

# TRANSNATIONAL ORGANISED CYBERCRIME

UQ/U:VIE/UZH/UNIFE/UNI KÖLN  
TRANSNATIONAL ORGANISED CRIME  
PROGRAM 2023–24

## SYLLABUS

Current as on 5 February 2024

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# Course description

## Short summary

In this course, students undertake directed research on selected topics relating to transnational organised crime. In 2023–2024, the focus is transnational organised cybercrime. The course is designed for students to conduct independent, guided research in an international context and to equip students with advanced research, communication, presentation, writing and team-work skills, specifically in this field of study. Students in this course gain a general understanding of the criminology, policies, and laws relating to this topic, liaise with key stakeholders in the field, and have an opportunity to present their research findings to an academic audience and publish their written material.

## The joint Transnational Organised Crime program at the Universities of Queensland, Vienna, Zurich, Ferrara, and Cologne

The joint Transnational Organised Crime program at the University of Queensland (Brisbane, Australia), the University of Vienna (Austria), the University of Zurich (Switzerland), the University of Cologne (Germany), and the University of Ferrara (Italy), first established in 2018, involves an international network of emerging and established scholars working within a structured research and learning framework to produce high quality research outcomes on a topic of current, international concern.

Under the overarching theme of 'transnational organised crime', every year a specific research topic of particular significance is chosen by the programme coordinators. In 2023–2024 the focus is on transnational organised cybercrime.

For further details about the concept and schedule of this programme and for further information about, and outcomes of previous courses, visit <https://toc.jura.uni-koeln.de>.

## Course coordinators and contact details

### University of Queensland

#### **Professor Dr Andreas Schloenhardt**

School of Law

W469 Forgan Smith Building, St Lucia Campus, Brisbane Qld 4072, Australia

[a.schloenhardt@uq.edu.au](mailto:a.schloenhardt@uq.edu.au)

### University of Vienna

#### **Professor Dr Susanne Reindl-Krauskopf**

Rechtswissenschaftliche Fakultät, Institut für Strafrecht und Kriminologie

Schenkenstrasse 4, 1010 Wien, Austria

[susanne.reindl@univie.ac.at](mailto:susanne.reindl@univie.ac.at)

#### **Professor Dr Andreas Schloenhardt**

Rechtswissenschaftliche Fakultät, Institut für Strafrecht und Kriminologie

Schenkenstrasse 4, 1010 Wien, Austria

[andreas.schloenhardt@univie.ac.at](mailto:andreas.schloenhardt@univie.ac.at)

**Dr Monika Stempkowski**

Rechtswissenschaftliche Fakultät, Institut für Strafrecht und Kriminologie  
Schenkenstrasse 4, 1010 Wien, Austria  
monika.stempkowski@univie.ac.at

**University of Zurich****Professor Dr Christian Schwarzenegger**

Rechtswissenschaftliche Fakultät  
Treichlerstrasse 10, 8032 Zurich, Switzerland  
christian.schwarzenegger@rwi.uzh.ch

**Professor Dr iur Gian Ege**

Rechtswissenschaftliche Fakultät  
Treichlerstrasse 10, 8032, Switzerland  
gian.ege@rwi.uzh.ch

**University of Ferrara****Professor Dr Serena Forlati**

Dipartimento di Giurisprudenza  
Corso Ercole I d'Este 37, 44121 Ferrara, Italy  
serena.forlati@unife.it

**University of Cologne****Professor Dr Bettina Weißer**

Rechtswissenschaftliche Fakultät  
Institut für ausländisches und internationales Strafrecht  
Sibille-Hartmann-Strasse 2–8, 50969 Köln, Germany  
bettina.weisser@uni-koeln.de

**Learning platform, research library, online communication, and cooperation**

The Moodle learning platform of the University of Vienna will be used for staff and students to communicate and collaborate with each other and to build an electronic library of key primary and secondary sources. Regular cooperation and exchange between all participants will take place through this platform beyond the main teaching dates set out below.

**Focus: Transnational Organised Cybercrime****Introduction and background**

The 2023–2024 Transnational Organise Crime programme broadly explores the synergies between organised crime and cybercrime. This includes specific crime types, the means and methods of online and computer-based offending, the involvement of organised criminal groups, international frameworks and national laws, as well law

enforcement methods, prosecution, and prevention of transnational organised cybercrime.

