

PET-RTRC

*The latest news from the PET Radiotracer
Translation and Resource Center*

Letter from the Program Director



Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the Fall/Winter 2023 edition of the PET-RTRC newsletter. First and foremost, the Center was renewed for an additional five years starting this past September! After a rigorous Site Visit review in April and followup with the NIBIB program office it was determined that the Center was a valued national resource that should be continued into the next cycle. We would like to thank everyone involved in the Center, including the Collaborative Projects, Service Projects, and External Advisory and Tracer Review Committees. The Center is such a valuable resource due to everyone's involvement.

Over the summer, we had booths at SNMMI in Chicago and WMIC in Prague. Thanks to everyone who stopped by to learn more about the Center. In addition, a P41 Symposium was held at the WMIC meeting in Prague. This symposium was well attended and presentations were given by Dr. Tatjana Atanasijevic of NIBIB who described the P41 funding mechanism as well as by Drs. El Fakhri (MGH), Pomper (Johns Hopkins), and Gropler who discussed the resources and science around their P41 Centers. Dr. Zahi Fayad from the Icahn School of Medicine gave an outstanding seminar in October entitled "Whole Person Care: Toward Data Driven Medicine". In December, the PET-RTRC will co-sponsor the Michael Welch lecture given by Dr. Robert Mach from UPenn.

In this issue, the Spotlight section focuses on the exciting work of Zhude (Will) Tu, PhD, PI of TR&D 1. This project investigates the development and evaluation of imaging agents targeting S1PR receptors, which are of clinical significance in Multiple Sclerosis and cancer. Our 2024 Workshops and Scientific Session are set for February 20-22. [Registration](#) is now open. The Workshops will focus on Imaging of Immunotherapy, Neuroimaging, and FDA regulatory updates. The Scientific Session will feature Kory Lavine, MD, PhD and Steven Brody, MD. These sessions will be conducted in a hybrid manner and those that can attend in person can tour our facilities on the morning of February 22.

Please visit our website to learn more about the [PET-RTRC](#) and our upcoming activities. To stay up to date with our most recent developments or to be added to our mailing list, please contact Michelle Hoelscher at michellehoelscher@wustl.edu

Best Regards,

Robert J Gropler, MD
PET-RTRC Program Director

Fall/Winter 2023

A Look Inside

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The PET-RTRC is the U.S. innovation hub for the development of novel PET radiotracers. Leading the way for a nationwide network of collaborators, the center seeks to expand the understanding of diseases and advance the mission of precision imaging.

