

Young DEGRO = junge DEGRO = jDEGRO

The jDEGRO working group is an association of young members of the German Society for Radiation Oncology (DEGRO) and junior scientists from the radiation oncology field.

Our working group has set itself the goal of strengthening and promoting the interests of qualified young members of the radiation oncology workforce, and of developing ideas to optimise education, further training and research. We would like to offer the young generation a development platform.

The jDEGRO strives to build local networking and to provide support in the implementation of the curriculum (rotations, observerships, and working in hospitals and private practice). Last but not least, committed young scientists should receive support in their research activities through the formation of international research networks and the establishment of interdisciplinary exchange programmes.

The jDEGRO held elections in March 2024 and is currently in a transition phase to hand over the tasks within the executive board. In the following sections, our working groups and networks introduce themselves and their commitments.

Please reach out if you have any questions or require further information:

jd@degro.org

www.linkedin.com/groups/12922830/

www.degro.org/jd/ (in German)

- An overview of our programmes and groups -

Congress/ conference group

This team designs and organises a variety of topics at the annual DEGRO congress. Members of jDEGRO who want to participate can enter their expertise and experience into a database, from which young co-chairs are selected.

Chairs:

Danny Jazmati,
Düsseldorf

Annemarie Schröder,
Rostock

Livia Schmidt (new),
Essen

Mathias Sonnhoff (new),
Bremen

Other representatives:

Team Congress:

Lukas Käsmann, Munich

Team Education:

Hannah Schöberl, Jena

Melanie Schneider,
Dresden

Team Trial:

Alexander Rühle, Leipzig

Felix Ehret (new), Berlin

Team PR:

Maike Trommer, Cologne

Georg Wurschi, Jena

Felix Grabenbauer
(new), Jena

Maren Schöneich (new),
Kiel

Trial group	Here, individual clinical research ideas and projects are developed, initiated and realised. Members of jDEGRO can submit and join research projects.
Education group	We organise a regular webinar and prepare a collection of exam protocols for the specialist examination. There are surveys on further training, and we offer a visiting programme to learn skills that are not offered at our institutes. Also, jDEGRO has its own mentoring programme.
Alliance of Young Doctors	The jDEGRO is involved in the Bündnis Junge Ärztinnen und Ärzte (BJÄ, the Alliance of Young Physicians) and the DACH working group (DEGRO+ÖGRO+SRO) in Germany.
International / DACH	Members who have been abroad, e.g. as part of a fellowship, share their experiences, answer questions and help with networking.
Women in RadOnc	The jDEGRO is committed to and actively participates in the DEGRO working group Frauen in der Radioonkologie (FiRO, Women in Radiation Oncology).
jDEGRO hosts Newsletter (PR team)	Twice a year we organise symposia in different locations for networking, discussions, education and training. In our winter and summer newsletters, we inform our members about recent developments and upcoming events.
Young biologists (jDeGBS) and young medical physicists (jMP)	These collaborations are ways for young scientists in biology, medicine and physics to focus on radiation research and to engage with related initiatives to strengthen interdisciplinary and educational opportunities.
Professionals	Once young radiation oncologists develop, become specialists and leave jDEGRO, they can become involved in the DEGRO network known as "Professionals".



Front left: Annemarie Schröder, Danny Jazmati, Alexander Rühle: jDEGRO and Professionals group at the annual congress DEGRO2023

- Insights into some of our programmes -

■ Hosting jDEGRO – our twice-yearly symposium

Hosting jDEGRO is a Germany-wide itinerant symposium on radiotherapy. It offers a compelling, continuing education programme specifically for physicians who are training to become radiotherapy specialists. Participants from biology and physics fields and medical radiology technologists are also invited and addressed by the programme. During the symposium, the working group meets to exchange ideas, discuss current topics and draw up plans for future projects. Every two years, new representatives are elected. In March 2024 in Hanover, Livia Schmidt (Essen) and Mathias Sonnhoff (Bremen) were elected as the new jDEGRO chairs.

Both university (most recently Essen and Hanover) and non-university (Bremen) locations are considered hosts. The event is always organised by a local host and the jDEGRO event team. Each symposium is financed by sponsorship contributions from industry partners in the field of radiotherapy. The next event, which will focus on immunotherapy as well as radiation oncology, will take place in Mainz on 22-23 November, 2024.

Contact us

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www.linkedin.com/groups/12922830/

www.degro.org/jd/
(in German)

Authors of this section



Livia Schmidt



Mathias Sonnhoff

■ Education group

The Education group aims to establish and develop the jDEGRO monthly webinars. Over a three-year time span, we cover 90% of the professional medical curriculum in Germany for radiation oncologists.

In 2021, the jDEGRO conducted the first general assessment of satisfaction among residents in radiation oncology. The results can be found in the article “Current situation in radiation oncology residency - results of a national survey” (Fleischmann et al., *Strahlentherapie und Onkologie*, 2023).

Currently a follow-up survey is ongoing in preparation for the annual DEGRO congress 2024, and work with the DEGRO academy for further development of the residency programme in Germany is planned for November 2024.

We have organised an exchange programme for residents to gain hands-on experience, at which they can learn more about either brachytherapy and/or other radiation treatment options, which might not be offered at their regular work sites. Additionally, we have a collection of old exam questions, which are shared upon request.