## **Research topics 2023–2024**

Students participating in this course can choose their research topic from the list of topics set out below. These topics seek to capture the many criminological, legal, international, and national facets and perspectives of this topic. Students are required to present their research findings in class during the course days in February 2024 and submit a written, fully referenced research paper by 5 May 2024.

### **(1) Concepts and definitions**

The first set of topics serve to explore and explain basic terms and concepts concerning transnational organised cybercrime, their sources and variations in international and national laws, and the evolution of these concept, of countermeasures, and the literature.

- 1.1. Transnational organised cybercrime: Concept, terminology, and scope
- 1.2. A short history of transnational organised cybercrime: the evolution of research, scholarship, and countermeasures
- 1.3. Global cybercrime and the problem of jurisdiction

### **(2) Facilitation of other offences**

The second set of topics looks at the use of computer-based (or cyber-) crime as a means to facilitate offences commonly committed by or associated with organised criminal groups. The main focus on the criminology of these crime types: means and modi operandi, perpetrators, 'hot spots' and other locations, levels and scale (data, profits etc), victims and damage caused. If specific countermeasures or other initiatives have been adopted, they may also be examined (this is optional). The focus should be on global levels and characteristics (with regional variations, where relevant, not on individual jurisdictions or countries).

- 2.1 Drug trafficking, online sales and distribution, and organised crime (presenter: Niklaus Julian Sempach; discussant: Harrison)
- 2.2 The "Darknet" and illicit drugs (presenter: Tabea Hannah Rabitsch; discussant: Helena; supervisor: Monika)
- 2.3 The online market for the illicit trade in wild fauna and flora
- 2.4 Arms trafficking, online sales and distribution, and organised crime
- 2.5 Smuggling of migrants and social media (presenter: Giorgia Bussolin; discussant: Jeanine; supervisor: Serena)
- 2.6 The role of social media and the internet in the context of trafficking in persons (presenter: Caitlin Kearney; discussant: Lucia; supervisor: Andreas)
- 2.7 The online market for counterfeit goods (presenter: Evgeniya Ispolatovskaya; discussant: Emily; supervisor: Gian)
- 2.8 Online distribution of child pornography and organised crime (presenter: Emma Turetta; discussant: Caitlin; supervisor: Serena)

### **(3) Online fraud and offending**

The following topics relate to specific types on online scams and fraud (where online offending is not just one of several but the defining means of the crime). The main focus

on the criminology of these crime types: means and modi operandi, perpetrators, 'hot spots' and other locations, levels and scale (data, profits etc), victims and damage caused. If specific counter-measures or other initiatives have been adopted, they may also be examined (this is optional). The focus should be on global levels and characteristics (with regional variations, where relevant, not on individual jurisdictions or countries).

- 3.1 Online money laundering (presenter: Caroline Hauer; discussant: Niklaus; supervisors: Monika, Andreas)
- 3.2 The '419 scams' and organised crime (presenter Emily Stohl; discussant Evgeniya; supervisor: Monika)
- 3.3 'Romance scams' organised crime (presenter: Abbey Grice; discussant: Emma; supervisor: Andreas)
- 3.4 Internet fraud and organised crime
- 3.5 Crime as a service and organised crime (presenter: Lucia Moser; discussant: Hannah; supervisor: Gian)
- 3.6 Ransomware attacks (presenter: Helena Hagan; discussant: Enrico; supervisor: Susanne)

#### **(4) Criminal organisations and cybercrime**

4. Organised criminal groups and cybercrime (presenter: Jeanine Davalos Gavia; discussant: Tabea; supervisor: Gian)

This project examines to what extent, in which context and crime-types established organised criminal groups (eg Italian Mafia-style groups, Asian organised crime, Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs, etc) engage in cybercrime-related activities. The focus can be on one or multiple groups.

#### **(5) International frameworks**

This set of topics explores individual international treaties and other frameworks that, directly or indirectly, seek to prevent and suppress transnational organised cybercrime. The projects should explore the general context, content, and evolution of the relevant framework but examine chiefly and primarily relevant provisions (and their application) concerning transnational organised cybercrime.