The PET-RTRC is supported by the NIH NIBIB Grant # P41 EB025815

MIR Mallinckrodt Institute
of Radiology

NIH National Institute of
Biomedical Imaging
and Bioengineering

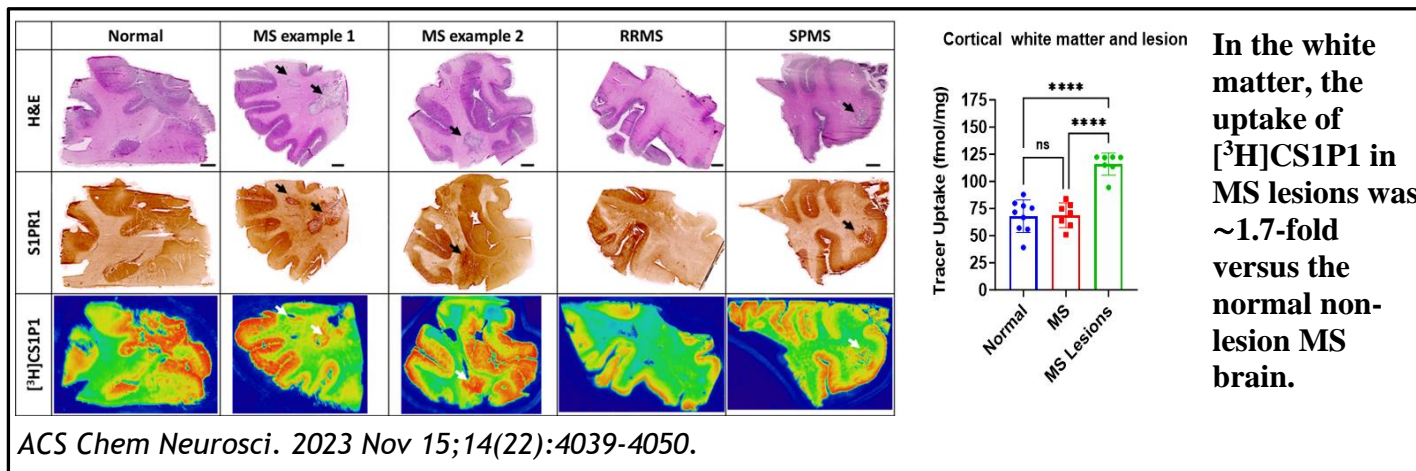
Spotlight



The NIBIB funded P41 PET-RTRC program at WUSTL and MIR aims to develop new PET radiotracers to deliver accurate diagnosis and personalized treatment of human disease. During the current funding cycle, the PET-RTRC programmatic mission is focused upon developing PET radiotracers for imaging inflammation. Among the three Translational Research and Development (TR&D) projects, **TR&D 1** (Led by **Dr. Zhude (Will) Tu**, Professor of Radiology, and Co-leader Dr. Robyn Klein, Professor of Medicine, Pathology & Immunology, and Neurosciences) has been working on the development and evaluation of imaging agents targeting S1PR receptors, which are of clinical significance in Multiple Sclerosis (MS) and cancer.

As one of the three TR&D projects in the previous P41 cycle, we successfully developed, validated, and transferred a C-11 labeled sphingosine phosphate-1 receptor 1 (S1PR1) radiotracer into clinical imaging for neurological diseases such as multiple sclerosis (MS), AD/PD, cerebrovascular cognitive dementia, schizophrenia, and other diseases. Our proof of mechanism study in MS demonstrated that S1PR1 could serve as a biomarker for neuroinflammation in MS, thus PET with a S1PR1 radiotracer can quantitatively assess the status of neuroinflammation in the brain. Our autoradiography study and immunohistochemistry analysis showed that MS white matter lesion regions have 1.7-fold high S1PR1 expression compared to MS white matter non-lesion regions and normal brain white matter. We are now in the process of transferring an F-18 labeled S1PR1 specific radiotracer to clinical use. This F-18 radiotracer will facilitate multiple clinical trials to explore S1PR1 PET in neurological diseases and in other peripheral system disorders.

In addition, we are also developing S1PR2 radiotracers for MS and bladder cancer. PET with a S1PR2-specific radiotracer will help identify MS or bladder cancer patients that may benefit from treatment with S1PR2 antagonists, or with S1PR2-targeted radiotherapies. Both S1PR1 and S1PR2 belong to a five members family (S1PR1-5) that are G-protein coupled receptors. They play critical roles in the central nervous system, immune system, metabolite system, diabetes, and cancers. S1PR2 is particularly involved in innate immune cell function, immune cell trafficking, and germinal center niche confinement. S1PR2 is expressed by brain endothelial cells and has been shown to modulate microglial activation. In published studies, we reported the synthesis of > 60 new molecules as candidate S1PR2 ligands including some that have high potency and high selectivity for S1PR2. We are evaluating the lead candidates in animal model of diseases to identify the most promising S1PR2 radiotracer for translational clinical investigation.



Collaborative Projects

ALABAMA

University of Alabama at Birmingham
Cancer Inflammation

ARIZONA

BNI Phoenix
Multiple Sclerosis

CALIFORNIA

Stanford University
Multiple Sclerosis
Pancreatic Cancer

CONNECTICUT

Yale University
Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm
Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome

GEORGIA

Emory University
Bacterial Infection

LOUISIANA

Louisiana State University
Ischemic Vascular Remodeling

MISSOURI

Washington University School of Medicine
Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm
Cardiac Inflammation
Neuroinflammation
Neuroinflammation in Nigrostriatal Injury

NEW YORK

Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center
Cancer Biology

NORTH CAROLINA

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Bladder Cancer

Service Projects

CALIFORNIA

University of California San Diego
Metastatic Cancer

University of Southern California
Myeloma Bone Disease

CONNECTICUT

Yale University
Mitochondrial Diseases
Neuroinflammation

MISSOURI

Saint Louis University
Cardiac Inflammation

Washington University School of Medicine
Multiple Sclerosis
Osteoarthritis
Pulmonary Fibrosis

NEW YORK

Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai
Myocardial Infarction

PENNSYLVANIA

University of Pittsburgh Medical Center
Atherosclerosis

TEXAS

University of Texas Southwestern
Kidney Injury

UTAH

University of Utah
Atherosclerosis

WASHINGTON DC

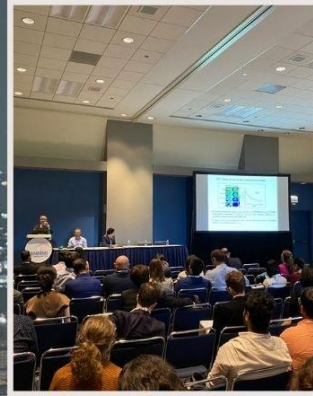
Howard University
Traumatic Brain Injury

GERMANY

Hannover University
Cardiac Inflammation and Fibrosis

Interested in becoming a member of the Center?

