
CATRIN
Czech Advanced Technology and Research Institute
ACCELERATOR
2st Innovative Drug Discovery Symposium
25.5. – 28.5. 2026 Valtice

The 1st Valtice Workshop on Bio-Entrepreneurship is kindly financially supported by

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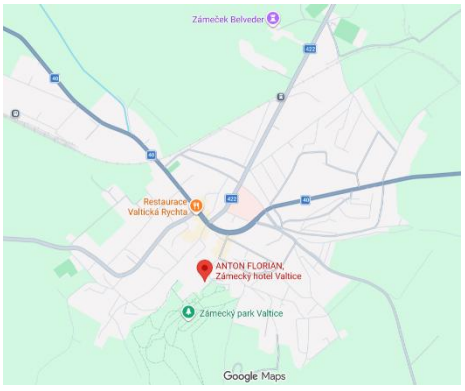
Location

Zámecký hotel Anton Florian



Organized by Barbora Blahova Prudilova and Dr. Alexander Dömling

Introduction

Entrepreneurship plays a central role in modern society by transforming scientific discoveries into products and technologies that address unmet societal and medical needs. While invention focuses on creating something new, innovation is the successful implementation and translation of ideas into practical impact. In biomedical sciences, entrepreneurship is increasingly important to bridge the gap between academic research and clinical application.

The 1st Biomedical Entrepreneurship Workshop aims to provide students and young researchers with practical insight into the processes required to translate biomedical discoveries into start-up companies and therapeutic innovations.

Description of the Workshop

The workshop combines expert lectures with practical team-based entrepreneurial exercises.

From morning until noon, invited speakers from academia, industry, venture capital, and biotechnology entrepreneurship will provide lectures covering key aspects of biomedical innovation and company creation. Topics include:

- Transition from preclinical research to clinical development (Dr. Antuch)
- Patent and intellectual property strategies (Dr. Forstmeyer)
- Company foundation and early-stage business development (Navratil)
- The world of venture capital and financing (Hladky)
- Entrepreneurial experiences and start-up case studies (Dr. Groves, Loeser, Jurecka)

In the afternoon sessions, students will work in small groups of three on the concept of a virtual biomedical start-up company. The teams will develop:

- The scientific and commercial idea
- Market opportunities
- Business and financing strategies
- Intellectual property concepts
- Investor-oriented presentation strategies

The workshop will culminate in a final investor-style pitch presentation (~15–20 minutes) in front of the invited lecturers and audience, followed by questions and discussion.

Valtice Workshop Schedule
(25th – 28th May 2026)

Monday

15:30 – 15:45 Alexander Dömling, ***Welcome and introduction***

15:45 – 16:00 Fluorochem, ***TBA***

16:00 – 17:00 Thomas Loesser, ***Commercializing IP: The Endless River***

17:00 – 18:00 Walfrido Antuch, ***The CMC Continuum: An Introduction to Phase-Dependent Regulatory Expectations***

18:00 – 19:00 Jiri Navrátil, ***From Invention to Innovation***

19:30 **Dinner**

Tuesday

9.30 – 10:30 Dietmar Forstmeyer, ***Introduction to and advanced strategic patenting***

10:30 – 11:30 Andrew Hladký, ***Preparing a Biomedical Discovery for Venture Capital***

11:30 – 13.00 **Lunch**

13:00 – 18:00 workshop, in-between **coffee break**

18:00- 19:00 Roman Jurečka, ***Case Study & Practical IP Commercialization at UP/CATRIN***

19:00 **Dinner**

Wednesday

9:30 – 10:30 Matthew Groves, ***Protyon: The Journey***

Strudent Group Pitching

10:30 - 11:00 **REEactor**

11:00 - 11.30 **TBA**

11:30 – 12.00 **AMADTEUS**

12.00 – 13:30 **Lunch**

13:30 - 14:00 **TBA**

14:00 - 14.30 **Nexulyn**

14.30 - 15:00 **DELGENE**

15:00 - 15:30 **Coffee break** discussion

15:30 - 16:00 **RNova**

16:00 – 16:30 ***Round table discussion and welfare***

18:00 **Dinner**

Abstracts

The CMC Continuum: An Introduction to Phase-Dependent Regulatory Expectations

Walfrido Ernesto Antuch Garcia

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Getting a promising molecule from the lab bench to a Phase 3 pivotal trial is one of the most complex journeys in drug development – and Chemistry, Manufacturing, and Controls (CMC) is the backbone that holds it all together. In this session, Walfrido Antuch draws on deep industry experience to map out how CMC requirements transform as a program matures.

From the relative freedom of preclinical research to the stringent quality and scale standards that define late-stage development, every step demands a new level of rigor. This high-level overview will spotlight the critical milestones a molecule must hit before it can enter the clinic – helping researchers and innovators understand not just the science, but the strategic and regulatory landscape that shapes every successful drug program.

From Invention to Innovation

Jiří Navrátil

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A groundbreaking discovery sitting in a lab drawer is not an innovation – it's a missed opportunity. This session with Jiri Navratil is a practical roadmap for researchers who want to see their work make a real-world impact.

Participants will be guided through the key steps that bridge invention and innovation: identifying results with genuine commercial potential, assessing market readiness, engaging early adopters, and choosing the right path forward – whether that means licensing to an established player or founding a spin-out of your own. If you've ever wondered how science becomes a product, this talk is your starting point.

Introduction to and Advanced Strategic Patenting

Dietmar Forstmeyer

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Patents are not just legal documents – they are strategic assets that can make or break a company's future. Dietmar Forstmeyer, whose IP work has underpinned deals generating hundreds of millions of dollars, brings both legal rigor and real-world business insight to this essential session.