- 5.1. United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime and cybercrime
- 5.2. Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime and organised crime
- 5.3. Efforts to conclude a new UN cybercrime convention (presenter: Enrico Zannarini; discussant: Marie; supervisors: Serena, Andreas)
- 5.4. The FATF Recommendations and online money laundering (presenter: Lisa Hou; discussant: Caroline; supervisor: Andreas)
- 5.5. EU Frameworks relating to transnational organised cybercrime

#### **(6) Computer- and internet-based offences and organised crime under domestic law**

These topics scan and examine substantive national criminal laws and outline and critically analyse offences addressing transnational organised cybercrime (including, in particular, aggravations to other offences, eg internet fraud committed by organised

criminal groups. The project should also look at case examples and interpretations by national courts.

- 6.1. Offences relating to transnational organised cybercrime in Australian federal criminal law (presenter: Harrison Mitic; discussant: Jan; supervisor: Andreas)
- 6.2. Offences relating to transnational organised cybercrime in Queensland criminal law
- 6.3. Offences relating to transnational organised cybercrime in Austrian criminal law
- 6.4. Offences relating to transnational organised cybercrime in German criminal law
- 6.5. Offences relating to transnational organised cybercrime in Italian criminal law
- 6.6. Offences relating to transnational organised cybercrime in Swiss criminal law

## **(7) Law enforcement, prosecution, and prevention**

The final set of topics looks at various countermeasures to detect transnational organised cybercrime, prosecute offenders, and prevent offending and victimisation,

- 7.1. Special online investigative techniques: electronic surveillance
- 7.2. Special online investigative techniques: undercover investigations (esp. on social media) (presenter: Gamze Altindas; discussant: Abbey; supervisor: Susanne)
- 7.3. Search and seizure of computer systems, IP-addresses and other (communication) data
- 7.4. International law enforcement and judicial cooperation against transnational organized cybercrime (presenter: Marie Coenen; discussant: Lisa; supervisor: Bettina)
- 7.5. Use of electronic evidence in criminal proceedings
- 7.5A. Encrypted communication within organised crime: The admissibility of EncroChat evidence in criminal proceedings (presenter: Jan Osten; discussant: Gamze; supervisor: Bettina)
- 7.6. Data retention
- 7.7. Prevention
- 7.8. The future role of artificial intelligence (AI) in criminal investigations of transnational organized cybercrime (presenter: Hannah Retief; discussant: Giorgia; supervisor: Susanne)

## **Discussant**

Each student will act as the discussant of another student's research project. The role of the discussant is to offer support and feedback and provide some peer review of draft presentations and research papers. The discussant will provide oral feedback on the presentation of the research project and may provide written feedback on a draft of the research paper. Discussants will be assigned after the initial planning meetings in October.

## **Training sessions**

To assist students in developing and delivering their research projects, and to enhance students' research, presentation, and writing skills, several training sessions are offered

throughout the program. These include workshops delivered by library staff on available resources and databases, by experts on academic presentation, writing, and argument mapping, as well as by the course staff. Details are set out in the schedule below.

### **Guest lectures**

In addition to the individual research projects, several guest lectures are offered throughout the program and during the main teaching days. These lectures offer in-depth discussion on thematic issues covered in this course and enable students to exchange ideas with academic scholars and practitioners. Details are set out in the schedule below.



# Schedule 2023–24

## Application and selection process

Students in the discipline of law (third year or higher) from the participating institutions are invited to apply for participation in the programme. Students from other relevant disciplines, including, inter alia, international relations, sociology, political science, and journalism, psychology who are not also enrolled in a law degree should contact the course coordinator at their home institution to check their eligibility.

### Prerequisites for law student applicants

UQ Successful completion of LAWS2113 and LAWS2114, LAWS2700 and LAWS2701, or LAWS2708 (with an overall grade 6 or higher)

U:Vie at least three years (six semester) of study; successful completion of Modulprüfung Strafrecht by 1 October 2023 is desirable but not mandatory; doctoral candidates and students from other disciplines may also apply.

UZH Successful completion of Strafrecht 1 and 2

UniFe The programme is open to PhD students and to LM Students in their fourth or fifth year who have passed the exams of Criminal Law (I) and (II) and Criminal Procedure. A PhD or final dissertation research topic that is related to the course's object will be a preferential title.

Uni Köln Successful completion of Criminal Law I and II (Strafrecht 1, 2) and Criminal Procedure I with an average of at least 9 points; participation can be recognized either as a research essay (Seminararbeit) as part of the specialisation (Schwerpunktsbereichsstudium) or as the additional research essay for doctoral candidates who completed their studies at another university or as part of their PhD project (Doktorandenseminar); rules and regulations of the respective study and examination regulations (Prüfungsordnungen) apply.

