



## RNA Salons 2022/2023

Report to the **RNA SOCIETY** Board of Directors

by Dr. Ute Kothe

*RNA Salons aim at enhancing interaction between RNA researchers with diverse expertise/interests so as to facilitate communication and training opportunities in RNA research and promote professional development for RNA scientists.*

### The RNA Salons are striving!

Since the inception in 2016, the RNA Salons have grown into the major program of the **RNA SOCIETY** to engage thousands of RNA researchers worldwide in regular regional meetings fostering a sense of community amongst junior and senior RNA aficionados. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, this sense of belonging has sustained many RNA Salons that shifted their activities to an online format and fostered even more connections with non-local communities.

#### RNA Salon highlights 2022/23:

- 56 RNA Salons – more than ever
- Now present on all continents
- 2-year funding structure successfully established
- Continued support by Lexogen

In the last two years, the RNA Salons have undergone the next transformation further strengthening our global RNA community. First, the number of RNA Salons has increased again, and the **RNA SOCIETY** is proud to support 56 RNA Salons - the largest number of RNA Salons ever! Importantly, RNA Salons are now available on (almost) all continents providing: North America, Europe, South America, Australia, Asia and Africa (is somebody interested in establishing an RNA Salon in Antarctica?). We are particularly happy to support several new RNA Salons in regions that were previously not part of this program (China, Palestine, Africa, Finland, Portugal, Greece, and Switzerland).

Second, we have successfully established a new program structure where established RNA Salons can request two years of funding. As a result, 22 RNA Salons are now in their second year of funding (having been selected in 2021). And of the 29 new RNA Salons selected in 2022, 17 will continue to receive a second year of funding in 2023/24. This system with an annual intake combines flexibility with reduced workloads for RNA Salon organizers and is thus much appreciated by everybody involved. We are also grateful for the continued support by Lexogen who have committed to fund interested RNA Salons for two years.

In conclusion, the **RNA SOCIETY** is strong because the RNA Salons are strong. Many researchers are proud to lead or to be a member of the RNA Salon program, we hear many reports of active engagement, strong support for junior RNA scientists at the regional level, and a desire to connect. With both increased geographical representation

and a focus on diversity, equity and inclusion throughout the application and reporting process, we hope to foster even stronger communities where everybody is welcome, and all RNA talent is striving.

On a personal note, I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to be part of this program and to witness the passionate commitment by so many RNA researchers to support their communities through the RNA Salon program.

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