

iSTAR Newsletter, June 2025

1. Welcome to the program: **Anastasios Giannou**
2. Award of the Dr. Martini-Preis 2025, **Johannes Hartl**
3. Congratulations to **Johann von Felden**
4. BMBF becomes **BMFTR**!
5. Meet the iSTARs on **LinkedIn**
6. **EMPOWER-ACS** meeting
7. Upcoming events: **iSTAR Retreat 2025**
8. **Significant publications** by iSTARs

1. Welcome to iSTAR



Dr. Anastasios Giannou, physician and senior researcher at the Department of General, Visceral and Thoracic Surgery and I. Department of Medicine. He joined the iSTAR program in May 2025. His research focuses on the microbiome as an immunomodulatory stimulus in metastasis formation.

2. Congratulations to Dr. Johannes Hartl!

In February, Germany's oldest medical prize was awarded to six researchers from the University Medical Center Hamburg-Eppendorf. The prize recognizes outstanding achievements in the field of medical research.

This year, the second prize for the optimization of standard therapy for inflammatory liver disease went to **Dr. Johannes Hartl** and Dr. Jan Philipp Weltzsch, who developed innovative approaches to improve treatment methods.



Dr. Jan Philipp Weltzsch & Dr. Johannes Hartl (UKE - Unternehmenskommunikation - Dr. Martini-Preis 2025)

If you are interested in further information on the work of the award winners, please follow the [link](#).

3. Congratulations to Johann von Felden



PD Dr. Johann von Felden is the first iSTAR, who started in July 2022 in the programme. Yesterday he successfully passed the iSTAR evaluation.

Congratulations and we wish you continued success for the future!

4. BMBF becomes BMFTR!

New ministry, new name: „*Bundesministerium für Forschung, Technologie und Raumfahrt*“
Please follow the [link](#) for further information.

With funding from the:



Federal Ministry
of Research, Technology
and Space

5. iSTAR on [Linked in](#)

In order to increase the visibility of the iSTARs and the program, the social media presence will be increased. For this purpose, an iSTAR LinkedIn channel has recently been launched.

You are welcome to follow iSTAR on [Linked in](#). Please scan the QR Code:



6. EMPOWER-ACS meeting in Würzburg

In May, two representatives of the iSTAR program as well as the iSTAR coordinator took part in a meeting organized by the EMPOWER-ACS platform. They had the opportunity to meet scientists and coordinators, who are part of the nationwide BMFTR-sponsored clinician scientist programs. It was a great opportunity to network, exchange knowledge and take part in team building activities.



The iSTAR speaker **Dr. Fabian Braun** (left) and **Dr. Tilo Freiwald** (both from the Department of Nephrology, Kidney Transplant, Rheumatology and Endocrinology) together with the iSTAR coordinator, **Dr. Sonja Hiekmann** (Würzburg, May 2025).

7. Save the date: iSTAR Retreat 2025

The next iSTAR Retreat will take place on the **20th (& 21st – iSTARs only) of November** in Alt Duvvenstedt, Schleswig-Holstein.

Please register now by following the link: [UKE - iSTAR - Registration for the iSTAR Retreat](#)

SAVE THE DATE

20th to 21st of November 2025



Retreat 2025

Seehotel Töpferhaus, Alt Duvenstedt

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In **2026 a joint (A)CS retreat** with all members of the iSTAR, iDfellows and iPRIME-CS programme is planned. Please already save the preliminary date: **25th and 26th of June 2026**.

8. Significant publications by iSTARs

Fabian Braun

Braun F, Mandel AM, Blomberg L, Wong MN, Chatzinikolaou G, Meyer DH, Reinelt A, Nair V, Akbar-Haase R, McCown PJ, Haas F, Chen H, Rahmatollahi M, Fermin D, Ebbestad R, Slaats GG, Bork T, Schell C, Koehler S, Brinkkoetter PT, Lindenmeyer MT, Cohen CD, Kann M, Unnersjö-Jess D, Bloch W, Sampson MG, Dollé ME, Puellas VG, Kretzler M, Garinis GA, Huber TB, Schermer B, Benzing T, Schumacher B, Kurschat CE. **Loss of genome maintenance is linked to mTORC1 signaling and accelerates podocyte damage**. JCI Insight. 2025 May 20:e172370. doi: 10.1172/jci.insight.172370. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 40392611.

Malte Mohme

Schulte SC, Peter W, Rosenberger G, Schäfer M, Maire CL, Rüniger A, Ryba A, Riecken K, Fita KD, Matschke J, Akyüz N, Dierlamm J, Klau GW, Ricklefs FL, Gempt J, Westphal M, Lamszus K, Diltz A, Mohme M. **Somatic mutations in HLA class genes and antigen presenting molecules in malignant glioma**. Cancer Immunol Res. 2025 May 5. doi: 10.1158/2326-6066.CIR-24-0419. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 40323360.

Alsousli M, Maire CL, Piffko A, Matschke J, Glau L, Reetz M, Schneegans S, Emurlai G, Asey B, Rüniger A, Peine S, Kropidlowski J, Gempt J, Glatzel M, Westphal M, Tolosa E, Lamszus K, Pantel K, Joosse SA, Mohme M, Wikman H. **Altered CD4 T cell response in oligometastatic non-small cell lung cancer brain metastasis**. Acta Neuropathol Commun. 2025 May 9;13(1):95. doi: 10.1186/s40478-025-02011-1. PMID: 40346687; PMCID: PMC12063345.

Johann von Felden

Gorgulho J, Loosen SH, Masood R, Giehren F, Pagani F, Buescher G, Kocheise L, Joerg V, Schmidt C, Schulze K, Roderburg C, Kinkel E, Fritzsche B, Wehmeyer S, Schmidt B, Kachel P, Rolling C, Götze J, Busch A, Sinn M, Pereira-Veiga T, Wikman H, Geffken M, Peine S, Matschl U, Altfield M, Huber S, Lohse AW, Beier F, Brümmendorf TH, Bokemeyer C, Luedde T, von Felden J. **Soluble and EV-bound CD27 act as antagonistic biomarkers in patients with solid tumors undergoing immunotherapy**. J Exp Clin Cancer Res. 2024 Nov 8;43(1):298. doi: 10.1186/s13046-024-03215-4. PMID: 39511626; PMCID: PMC11545160.