Please fill out the [Collaborative Project](#) or [Service Project](#) application and send to michellehoelscher@wustl.edu



SNMMI 2023



*Chicago,
Illinois*



P-41 Symposium @ WMIC | September 9, 2023

Robert Gropler, MD | Georges El Fakhri, PhD | Martin Pomper, MD, PhD | Tatjana Atanasijevic, PhD



The Directors of the 3 Centers that comprise the faction of Molecular Imaging Technology P-41 Centers were invited to speak along with NCBIB P41 Scientific Program Manager, Dr. Tatjana Atanasijevic, at [WMIC](#) in Prague, Czech Republic in September.

Seminar Speaker | October 10, 2023

Zahi Fayad, PhD- Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai

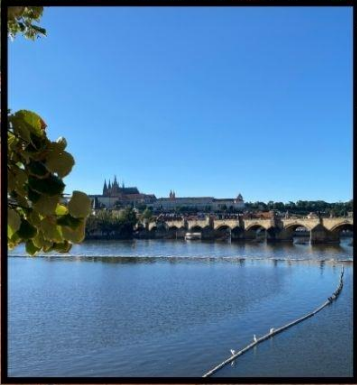
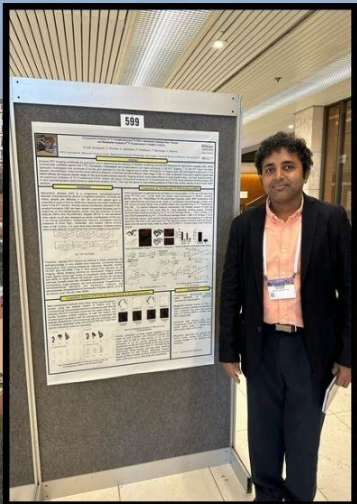


In October, we welcomed Dr. Zahi Fayad from the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai to give a Seminar titled “*Whole Person Care: Toward Data Driven Medicine*”. This lecture was offered both in person and via Zoom.

WMIC 2023



Prague,
Czech
Republic



Publications

TR&D 1:

Luo Z, Han J, Liu H, Rosenberg AJ, Chen DL, Gropler RJ, Perlmutter JS, Tu Z. *Syntheses and in vitro biological evaluation of S1PR1 ligands and PET studies of four F-18 labeled radiotracers in the brain of nonhuman primates*. *Organic & biomolecular chemistry*. 2018 December 5;16(47):9171-9184. [PubMed PMID: 30462126](#)

Luo Z, Liu H, Klein RS, Tu Z. *Design, synthesis, and in vitro bioactivity evaluation of fluorine-containing analogues for sphingosine-1-phosphate 2 receptor*. *Bioorganic & medicinal chemistry*. 2019 August 15;27(16):3619-3631. [PubMed PMID: 31279524](#)

Luo Z, Gu J, Dennett RC, Gaehle GG, Perlmutter JS, Chen DL, Benzinger TLS, Tu Z. *Automated production of a sphingosine-1 phosphate receptor 1 (S1P1) PET radiopharmaceutical ¹¹C S1P1 for human use*. *Applied radiation and isotopes*. 2019 October;152:30-36. [PubMed PMID: 31280104](#)

Liu H, Luo Z, Gu J, Jiang H, Joshi S, Shoghi KI, Zhou Y, Gropler RJ, Benzinger TLS, Tu Z. *In vivo Characterization of Four 18F-Labeled S1PR1 Tracers for Neuroinflammation*. *Mol Imaging Biol*. 2020 Oct;22(5):1362-1369. doi: 10.1007/s11307-020-01514-8. [PubMed PMID: 32602083](#)

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Chen DL, Ballout S, Chen L, Cheriyan J, Choudhury G, Denis-Bacelar AM, Emond E, Erlandsson K, Fisk M, Fraioli F, et al. *Consensus recommendations on the use of ¹⁸F-FDG PET/CT in lung disease*. *J Nucl Med*. 2020 Dec; 61(12):1701-1707. [PubMed PMID: 32948678](#)

