doctoral training includes basic biomedical research, clinical research and public health research, thereby allowing cross-fertilization between disciplines and technologies, and between health care professionals and scientists. The school also provides opportunities for PhD researchers to improve their academic, technical, communicative, and personal skills to prepare them for their future career either inside or outside of academia.

After four years, the doctoral work culminates in the writing of a thesis that is publicly defended. After graduation, PhDs have a variety of professional choices in academia as well as industry, education and civil service.

The doctoral school is strongly internationally oriented and encourages applications from abroad. Specific international calls and programmes, including Erasmus Mundi and Marie Curie training networks, are available in different domains.

BIOMEDICAL LIBRARY

The Biomedical Library provides access to a vast, mainly digital, collection of journals, databases, books and other scientific information. This collection is made available for education, research, and clinical practice to students and staff of the Biomedical Sciences Group and the University Hospital Leuven. The Biomedical Library is a state-of-the-art 'information laboratory' where students and researchers can (learn to) search, evaluate, manage, and exchange biomedical information in an active and collaborative way.



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