

Call for papers: A special issue on tackling emerging infectious diseases

In 2020, the world faced a devastating global pandemic caused by the spread of a novel respiratory virus. While the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic exposed the vulnerability of the modern world to emerging infectious disease, mRNA- and viral vector-based vaccines have quickly proven to be remarkably efficacious against the causative agent, severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). This monumental accomplishment was made possible by years of prior experimentation with recombinant genetic vaccine and nucleic acid delivery technologies by members of the gene and cell therapy community worldwide. Similar vaccines are being developed or have already been approved to protect against other infectious diseases such as Ebola or Zika virus. Other cutting-edge technologies that fall under the molecular therapy umbrella, such as monoclonal antibody therapy and even chimeric antigen receptor (CAR)-T cell therapy complement modern treatment of infectious diseases. Further development of these technologies will be crucial for preparing for the next pandemic, which is bound to come sooner rather than later. In addition, early-stage monitoring and tracking of new and emerging infectious agents will be key to limiting their impact worldwide. We must also examine the possible role of climate change in the emergence of new pathogenic agents as permafrost melts and ecosystems and habitats are stressed by human activity and changing weather patterns across the globe.

In light of this, the editors of the journal are thrilled to announce the development of a special issue of *Molecular Therapy* that will feature original research and review articles from leaders in the fields of vaccine development, infectious disease, and global health. The issue will cover, among other aspects: advances and innovation in development of mRNA vaccine technologies against infectious diseases; the current status of mRNA vaccine development against COVID-19; innate immunity to coronavirus and viral evasion; adenoviral vaccines against infectious diseases; advances in DNA vaccines against infectious diseases; antibody-based treatments of malaria; emerging global threats; and global challenges in the co-ordinated response to epidemic diseases. Guest editors of this special issue include Andrew Baker, David Weiner, Niek Sanders, Ami Patel, and Weidong Xiao. Authors are encouraged to contact one of the above or the editorial team at editor@molther.org to submit presubmission inquiries. Submissions to this special issue should adhere to our standard manuscript guidelines available on the journal website. The deadline for submissions is October 1, 2021 and publication of the issue is targeted for quarter one of 2022.

Robert M. Frederickson¹ and Roland W. Herzog²

¹Molecular Therapy, Seattle, WA, USA; ²Editor-in-Chief of *Molecular Therapy* and Department of Pediatrics, Gene and Cell Therapy Program, Herman B. Wells Center for Pediatric Research, Indiana University School of Medicine, Indianapolis, IN, USA

Correspondence: Robert M. Frederickson, Executive Editor of the Molecular Family of journals, Seattle, WA, USA.

E-mail: editor@molther.org

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