

VIOSS – Vilnius International Oncology Summer School 2026

6–10 July 2026

Vilnius University
Medical Science Centre(MMC)
Žaliųjų ežerų g. 2,
Vilnius, Lithuania

Organized by:



Faculty of
Medicine



Nacionalinis
vėžio centras



VAIKAMS



Life Sciences
Center



Program Overview

Target Audience: First-second year PhD students or those planning to pursue a PhD in oncology or related fields (advanced master).

Duration: 5 days (Mon–Fri)

ECTS: 5 credits (recommended, based on participation assignments, and project work).

Each day will consist of:

2 Theoretical Sessions: Key topics in oncology and research methodologies.

1 Practical Session: Hospital visit or hand-on activity related to oncology practice.

1 Teamwork Session: Collaborative work on PhD research ideas, with feedback from peers and mentors.

Program Overview

Day 1: Monday, 6th July - Introduction to Oncology & Research Methodologies

09:00–09:30

Registration & Welcome Coffee

09:30–10:00

Opening Ceremony

Welcome from Vilnius University, National Cancer Center Lithuania and Vilnius University Hospital Santaros Klinikos

Overview of programme objectives and project work

10:00–11:00

Critical Appraisal of Scientific Evidence

Speaker: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Karolis Ažukaitis, Vilnius University, Lithuania

Topics:

- Evidence-informed medicine
 - Interpreting research findings
 - Research waste and predatory journals
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11:00–11:30

Organizing Clinical Trials in Oncology: From Study Design to Patient Enrollment

Speaker: Dr. Valdas Pečeliūnas, National Cancer Center, Vilnius

Topics:

- Clinical trial design, regulatory requirements, ethical approval
- Patient recruitment, informed consent, trial coordination
- Data management, monitoring, institutional collaboration

11:30–12:30

Lunch

12:30–13:15

Research Methodologies in Oncology

Speaker: Dr. Kasandra Musovič, University of Maribor, Slovenia

Topics:

- Literature reviews and evidence-based research
 - PICOT framework
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13:15–14:00

Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches in Research

Speaker: Dr. Giorgia Petrucci, Campus Bio-Medico University, Rome

Topics:

- Differences between qualitative and quantitative research
 - Methodological approaches and research integrity
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14:00–15:00

Experience Session – Hospital Visit

National Cancer Center, Vilnius

Overview of oncology departments and laboratories

15:00–16:30

**Teamwork Session – Introduction to
Group Research Project**

Speaker: Marius Čiurlionis, National Cancer
Center, Vilnius

19:00–21:00

**Welcome Social Event – Research
Kitchen & Dinner**

09:00–09:15

**Welcome address from Director
of Life Sciences Center prof.
Arvydas Lubys**

09:15–10:00

Molecular Mechanisms in Cancer

Speaker: prof. Sonata Jarmalaitė, Vilnius
University Life Sciences Center

10:00–10:45

Cancer in Single Cell Resolution

Speaker: prof. Linas Mažutis, Vilnius
University Life Sciences Center

10:45–11:30

The Microbiome in Cancer

Speaker: prof. Eglė Lastauskienė, Vilnius
University Life Sciences Center

11:30–12:30

**Experience Session – Genomics
Laboratory Visit**

Speaker: To Be Announced

Topics:

- Introduction to genetic diagnostics technologies (team of prof. Sonata Jarmalaitė)
 - Introduction to single-cell analysis (team of prof. Linas Mažutis)
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Travel back to MMC

13:00–14:00

Lunch

14:30–15:00

**Decoding the Complexity of Cancer
Metastasis: Intrinsic Potential or
Evolutionary Acquisition**

Speaker: Dr. Kamilė Normantaitė, National
Cancer Institute, Vilnius

Topics:

- Biological mechanisms of cancer metastasis
 - Intrinsic metastatic potential vs evolutionary acquisition
 - Experimental and clinical approaches to metastatic evolution
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15:00–16:30

**Teamwork Session – Developing
Research Ideas and Methodologies**

Facilitators: Dr. Giorgia Petrucci, Dr.
Kasandra Musovič

09:00 - 09:45

The role of clinical trials in childhood cancer: success story and future perspectives.

