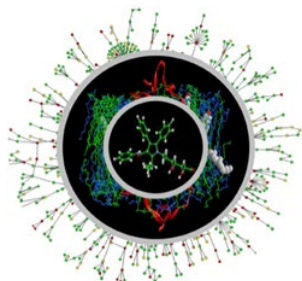


NWO GRANT FOR AIMMS STAR GRADUATE PROGRAMME

The Amsterdam Institute for Molecules, Medicines and Systems has received €800.000 from the Dutch Organization for Scientific Research (NWO) to establish the AIMMS STAR graduate programme.

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With the funding, the [Amsterdam Institute for Molecules, Medicines and Systems](#) (AIMMS) is able to provide Scientific Top Training in Antimicrobial Research (STAR) to talented students enrolled in three Master's programmes at VU University Amsterdam.

New generation of antimicrobial researchers

Treats of drug-resistant pathogens are emerging worldwide and ask for development of novel drugs that act on the pathogen's molecular networks. This demands a new generation of bright scientists who are able to combine molecular biology, microbiology, systems biology and drug development. The four most talented AIMMS STAR students will be granted a PhD position to execute their own antimicrobial research proposal.

Spot, train and cherish young talent

The AIMMS STAR graduate programme will start this September for students entering the Master's programmes in [Drug Discovery and Safety](#), [Biomolecular Sciences](#) and [Bioinformatics and Systems Biology](#). In the first year, all freshmen interested in the AIMMS STAR programme will be introduced into the multidisciplinary field on antimicrobial research with courses and seminars. Furthermore an internship at partner institutes in Leuven, Copenhagen and Uppsala can be arranged.

For the second Master's year, 10 to 20 talented students are selected to perform an internship on antimicrobics in an AIMMS research group of their choice and write – next to their literature thesis – a PhD proposal on antimicrobial research. An international expert panel will review and rank the best proposals; the AIMMS STAR board will award the best four students with a PhD position. The selected students will perform their own researcher under supervision of a senior scientist of their choice within one of the participating [AIMMS research groups](#). The funding from NWO enables AIMMS to provide for these 4 PhD students.

During their PhDs, the 4 selected students will – next to their graduate school enrollment and education within AIMMS – receive additional training at summer schools and partner institutes, and optionally in pharmaceutical industry. This will provide them with all the necessary tools to perform groundbreaking research and prepare them for a fruitful career in antimicrobics research.

NWO graduate programme grant

In the past years, numerous researchers and research groups within AIMMS have attained many grants,

i.a. VENI, VIDI, ECHO, Aspazia, TOP, STW, Marie Curie and funding from the Innovative Medicine Initiative. This NWO graduate programme funding is the first grant that AIMMS has obtained as a research institute in itself.

Early 2013, former managing director [Jacqueline van Muijlwijk](#) applied for this grant, together with Rieky van Walraven (proposed coordinator of the STAR programme) and PhD student [Ton Blaazer](#). In June, NWO delegates held interviews on this call with Van Muijlwijk, Blaazer, [Frank Bruggeman](#) (proposed educational director of the STAR programme) and [Hans Westerhoff](#) (proposed chairman of the STAR scientific committee). Their commitment, enthusiasm and perseverance ultimately led to the achievement of the graduate programme grant.

About AIMMS

AIMMS has been established in 2010 and comprises 16 of the best research groups at VU University within the areas of pharmaceutical sciences, life sciences, systems biology and molecular sciences. By combining these disciplines, AIMMS focuses on the elucidation of molecular mechanisms of diseases and the development of novel and safer drugs, therapeutics and diagnostics.

More information

For more information on the AIMMS STAR graduate programme, please contact its coordinator Rieky van Walraven: h.s.van.walraven@vu.nl.