Zhou Y, Flores S, Mansor S, Hornbeck RC, Tu Z, Perlmutter JS, Ances B, Morris JC, Gropler RJ, Benzinger TLS. *Spatially constrained kinetic modeling with dual reference tissues improves ¹⁸F-flortaucipir PET in studies of Alzheimer disease*. *Eur J Nucl Med Mol Imaging*. 2021 Sep; 48(10):3172-3186. [PubMed PMID: 33599811](#)

Jiang H, Gu J, Zhao H, Joshi S, Perlmutter JS, Gropler RJ, Klein RS, Benzinger TLS, Tu Z. *PET study of sphingosine-1-phosphate receptor expression in response to S. aureus infection*. *Mol Imaging*. 2021 Oct 4;2021:9982020. [PubMed PMID: 34934406](#)

Jiang H, Joshi S, Liu H, Mansor S, Qiu L, Zhao H, Whitehead T, Gropler RJ, Wu GF, Cross AH, Benzinger TLS, Shoghi KI, Perlmutter JS, Tu Z. *In vitro and in vivo investigation of S1PR1 expression in the CNS using [³H]CS1P1 and [¹¹C]CS1P1*. *ACS Chem Neurosci*. 2021 Oct 6; 12(19):3733-3744. [PubMed PMID: 34516079](#)

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Chand GB, Jiang H, Miller JP, Rhodes CH, Tu Z, Wong DF. *Differential sphingosine-1-phosphate receptor-1 protein expression in the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex between schizophrenia type 1 and type 2*. *Front Psychiatry*. 2022 Mar; 13:827981. [PubMed PMID: 35350429](#)

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Heo GS, Kopecky B, Sultan D, Ou M, Feng G, Bajpai G, Zhang X, Luehmann H, Detering L, Su Y, Leuschner F, Combadiere C, Kreisel D, Gropler RJ, Brody SL, Liu Y, Lavine KJ. *Molecular imaging visualizes recruitment of inflammatory monocytes and macrophages to the injured heart*. Circ Res. 2019 Mar; 124(6):881-890. [PubMed PMID: 30661445](#)

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Baba O, Huang LH, Elvington A, Szpakowska M, Sultan D, Heo GS, Zhang X, Luehmann H, Detering L, Chevigne A, Liu Y, Randolph GJ. *CXCR4-Binding Positron Emission Tomography Tracers Link Monocyte Recruitment and Endothelial Injury in Murine Atherosclerosis*. Arterioscler Thromb Vasc Biol. 2021 Feb;41(2):822-836. [PubMed PMID: 3327748](#)

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Liu Z, Liao F, Zhu J, Zhou D, Heo G, Luehmann H, Scozzi D, Parks A, Hachem R, Byers D, Tague L, Kulkarni H, Cano M, Wong B, Li W, Huang H, Krupnick A, Kreisel D, Liu Y, Gelman A. *Reprogramming alveolar macrophage responses to TGF- β reveals CCR2+ monocyte activity that promotes bronchiolitis obliterans syndrome*. J Clin Invest. 2022 Oct; 132(19):e159229. [PubMed PMID: 36189800](#)

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Sastriques-Dunlop S, Elizondo-Benedetto S, Arif B, Meade R, Zaghoul MS, English SJ, Liu Y, Zayed MZ. *Ketosis Prevents Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Rupture Through CCR2 Downregulation and Enhanced MMP Balance*. bioRxiv.2023 Feb 22;2023.02.21.529460. doi: 10.1101/2023.02.21.529460. [PubMed PMID: 36865192](#)

Maier A, Toner YC, Munitz J, Sullivan NAT, Sakuri K, Meerwaldt AE, Brechbühl EES, Prévot G, van Elsas Y, Soultanidis G, Rasidian M, Pérez-Medine C, Heo GY, Gropler RJ, Liu Y, Reiner T, Nahrendorf M, Swirski FK, Strijkers GJ, Teunissen AJP, Calcagno C, Fayad ZA, Mulder WJM, Van Leent MMT. *Multiparametric immunoimaging maps inflammatory signatures in murine myocardial infarction models*. J Am Coll Cardiol Basic Trans Science. Null2023. o (o).