If there are any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us either via our general email weiterbildung@degro.org, or via our private emails: Melanie Schneider (Melanie.Schneider@uniklinikum-dresden.de) or Hannah Schöberl (Hannah.Schoeberl@med.uni-jena.de).

The mentoring programme is organised by Thomas Weissmann (Thomas.Weissmann@uk-erlangen.de). It brings together mentors and mentees from different sub-specialities of our workforce.

■ Trial group

The jDEGRO Trial group was founded in 2015 and serves as an open platform within the DEGRO to establish an effective research network of young emerging scientists from the fields of radiation oncology, radiation biology and medical physics. Our aim is to support and connect the next generation of physicians and scientists with the overarching objective of discussing, planning, and executing research in the field of radiation oncology. To achieve this, the group holds regular in-person and online meetings, and it issues calls for new study ideas. Project proposals are peer reviewed by members of the Trial group, and the final selection of studies is based on elections.

Authors of this section



Hannah Schöberl



Melanie Schneider

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Felix Ehret

Since its launch nearly ten years ago, the Trial group has successfully completed numerous projects, including a prospective multicentre study on the financial toxicity of cancer patients (Fabian et al., *Radiother Oncol.*, 2023), a multi-institutional analysis of re-irradiation outcomes in head and neck cancer (Roesch et al., *Radiother Oncol.*, 2023), and a nationwide survey among young physicians, physicists, and biologists on the current landscape and challenges in radiation oncology research (Weissmann et al., under review, 2024). The initiative and success of the Trial group help to address the need for high-quality radiation oncology research and the shortage of young scientists in radiation science and beyond.

■ Congress/conference group

Team congress is responsible for co-organising the annual national conference of the DEGRO. It plans sessions and assigns junior scientists to be co-chairs in the fields of radiation oncology, physics and radiation biology. This not only encourages young committed members to get involved, but also enhances the scientific exchange between jDEGRO members. Members are always encouraged to get involved and are (where possible) assigned to sessions that are within their expertise or are of particular interest to them. For this purpose, we have a large database to which all members can sign up and enter their expertise and experiences.

■ Women in Radiation Oncology

In 2024, the interdisciplinary working group FiRO (Women in Radiation Oncology), was founded within the DEGRO. This group aims to empower female professionals within the workforce of medicine, biology and physics and to increase the focus on female patients receiving radiation.

The working group will provide female professionals with opportunities to train as leaders, to be mentored and to boost their professional development to improve their confidence and visibility in the field. This includes supporting families.

Networking and collaboration among women in radiation oncology both within DEGRO and with other national and international organisations will be established and expanded. The group's work also includes conducting and publishing its own scientific analyses, e.g., survey results and prospective studies.

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The group will take initiatives to raise awareness of the challenges faced by women in radiation oncology and the importance of gender equality. It will work to eliminate gender inequalities within the DEGRO and the wider field of radiation oncology.

The group will also focus on female patients receiving radiation. Members will elaborate if different management is required for women as patients in radiation oncology, regarding both therapeutic approaches and side effects but also psycho-oncological and supportive care.

■ Young German Society for Biological Radiation Research (jDeGBS)

The Junge Deutsche Gesellschaft für Biologische Strahlenforschung (jDeGBS) is a platform that brings together young scientists from the fields of biology, medicine and physics who are all working together in the field of radiation research. Just like the jDEGRO, the jDeGBS aim to strengthen the interests of young scientists in the DeGBS through support and further education opportunities as well as to increase the visibility of young scientists within and outside the DeGBS. The jDeGBS works closely with the jDEGRO and jMP. These connections are strengthened by the inclusion of jDeGBS committee members Lisa Deloch and Julia Hess as associate members of the jDEGRO executive board, the active involvement of jDeGBS members in jDEGRO activities and the formation of an interdisciplinary trial in the jDEGRO Trial group.

The mentoring programmes of jDeGBS and jDEGRO work closely together to recruit the most suitable mentors for the participants of both mentoring programmes, as this is a core element of our work that contributes significantly to the skills development of our members. Furthermore, we offer a wide range of educational online seminars that are constantly being expanded. The jDeGBS with other societies, including (j)DEGRO and DGMP/jMP, has organised round tables on, e.g., the future of radiation research. The organisation of the 2023 young investigators session at the biannual DeGBS conference, which was named “Collaborating for a better outcome in paediatric medulloblastoma - from preclinical testing to clinical trials”, further emphasised the need for close interaction of medical and biological specialists.

Our jDeGBS young scientists symposium is a great opportunity for networking and scientific discussion. It includes accommodation, catering and social events. The scientific sessions promise to be a forum for innovative ideas and

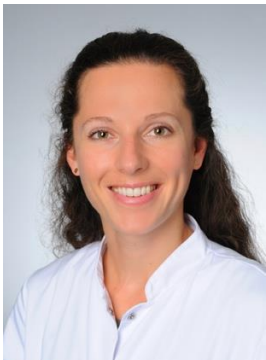
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Lisa Deloch

discussions. We would also like to introduce another exciting initiative for the coming year: the jDeGBS will publish a special issue in the renowned journal *Cancers*, entitled *The Future of Radiation Research in Cancers, 2nd Edition* and we are happy to receive submissions from all specialities that are involved in radiation research ([Cancers | Special Issue: The Future of Radiation Research in Cancers, 2nd Edition \(mdpi.com\)](https://www.mdpi.com/Cancers/Special_Issue/2024/1)).

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