

July 2026

Summer issue



A COMPREHENSIVE NETWORK AGAINST BRAIN CANCER

Editorial: Leadership, Diversity, and the Spirit of Istanbul

Dear Net4Brain Community,

As we wrap up the first half of 2026, our comprehensive European network against brain cancer stands more united, visible, and vibrant than ever before. This special issue marks a historic transition from reflection to action.

Tackling central nervous system malignancies is a borderless, global challenge that demands diverse intellectual perspectives. We take immense pride in our network's rich diversity, particularly highlighted by the brilliant women leading our core workflows, from our Science Communication Coordinator, Terézia Kisková-Šimková, and Young Researchers Group Leader, Annalisa Occhipinti, to our industrious PhD candidates like Bárbara Marques and Khuraman Sayin.

This month, that collective energy culminated on the shores of the Bosphorus for our highly anticipated 3rd Net4Brain Annual Meeting. In this post-meeting bimonthly issue, we provide an extensive review of the breakthrough science presented in Istanbul, launch our highly creative "Tea Time with Net4Brain" column, showcase past global recaps, and preview upcoming training opportunities.

Thank you for your unyielding enthusiasm, which remains the solid foundation of tomorrow's clinical breakthroughs.

Warm regards,

Dr. Aylin Toplu-Hocaoğlu (WG6 leader)





Net4Brain
Let's beat brain cancer together

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EUROPEAN COOPERATION
IN SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

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ALL ROADS LED TO ISTANBUL: High-Capacity Translation at ANAMED

Date: June 1–3, 2026

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COST Action CA22103

3rd Annual Meeting
Net4Brain
Istanbul

JUNE 1-3, 2026
Koç Üniversitesi, İstanbul, Türkiye

Scan the QR code to access online resources,
including speaker and poster abstracts

Host Institution: Koç University Graduate School of Health Sciences, İstanbul, Türkiye

Venue: Koç University Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations (ANAMED), İstiklal Avenue, Beyoğlu
High Demand for Participation

The 3rd Annual Meeting saw an unprecedented volume of participation requests, far exceeding our initial capacity. This confirms Net4Brain as the leading European hub for brain cancer translation.



Collaborative Synergy

Over 200 attendees from 38+ countries converged in the heart of Istanbul. The atmosphere at ANAMED fostered deep multidisciplinary networking between clinicians, biologists, and AI experts.

Day 1: Empowering the Next Generation (ECR Forum)

The initial day began on the -2nd Floor Main Saloon with welcome addresses from our Action Chair, Xinzhong Li, and YRG Leader, Annalisa Occhipinti. A flagship panel and an Early Career Researcher (ECR) career development path session set an inclusive tone.

Senior mentors like Milica Pešić and Radim Jančálek shared clinical-academic pathway insights during keynotes. Five outstanding Short-Term Scientific Mission (STSM) grant talks demonstrated our network's focus on mobility.



The evening concluded with parallel Management Committee planning workflows and an interactive collaborative networking event bringing all generations together.

SCIENTIFIC HORIZONS:

Day 2 & 3: Working Group Deliverables & Keynote Dissection

The core scientific program brought together top international speakers who are breaking boundaries down from the bench straight to clinical translational recommendations.

Our scientific program featured world-leading experts who pushed the boundaries of our shared knowledge.



Following the scientific tracks in Istanbul, the Net4Brain Core Group and Management Committee held a highly productive strategic meeting to map out the future of our Action. With our network expanding rapidly, these leadership discussions focused on maximizing the impact of our upcoming deliverables, streamlining cross-border data sharing protocols, and setting a sustainable roadmap for late 2026 and beyond. Exciting milestones are on the horizon, and we are fully geared up for the journey ahead!

EXCITING NEW INITIATIVE – LAUNCHING SOON!

COMING SOON: "Tea Time with Net4Brain"

Humanizing Neuro-Oncology, One Conversation at a Time

Great science is driven by great people, yet the personal journeys, challenges, and philosophies of senior researchers often remain hidden behind dense academic abstracts and research papers. To bridge this gap, the Creative group of Net4Brain Dissemination Team (WG6) is excited to announce the upcoming launch of our brand-new feature column: **"Tea Time with Net4Brain"**.



Why "Tea Time"? Our Vision & Core Mission

The concept behind this casual, bi-weekly interview series is simple yet impactful: we want to humanize neuro-oncology. By sitting down with leading experts and steering committee members over an informal cup of tea, we aim to bring their personal stories straight to our community.

This initiative was designed with three core goals in mind:

- **Breaking Hierarchies:** Following our network's philosophy that "silly questions do not exist," these features will show our early-career researchers (ECRs) and PhD students that even the most celebrated global experts started exactly where they are now.
- **Fostering Inclusivity & Mentorship:** Readers will gain unique insights into our leaders' personal mentorship styles, how they handle research pressures, and their advice for navigating an international scientific career.
- **Promoting Open Science:** We want to make high-level brain cancer research accessible and relatable not just to academics, but to patients, advocacy groups, and the wider public, thereby building long-term trust in translational science.

LOOKING FORWARD – UPCOMING TRAINING & PHOTO CHALLENGE

PRE-ANNOUNCEMENT: Upcoming Training Initiatives

Education and skill transfer across borders remain a core focus of our Action. We are excited to announce that planning is underway for two premium educational tracks scheduled for late 2026:

Net4Brain Training School on Mathematical Oncology:

Dates: 15–18 September 2026

Venue: Palacio de los Condes de Valdeparaíso, University of Castilla–La Mancha, Almagro, Spain

Covering core methodologies such as ordinary/partial differential equations, agent-based/hybrid modelling, radiogenomics, AI/machine learning for imaging, uncertainty quantification, and digital twins.

ECR Online Academic Publishing and Review Workshop

Partnering with senior editors from high-impact neuro-oncology journals, this session will provide early-stage researchers with practical tips on peer-review navigation and grant writing. More details coming soon!

Keep an eye on your email for registration links and travel grant eligibility details coming soon!

Core group meeting in Košice, Slovakia

Date: 3.10.2026

Venue: Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice, Šrobárova 2, Košice, Slovakia





THE SOCIAL CORNER: The #Net4BrainChallenge is Still Going Strong!

Share Your Perspective & Let Your Research Shine

Our exciting competition continues to capture the imagination of our network! We are thrilled to remind all our members that the first Net4Brain Lab Photo Challenge is actively underway, and we are absolutely loving the creative entries rolling in from labs across Europe.

All Net4Brain members are warmly invited to keep sharing snapshots from their daily experimental work in the lab. Let's make our science visible to the wider community!

What Can You Share?

- A striking microscopy image.
- A creative experimental setup.
- A spontaneous moment that captures the true spirit of scientific discovery.

How to Participate:

Simply post your photo on your favorite social media platform (LinkedIn, Facebook, or Instagram) using the official hashtag #Net4BrainChallenge to:

- ✓ Showcase your research to a much wider audience.
- ✓ Connect and network with fellow scientists across the Action.
- ✓ Take part in a friendly, inspiring, and collaborative competition.

What Happens Next?

The competition doesn't stop with submission! The most original and inspiring images will be carefully shortlisted by our WG6 Creative Group. Then, the excitement builds as the final winner will be selected through community voting across our official social media platforms.

The Winning Entry Will:

- Be proudly featured on the cover of our next newsletter and across all official Net4Brain channels.
- Receive a special recognition prize from the network coordination team!

Get creative, share your science, and let your research shine!

Contacts

Chair: **Prof Xinzhong Li**, x.li@tees.ac.uk

For further contacts, click [here](#).

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Prepared by: Creative group