TR&D 3:

Sivapackiam J, Liao F, Zhou D, Shoghi KI, Gropler RJ, Gelman AE, Sharma V: *Galuminox: Preclinical validation of a novel PET tracer for noninvasive imaging of oxidative stress in vivo*. Redox Biology, 2020, 37: [PubMed PMID: 33039825](#)

Fox, GC, Su X, Davis JL, Xu Y, Kwakwa KA, Ross MH, Fontana F, Xiang J, Esser AK, Cordell E, Pagliai K, Dang HX, Sivapackiam J, Stewart SA, Maher CA, Bakewell SJ, Fitzpatrick JAJ, Sharma V, Achilefu S, Veis DJ, Lanza GM, Weillbaeher KN. *Targeted Therapy to $\beta 3$ Integrin Reduces Chemoresistance in Breast Cancer Bone Metastases* Mol Cancer Ther June 1 2021 20 (6) 1183-1198; [PubMed PMID: 33785647](#)

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QI2R:

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Upcoming Events

REGISTRATION OPEN | February 20-22, 2024

PET-RTRC | PET Radiotracer Translation and Resource Center

2024 REGISTRATION OPEN: St. Louis, Missouri

Tuesday, February 20	Imaging of Immunotherapy Workshop
Wednesday, February 21	Developments in Neuroimaging + FDA Regulatory Updates Workshop
Thursday, February 22	2 Plenary Sessions

Dr. Kory Lavine- Washington University in St. Louis
“Mechanistic Determinants of Cardiac Inflammation and Fibrosis”

Dr. Steven Brody- Washington University in St. Louis
“Clinical Needs for Molecular Imaging of Non-Malignant Lung Disease”




Check for Updates @ <https://www.mir.wustl.edu/research/global-centers/pet-rtrc/>
 Contact PETRTRC@wustl.edu







PET-RTRC Annual Workshop | Scientific Session

More information and registration link on our [website](#).

Look for Us

PET-RTRC BOOTH #206 @ **SNMMI June 8-11, 2024** | Toronto, Canada





Happy
Holidays!

WISHING YOU AND YOUR LOVED
ONES A WONDERFUL HOLIDAY
SEASON AND WARM WISHES FOR
THE NEW YEAR

Cheers, The PET-RTRC Team

Leadership

Executive Committee Members

Robert Gropler, MD | Chair, Program Director,
TR&D 2 Co-Leader

Will Tu, PhD | TR&D 1 Leader

Yongjian Liu, PhD | TR&D 2 Leader

Vijay Sharma, PhD | TR&D 3 Leader

Buck Rogers, PhD | Training & Dissemination
Project Leader

Michael Nickels, PhD | Training & Dissemination
Co-Leader-Dissemination

Richard Laforest, PhD | QI2R Leader

Andrew Gelman, PhD | TR&D 3 Co- Leader

Robyn Klein, MD, PhD | TR&D 1 Co- Leader

Michelle Hoelscher, CNMT | Program Manager

How to find us...

mir.wustl.edu/pet-rtrc

[#PETRTRC](https://twitter.com/PETRTRC)

External Advisory Committee

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California San Francisco (Chair)

Richard Carson, PhD | Yale University

Peter Caravan, PhD | Harvard University

David Mankoff, MD, PhD | University of
Pennsylvania

Sruti Shiva, PhD | University of Pittsburgh

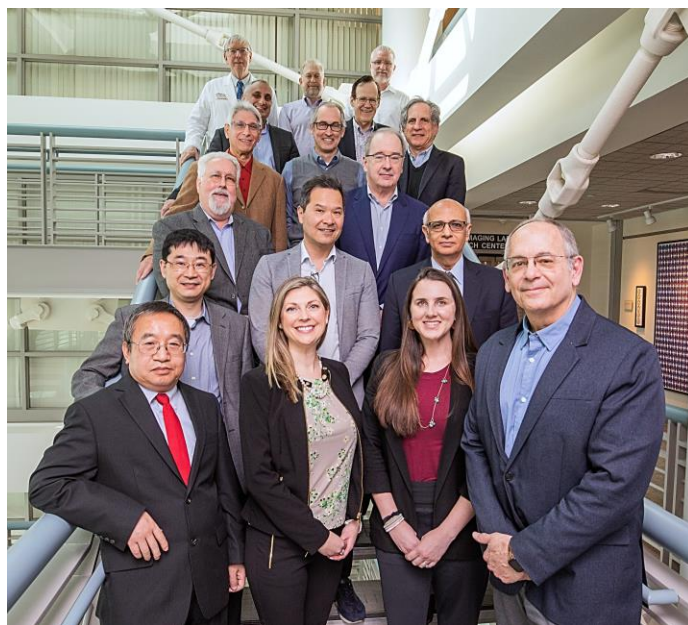
Tracer Review Committee

Peter Scott, PhD | University of Michigan (Chair)

Steven Liang, PhD | Emory University

Julie Sutcliffe, PhD | University of California-
Davis

Richard L Wahl, MD | Washington University



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SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

MIR Mallinckrodt Institute
of Radiology