### Selection process

Student applicants will be vetted through a selection process, taking into account, inter alia, students' academic performance, prior research experience, foreign language abilities, their statement of interest relating to the format and topic of the programme, and their availability to conduct the research and complete the milestones required by this programme. Students may be asked to participate in a group or individual interview.

### Travel stipends

U:Vie University of Vienna students will receive a travel stipend of EUR 600 to cover some of the costs associated with travel to and accommodation in Zurich

Uni Köln The University does not grant travel stipends. Applications for travel stipends with the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) are encouraged and supported by the University.

UniFe The University of Ferrara will cover for part of its students' travel, accommodation and subsistence costs related to the trip to Australia.

UQ No travel stipends available.

## Timetable 2023–24

(all times are local)	University of Cologne	University of Ferrara	University of Queensland	University of Vienna	University of Zurich
Course introduction, allocation of research topics	10 Oct 2023 9-11am online		10 Oct 2023 5–7pm 01-W353	10 Oct 2023 9-11am U13, Juridicum	
Research training			26 October 2023 8:00-9:30am 01–W353	9 Nov 2023 1–3:30pm SEM62, Juridicum	
Discussion of research outline	5 Dec 2023 8:30–11am	5 Dec 2023 8:30–11am	5 Dec 2023 5:30–8pm	5 Dec 2023 1–3:30pm	
Room	online <a href="https://uqz.zoom.us/j/87587364994">https://uqz.zoom.us/j/87587364994</a> meeting ID 875 8736 4994			SEM63, Juridicum	
Academic presentation training	11 Jan 2024 8:30–11:30am	11 Jan 2024 8:30–11:30am	11 Jan 2024 5:30–8:30pm	11 Jan 2024 8:30–11:30am	11 Jan 2024 8:30–11:30am
	online <a href="https://uqz.zoom.us/j/87571612015">https://uqz.zoom.us/j/87571612015</a> meeting ID 87571612015				
Guest lecture (Cologne)	Christine Untch (Department of Comparative Criminal Law, University of Cologne), '(Inter)national law enforcement in the cloud? Risks of unilateral access to foreign data' 23 January 2024, 9:00am CEST/6:00pm AEST <a href="https://uni-koeln.zoom.us/j/93171803493?pwd=QkVFbjlNdTRpTkFySFFXSnlncjJaQT09">https://uni-koeln.zoom.us/j/93171803493?pwd=QkVFbjlNdTRpTkFySFFXSnlncjJaQT09</a> meeting ID 931 7180 9493, password 344609				
Arrival in Zurich	11 Feb 2024	11 Feb 2024	11 Feb 2024	11 Feb 2024	n.a.
<b>Joint teaching dates</b>	Monday, 12 February 2024, 10:00am–3:30pm Tuesday, 13 February 2024, 9:00am–3:00pm Wednesday, 14 February 2024, 9:00am–3:00pm Thursday, 15 February 2024, 9:00am–3:00pm Friday, 16 February 2024, 9:00am–1:00pm				
Debrief and further development of research project			5 March 2024 5:30–8:00pm (online)	5 March 2024 8:30-11:00am (online)	
Guest lecture (UniFe)	Karine Bannelier (Université de Grenoble, Grenoble Alpes Cybersecurity Institute) „Towards a United Nations Convention against Cybercrime?“ March 2024, 9:00am CEST/6:00pm AEST online meeting ID 876 6846 4831				
Academic writing			19 March 2024 3–6pm room t.b.a.	13 March 2024 1–5 pm room t.b.a.	

(all times are local)	University of Cologne	University of Ferrara	University of Queensland	University of Vienna	University of Zurich
From paper to publication			n/a	10 April 2024 1–5 pm room t.b.a.	
Final review			23 April 2024 4–6pm room t.b.a.	30 April 2024 1–5pm room t.b.a.	
Deadline for submission of research paper			5 May 2024 2:00pm	5 May 2024 2:00pm	

## Joint teaching dates, February 2024

Room/location for Monday-Friday:

University of Zurich, Main building, Rämistrasse 71, room KOL H 309

### Sunday, 11 February 2024

6:00pm Informal get-together (students only)