Beginning with the fundamentals of how patents and patent applications work, Dietmar moves through the key considerations every innovator should know before filing – and reveals the principles behind truly effective patent strategy. Whether you are protecting your first invention or managing a complex IP portfolio, this session will sharpen the way you think about intellectual property.

Preparing a Biomedical Discovery for Venture Capital

Andrew Hladký

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Investors see hundreds of pitches. What separates the ones that raise institutional capital from the ones that don't? Andrew Hladky, an early-stage deep-tech investor, pulls back the curtain on how biomedical spin-outs are really evaluated.

This session examines the signals that indicate a company is ready – and the red flags that quietly kill deals before they start. From IP structure and founding team dynamics to equity arrangements, milestone planning, and capital strategy, the decisions made at formation stage have long shadows. This is the talk to attend before you approach your first investor.

Case Study & Practical IP Commercialization at UP/CATRIN

Roman Jurečka

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How does a university actually turn research into commercial reality? Using the evolution of Mössbauer spectrometers at Palacký University as a vivid, concrete case study, Roman Jurecka maps the full journey – from the spark of an idea to a viable commercial exit.

This session navigates the internal processes that researchers often overlook: IP disclosures, feasibility assessments, conflict-of-interest management, and the fundamental choice between licensing and spin-off creation. Strategic frameworks including Technology Readiness Levels (TRL),

the "Valley of Death," and the Innovation Ecosystem are brought to life in the UP/CATRIN context, giving participants a directly applicable toolkit for their own commercialization journeys.

Protyon: The Journey

Matthew Groves

m.r.groves@rug.nl, Professor and Founder of Protyon BV, Groningen

Some startup stories are polished for the pitch deck. This one is told with hard-won honesty.

Protyon (www.protyon.tech) was born from a chance meeting at an entrepreneurship workshop – a collaboration between the University of Groningen and the University Medical Centre Groningen, aiming to guide clinicians in choosing the right medication when patients develop resistance mutations in disease-driving proteins. What followed was a period of intense excitement and real disappointment, full of decisions made, mistakes made, and lessons learned the hard way.

Matthew Groves will walk through it all: building the right team, finding your "hero," the myths and realities of pitch decks, when and why to seek investors, navigating legal and licensing hurdles, knowing when to pivot, and bridging the gap between technology and the messy real world. This is the session where theory meets the unfiltered truth of startup life.

Commercializing IP: The Endless River

Thomas Loesser

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What does it take to turn cutting-edge science into a global biotech success story? Thomas Loesser and Dietmar Forstmeyer's journey began at Morphochem, a venture-backed startup with a bold mission: create novel small molecules that could change medicine. Backed by a world-class international venture capital syndicate, the team built a rich IP portfolio — one that Dietmar carefully stewarded through every deal and corporate restructuring.

When Morphochem's business units separated, the core research team pressed on, developing small molecule therapies for neurodegenerative diseases. But funding was running dry — until Thomas stepped in with a bold, unconventional solution: an equity-based licensing deal that gave birth to Neuron23, Inc. in San Francisco. That single creative move, made possible only through years of rigorous IP management, has since generated over $380 million in value.

And the river keeps flowing. In December 2025, a spin-out of the spin-out — Sundance Biosciences — launched with significant backing from existing Neuron23 investors. This session is a masterclass in long-term IP thinking: how patient, strategic deal-making can transform laboratory discoveries into lasting commercial empires.

Student workshop presentations:

Group 1: Imma Capriello, Benedetta Sciacca, Mayur Murkim – **REEactor**

REEactor is a deep-tech company developing advanced molecular and process technologies for the efficient, selective, and sustainable separation of rare earth elements critical to modern energy, electronics, and defense industries.

Group 2: Dr. Vishvanatha THIMMALAPURA MARULAPPA, Samatha Masineni, Maria Cristina Molaro – **Nexulyn Team**

Nexulyn Therapeutics is an oncology-focused biotechnology company developing next-generation antibody–drug conjugates (ADCs) through a proprietary technology platform combining a novel class of ultra-potent cytotoxic payloads with innovative in situ linker technologies designed to improve selectivity, stability, and therapeutic efficacy.

Group 3: Dr. Thiago MOREIRA PEREIRA, Dr. Pravin Hasuram Patil, Elisabetta La Scola– **DELGENE Team**

DELGENE Technologies is a drug discovery company combining proprietory unions of multicomponent reactions (UMCRs) with acoustic droplet ejection and automated DNA-encoded library (DEL) technologies to access and explore vast, previously inaccessible chemical space for next-generation therapeutics.

Group 4: Riccardo Fusco, Shahrrzad Mahdavialibad – **AMADTEUS Team**

AMADEUS is a deep-tech drug discovery company leveraging highly miniaturized automated chemistry, acoustic droplet ejection, and AI-enabled high-throughput experimentation to accelerate the design, synthesis, and optimization of next-generation therapeutics.

Group 5: Dr. Zeinab SAEDI, Dr. Emis Ingenito, Maria Eriminia Schiano – **TBA**

Group 6: Dr. Atilio Reyes Romero, Camilla Casciello, Caterina De Rosa – **RNova Therapeutics Team**

RNova Therapeutics is a biotechnology company developing next-generation small molecules that selectively modulate RNA structure and function to unlock novel therapeutic opportunities across cancer, genetic, and infectious diseases.

Group 7: Dr. Andrew Miller, Hadad Yazan, Chiara Battisegola - **TBA**


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