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## RAPTOR Mid-Term Meeting Report

8-9 June 2022, PSI, Villigen, Zurich, Switzerland

We are Stefanie Bertschi and Beatrice Foglia, PhD students at OncoRay in Dresden, Germany and at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität in Munich, Germany. We are currently in our first year and we are two out of 15 Early Stage Researchers (ESRs) involved in the Real-Time Adaptive Particle Therapy Of cancerR (RAPTOR) research programme, funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action (MSCA) innovative training network (ITN). We are working on bringing adaptive particle therapy to the clinic; it would allow current uncertainties to be minimised and would increase treatment accuracy to exploit the full benefits of particle therapy. To achieve this goal, the 15 projects are assigned to different parts of this adaptive workflow, such as imaging, intervention and verification. For more details about the programme, you can have a look at the RAPTOR website and at this previous article.

On the 8th and 9th of June, RAPTOR ESRs, supervisors and coordinators gathered at the Paul Scherrer Institute (PSI) facility located in Villigen (Switzerland) for the first RAPTOR Mid-Term Meeting. The main purpose of this event was to meet with the Research Executive Agency (REA) representative and EU officer, Mrs Grigore Ana, as well as meeting with the other ESRs and supervisors in person to start building our network (Figure 1).

The meeting with the REA representative is one of the milestones of the programme and was intended to enable us ESRs to discuss with the officer our experiences within the RAPTOR Network in terms of the training foreseen, supervision arrangements, progress and the impact of the project on our future careers. The main focus of the discussion then moved to administration, supervision, integration and the training of each ESR in the research environment.



Figure 1: ESRs, supervisors and coordinators meet the European Commission officer.

Furthermore, we were finally able to meet all the ESRs taking part in this programme and their supervisors in person. We were able to discuss our projects and also got the chance to know each other. We organised a dinner with the ESRs before the event started (Figure 2), followed by a dinner and a barbecue during the event, which all the supervisors and project coordinators joined as well. It was an amazing experience and we truly believe that we are a harmonious group, being able to work very well together and driving the project further.



*Figure 2: ESRs meet in person for the first time!*

Besides meeting the EU officer, we had some training in taking videos to show our work to the broader public and we had the experience of having our bi-monthly science check-ins in person, with three ESRs presenting their work to discuss its current status and open questions. Moreover, we introduced ourselves and our background as well as planned training and conferences, while also receiving a lot of updates and key information from the coordinator.

The most important thing we took away from this mid-term event was the connection we were able to build between the ESRs and the feeling of being a team working on the same goals. Everyone felt very willing to help and support each other.

It was an amazing experience to be part of such an event, being able to meet our colleagues and other people; we might also work together or visit during a secondment. We are really looking forward to our next opportunity to meet and discuss our progress at the RAPTOR school in Ljubljana, Slovenia. Stay tuned and follow the RAPTOR programme and ESRs on social media!

- Instagram: @raptoresrs
- Twitter: @raptor\_itn
- LinkedIn: RAPTOR consortium



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