### Monday, 12 February 2024

10:00am Introduction  
10:30am interactive session  
11:15am Break  
11:30am Presentation 1: The “Darknet” and illicit drugs (presenter: Tabea Hannah Rabitsch)  
12:20pm Lunch break  
1:05pm Presentation 2: Drug trafficking, online sales and distribution, and organised crime (presenter: Niklaus Julian Sempach)  
1:55pm Presentation 3: Smuggling of migrants and social media (presenter: Giorgia Bussolin)  
2:45pm Reflection, outcomes of the day

### Tuesday, 13 February 2024

9:00am Guest presentation:  
10:00am Break  
10:15am Presentation 4: The role of social media and the internet in the context of trafficking in persons (presenter: Caitlin Kearney)

- 11:05am Presentation 5: The online market for counterfeit goods (presenter: Evgeniya Ispolatovskaya)
- 11:55am Lunch break
- 12:40pm Susanne Reindl-Krauskopf & Monika Stempkowski: Transnational Organised Cybercrime
- 12:55pm Presentation 6: Online distribution of child pornography and organised crime (presenter: Emma Turetta; discussant: Emily)
- 1:45pm Presentation 7: Online money laundering (presenter: Caroline Hauer)
- 2:35pm Reflection, outcomes of the day
- 3:00pm Staff meeting
- 7:00pm Course dinner, Universitätsturm (top floor), Main building, Rämistrasse 71 (dress code: smart casual)

### **Wednesday, 14 February 2024**

- 9:00am Andreas Schloenhardt: Transnational Organised Cybercrime
- 9:15am Presentation 8: The '419 scams' and organised crime (presenter Emily Stohl)
- 10:05am Presentation 9: 'Romance scams' organised crime (presenter: Abbey Grice)
- 10:55am Break
- 11:10am Presentation 10: Crime as a service and organised crime (presenter: Lucia Moser)
- 12:00pm Presentation 11: Ransomware attacks (presenter: Helena Hagan)
- 12:50pm Reflection, outcomes of the day
- 2:15pm guided walking tour, meeting point: Münsterhof town square, Zurich

### **Thursday, 15 February 2024**

- 9:00am Guest presentation
- 10:00am Break
- 10:15am Presentation 12: Organised criminal groups and cybercrime (presenter: Jeanine Davalos Gavia)
- 11:05am Presentation 13: Efforts to conclude a new UN cybercrime convention (presenter: Enrico Zannarini)
- 11:55am Presentation 14: The FATF Recommendations and online money laundering (presenter: Lisa Hou)
- 12:45pm Lunch Break
- 1:30pm Serena Forlati: Transnational Organised Cybercrime
- 1:45pm Presentation 15: Offences relating to transnational organised cybercrime in Australian federal criminal law (presenter: Harrison Mitic)

- 2:35pm Presentations 16: International law enforcement and judicial cooperation against transnational organized cybercrime (presenter: Marie Coenen)
- 3:25pm Reflection, outcomes of the day

**Friday, 16 February 2024**

- 9:00am Presentation 17: Special online investigative techniques: undercover investigations (esp. on social media) (presenter: Gamze Altindas)
- 9:50am Presentation 18: Encrypted communication within organised crime: The admissibility of EncroChat evidence in criminal proceedings (Jan Osten)
- 10:40am Break
- 11:00am Presentation 19: The future role of artificial intelligence (AI) in criminal investigations of transnational organized cybercrime (Hannah Retief)
- 11:50am Further work: research papers and publication
- 12:25pm Course evaluation and discussion
- 1:00pm Close

[Farewell function (students only)]

## Assessment

The assessment involves two pieces: a presentation and a research paper. To receive a passing grade, both pieces must be attempted.

Note: University of Cologne and University of Ferrara students: please consult with your local staff about assessment requirements, deadlines, and grading.

Marks and grades will be awarded according to the following scale.

