



Dear subscriber,

The University of Cologne enters autumn with the academic term already in full swing, and the momentum of research transfer at the University continues to thrive. This edition highlights recent achievements and opportunities in research collaboration, innovation, and knowledge transfer across the MNF. Leading this is Transfer Think Tank, an initiative of the association of the Gateway Universities, the launch of a [sustainability research hub](#) at UoC, and the introduction of the new UoC University Award category for Transfer in 2026 for the first time. If you wish to recommend this newsletter to your colleagues and community, use this [link](#).

Contests, Events & Networking

Summerfest Biology: The Biology Department's annual Summerfest on July 18 at the Bio Center brought together students, PhD candidates, and professors from plant sciences, zoology, and biochemistry. With tasty food, refreshing drinks, and games between professors and students, it was a lively and fun opportunity to connect. Gateway and [Nucleate](#) presented their services at an information stand.

Biotech Beer: After two successful "Biotech Breakfast" events, the first edition of "Biotech Beer" took place on Thursday, August 28. Hosted as a casual after-work get-together on the rooftop of InnoDom Cologne, the event brought together professionals, researchers, and start-up enthusiasts from the biotech ecosystem of Cologne. Participants enjoyed the opportunity to connect, exchange ideas, and strengthen the growing community of biotech innovators in the region. A [special thanks](#) goes to the partners – the Gateway Excellence Start-up Center of the University of Cologne, KölnBusiness Wirtschaftsförderung, and BIO.NRW.

Future Tech Fest 2025: The flagship event of Startup Week Düsseldorf held on September 11 this year attracted 5,000+ participants from the start-up ecosystem. The [Gateway Excellence Start-up Center participated](#), offering a chance for UoC start-ups to pitch their ideas to experts. The event featured a vertically-focused expo, pitch battles, curated matchmaking, workshops, and insights on new venture clienting models. As a dynamic platform at the intersection of technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship, the festival had a strong B2B focus to spark business opportunities and foster strategic connections.

Pitch4MED: 12th September: As part of Startup Week Düsseldorf, Pitch4MED gave early-stage teams from Cologne and partner universities the chance to present innovative health-tech solutions to investors and experts. Highlights included Cologne's DentEduTech (realistic 3D dental training), INNOPAK (monoclonal antibody for hospital infections), and SIX1 PROTAC (targeted therapy for pancreatic cancer).

Nucleate Kick-Off: 22nd September: On Monday, September 22, the Nucleate x Gateway Kick-Off Event brought together around 40 students, PhDs, and early-stage founders at InnoDom Cologne. After a short introduction by Dr. Marita Mehlstäubl and Ivan Savchuk, moderator

Sergi Bravo led a panel with Ernesto Llamas, Victor Bustos, Lena-Sophie Schütter, and Nirojah Subramaniam on entrepreneurship in the health & life-science sector. The evening wrapped up with relaxed networking and idea exchange. [Activator registration](#) and further [info](#)

Awareness

ML4Q Retreat: On July 4th as part of the 2025 Summer Retreat of the ML4Q, a half day workshop was offered to the graduates, PhDs and postdocs to help them gain a new perspective on their existing research using the research canvas tool. Different areas within the [ML4Q](#) and their innovation readiness as perceived by the researchers formed the basis to further connect on ongoing projects and ideas with transfer potential. Alongside academic orientation, career orientation outside of academia with support of Gateway ESC was identified as a key gap in the graduate schools.

Quantum innovation lab Incubator: The University of Vienna-led bootcamp for supporting innovation in the area of quantum technologies took place in Bad Ischl in Austria in September 25-28. Graduates and advanced researchers from different universities in Austria as well as from TUM got together in the format of series of short inputs from team formation, ideation, innovation creation to technology roadmapping and business development. The details of this program, which in future could also be interesting for University of Cologne researchers to attend can be found [here](#)

Transfer Think Tank, RISE StartUpLand: The [Transfer Think Tank at InnoDom Cologne](#) gathered researchers, founders, and investors from the Gateway ecosystem for an engaging morning of dialogue and lightning pitches in high-tech innovations in life sciences. Partners such as BIO.NRW, BioRiver, KölnBusiness, BioCampus Cologne, Gateway Factory, HTGF, and Nucleate Germany contributed to the program, alongside presentations from the GeneNovate Programm 2026. Participants continued their insights from a workshop led by Gateway ESC on 28.10. Several teams showcased novel solutions, such as optical data filters from PoLightFilters, plant-derived therapies for Huntington's (Plantman), AI-enabled movement therapy for Parkinson's (ExPa), multisensory home health devices (EULE), and mobile apps for heart rate variability training (HOW2HRV).

Upcoming Events, Workshops and Competitions

New: UoC University Award for Societal Transfer – Nominations Now Open

The UoC introduces a new category of the UoC University Awards: Transfer into Society. This prize honours outstanding achievements that bring university knowledge, research, or innovation effectively into the public sphere. Nominations are open until 6 January 2026 for individuals, teams, or initiatives that have demonstrated measurable societal impact within the past three years. More details and the online nomination form are available on [here](#)

ProtoTYPES Cologne: The UoC [invites you](#) on 27 November 2025, from 6 PM at the UoC Aula for an inspiring evening where founders present ideas driving social change in education, health, and inclusion. Hear their stories, gain authentic insights into social entrepreneurship, and discover how courage and innovation can make a difference. The event is free to attend, jointly organized by UoC and Gateway ESC.

Thank you for your continued support & interest.

Best regards,

The Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences Transfer Team

Prof. Dr. Annette M. Schmidt (annette.schmidt@uni-koeln.de)

Dr. Dadhichi Paretkar (d.paretkar@gateway-unikoeln.de)