Assoc. prof. dr. Goda Vaitkevičienė

09:45 - 10:30

Childhood cancer-associated thrombosis: evidence, gaps and future directions.

Assoc. Prof. dr. Sonata Šaulytė-Trakymienė

10.30 – 11:00

Pediatric surgery/orthopedics

Rimantas Zagorskis

11:00 – 11:30

Life After Childhood Cancer: Psychological Challenges and Support.

Psychologist Aušrinė Kėvalaitė

11:30–12:30

Experience Session – Clinical Visit

Competence Center for Pediatric Oncology,
Hematology and Cancer Surgery

Topics:

- Introduction to paediatric oncology care
 - Multidisciplinary treatment approaches
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Travel back to MMC

12:30–13:30

Lunch

14:00–15:00

Academic Writing and Presentation Skills

Speaker: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Karolis Ažukaitis,
Vilnius University

Topics:

- Presenting research results
 - Introduction to scientific publishing
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15:00–17:00

Teamwork Session – Finalizing Research Projects & Pitch Preparation

Facilitators: Dr. Giorgia Petrucci, Dr.
Kasandra Musovič, Marius Čiurlionis

09:00–09:45

Biobanking and Bioinformatics in Oncology Research

Speaker: Dr. Mindaugas Morkūnas, Vilnius
University Hospital Santaros Klinikos

Topics:

- Bioinformatics tools in cancer research and biomarker discovery
 - Data analysis pipelines for large biological datasets
 - Biobanks in personalised medicine and collaborative research
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09:45–10:30

Mesenchymal Stromal Cell and Virus- Specific T Cell Therapies

Speaker: Dr. Adomas Bukauskas, Vilnius
University Hospital Santaros Klinikos

Topics:

- Therapeutic potential of mesenchymal stromal cells
 - Immune modulation and tissue repair
 - Clinical use of virus-specific T cells
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10:30–12:00

Clinical Immunotherapy: Transforming Cancer Treatment

Speaker: Dr. Andrius Žučenka, Vilnius
University Hospital Santaros Klinikos

Topics:

- Immune checkpoint inhibitors
- CAR-T therapy
- Tumour immune microenvironment

12:00–13:00

Lunch

13:00–14:00

Experience Session – Visit to the Reference Center for Oncohematological Diseases

Vilnius University Hospital Santaros Klinikos

Topics:

- Processing and analysis of biopsy samples
 - Interpretation of pathological findings in clinical decision-making
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14:00–16:00

Team Project Presentations & Participant Voting

09:30–10:15

**Introduction to Palliative Care
Research: Challenges and
Opportunities**

Speaker: Assoc. Prof. Piret Paal, University of
Tartu, Estonia

Topics:

- Advances in oncology and palliative care
 - Current research gaps and trends
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10:15–11:00

**Big Data and Oncology: The Role of
Cancer Registries**

Speaker: Dr. Tadas Žvirblis, Vilnius University

Topics:

- Structure and purpose of population-
based cancer registries
 - Registry data for cancer incidence,
survival and treatment outcomes
 - Role in research and public health
planning
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11:00–11:45

**From Cell Culture to Cancer
Biomarkers: A Translational Research
Journey**

Speaker: Dr. Ieva Ailte, Oslo University
Hospital, Norway

Topics:

- From in vitro studies to biomarker
discovery in patients
- Importance of protocols, reproducibility
and research infrastructure
- International collaboration and patient
involvement in biomarker validation

11:45–12:45

Lunch

13:00–14:00

Closing Ceremony

Vilnius University Hospital Santaros Klinikos

Topics:

- Best research project award
- Certificates and closing remarks

ECTS Credits & Evaluation

5 ECTS credits: Based on full attendance, participation in discussions, practical sessions, team project, and final presentation.

Students will be evaluated on:

- Active participation in sessions.
- Contribution to team project.
- Quality and feasibility of research ideas presented.