University of Queensland		University of Vienna		University of Zurich	
Grade	Marks	Grade	Marks	Grade	Marks
7 – high distinction	85–100	1+	95-100	6 – ausgezeichnet	85-100
		1 - sehr gut	91-94		
		1-	87-90		
6 - distinction	75–84	2+	83-86	5.5 - sehr gut	79-84
		2 - gut	79-82		
		2-	75-79	5 - gut	72-78
5 - credit	65–74	3+	71-74	4.5 - recht	61–71
		3 befriedigend	67-70		
		3-	63-66		
4 - pass	50–64	4+	58-62	4 - genügend	51–60
		4 genügend	54-57		
		4-	50-53		
3–1 - fail	49–0	5 – nicht genügend	49-0	3.5-1 – nicht genügend	50–0

University of Ferrara		University of Cologne
Grade	Marks	Grade
A	28-30L	16-18 Sehr gut
		13-15
B	26-27	gut
		10-12
C	22-25	vollbefriedigend
		7-9
D	18-21	befriedigend
		4-6 ausreichend
Fail	0-17	1-3 mangelhaft

		0 ungenügend
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## Presentation

(UQ + UZH: 40% of final grade; U:Vie: assessment for winter semester)

All students must work on a designated research topic and present their research findings in class. Each topic will be assigned a specific presentation date and time; these are not negotiable.

Students present their projects in a 20-minute presentation, followed by 20 minutes of discussion and 10mins of feedback.

Students have the option to work together on one topic and present as a team. Research papers, however, must be written and submitted individually.

Grading criteria:

- Outline, introduce, explain the research topic;
- Critically analyse and explore relevant issues;
- Structure and weight relevant issues;
- Develop alternative strategies and recommendation for reform;
- Visualise and communicate research outcomes clearly;
- Discuss topical issues in an open forum; and
- Conduct in-depth research using information and literature of highest quality.

Presentations must be held in English only.

## Research paper

(UQ + UZH: 60% of final grade; U:Vie: assessment for summer semester, sowie Möglichkeit der Approbation)

Each student must submit an individual, written report of his/her research topic (fully footnoted and referenced according to a commonly used legal reference guide. All papers must have an introduction, conclusion and a bibliography. The word limit for the papers is 7000 words (for UQ students, and UZH students choosing 6 ECTS; higher requirements apply for students choosing 12 or 18 ECTS for their Masters Thesis at UZH); 50,000 characters (minimum requirement for U:Vie Diploma students)]. The assessment is, however, based on quality, not quantity.

Grading criteria:

- Identify, scope, introduce, and state the significance of the research project;
- Critically analyse and explore relevant issues;
- Structure and weight relevant issues;
- Develop alternative strategies and recommendation for reform;
- Communicate clearly and efficiently in a written paper; and
- Conduct in-depth research using information and literature of highest quality.

Students have a choice to write their paper either in English, French or German.

Due date for submission: 5 May 2024, 2:00pm (14:00) local time.





## Course participants

### Staff

Gian	Ege	gian.ege@rwi.uzh.ch
Serena	Forlati	serena.forlati@unife.it
Gishok	Kiritharan	gishok.kiritharan@rwi.uzh.ch
Jonathan	Macziola	jmaczio1@uni-koeln.de
Susanne	Reindl-Krauskopf	susanne.reindl@univie.ac.at
Andreas	Schloenhardt	a.schloenhardt@uq.edu.au
Christian	Schwarzenegger	christian.schwarzenegger@rwi.uzh.ch
Monika	Stempkowski	monika.stempkowski@univie.ac.at
Bettina	Weisser	bettina.weisser@uni-koeln.de

### Participants

Gamze	Altindas	g.altindas@outlook.com
Giorgia	Bussolin	giorgia97.bussolin@gmail.com
Marie	Coenen	marie.coenen@uni-koeln.de
Jeannine	Davalos Gavia	jeannine.davalosgavia@uzh.ch
Abbey	Grice	abbey.grice@uq.net.au
Helena	Hagan	h.hagan@uq.net.au
Caroline	Hauer	a11907604@unet.univie.ac.at
Lisa	Hou	lisa.hou@univie.ac.at
Evgeniya	Ispolatovskaya	evgeniya.ispolatovskaya@uzh.ch
Caitlin	Kearney	caitlin.kearney@uq.net.au
Harrison	Mitic	h.mitic@uq.net.au
Lucia	Moser	lucia.moser@uzh.ch
Jan	Osten	josten1@uni-koeln.de
Tabea Hannah	Rabitsch	tabea.hannah@gmx.at
Hannah	Retief	h.retief@uq.net.au
Niklaus Julian	Sempach	niklausjulian.sempach@uzh.ch
Emily	Stohl	stohl.emily@gmail.com
Emma	Turetta	emma.turetta.98@gmail.com
Enrico	Zannarini	enrico.zannarini@unife.it