

MÁXIMA BUTTERFLY NEWSLETTER

MAKING AN IMPACT

April 2026

A VIBRANT START

The Butterflies kick-started 2026 with a two-day winter school, offering a deep dive into the world of immuno-oncology and cutting-edge pediatric cancer research. A particularly memorable part of the training school was the Hub Organoids/Merck visit, where the students had the opportunity to see how academic research discoveries can translate into biomedical innovation.

Beyond their research the students are also giving back to the wider community. By visiting local primary schools they are actively inspiring the next gen of young scientists. In a candid interview last month, two students reflected on how their secondments are transforming patient care making it more personal and targeted.



ON THE MOVE

The spirit of mobility is well and truly alive. Students are returning from, currently engaged in, or preparing to embark on international secondments, with host partners spanning Italy, France, Germany, Slovakia and the U.S.A. All students are on track to finish their first secondments by the end of summer 2026, 24 of whom have already done so. Second placements for 14 students plan to be completed by the end of 2026.

OPEN ACCESS PUBLICATIONS

Since the start of the Butterfly project, 14 open access manuscripts have been published, seven of which were published this year alone, with many more currently in the pipeline. Each publication represents a meaningful contribution to the vital body of research driving the fight against children's cancer.

OUTREACH

Last week Céline Debou took her research beyond the lab and into a local primary school. Sharing her work with young learners, she sparked genuine curiosity and excitement, and found the experience every bit as rewarding for herself as it was for the children.

That same passion for making a difference is captured in the latest patient newsletter, where Hannah Kunstek and Marnik Paeps discuss how international exchanges and collaboration are driving progress in the fight against children's cancer. You can read their inspiring interview in the online patient newsletter.



SAB FEEDBACK

At our annual scientific advisory board meeting on the 15th of December, the board members were impressed by the project's continued progress and were particularly pleased to learn that all 28 students are firmly committed to seeing their research through to completion.

