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The Team



Debora Gasperini, Group leader

Debora grew up near Umag, Croatia. She became interested in plant biology during her IB project on micropropagation of poplar hybrids at the **UWCad** (IT). She then studied Biology and Functional Genomics at the University of Trieste (IT), where she investigated the Self Incompatibility response in coffee in **Alberto Pallavicini's** lab. Determined to explore the genetic potential of the complex bread wheat genome, she joined **Simon Griffiths's** lab in 2006. Her PhD was a joint project between the **JIC** and **NIAB**, and was awarded by the University of East Anglia (UK) in Sept 2010. After that, she moved to the electrifying team of **Ted Farmer** at **UNIL** (CH). There, in addition to her postdoc work on Arabidopsis wound responses and root growth, she was appointed junior lecturer in Plant Molecular Biology. In Feb 2016, Debora started her own research group at the IPB in Halle (DE), and has been awarded an **ERC Consolidator Grant** in 2023.

Stefan Mielke, Postdoc



Stefan Mielke, Postdoc

Stefan grew up near Forst (Lausitz), Germany. He obtained his degree in Biochemistry from the Martin-Luther University Halle-Wittenberg. During his BSc thesis, he received extensive cell biology training in **Bettina Hause's** lab where he also moved his first steps into the JA world. He then joined **Nico Dissmeyer's group** for his MSc project to study protein degradation pathways. Stefan joined the **Gasparini lab** in Feb 2016 as a PhD student, to investigate how altered plant cell walls activate JA signaling. Results from some of his PhD work can be found [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#). He completed his degree with full marks in 2021, and is now a postdoc in the group.



Verona Wilde, Lab Technician

Verona grew up near Lutherstadt Wittenberg, Germany. She obtained her professional diploma and practical training in Braunschweig, and then moved to Halle first to the **MLU** and then to the **IPB**. Since her arrival at the IPB, she worked with many groups, across plant species, and became an expert in biochemistry, molecular biology and lab management. She joined us in Jan 2022 to keep us organized, well-trained, help us advance in our projects,

as well as run her own experiments.



Haojie Wang, postdoc

Haojie comes from Luoyang (Henan province), China. He obtained his BSc in Biotechnology from the Henan University of Science and Technology. He then joined **Ren Xiaolin**'s group for his MSc project to study ethylene biosynthesis in apple fruits (*Malus domestica*). Haojie joined **Jozefus Schippers**'s group as a Phd student to investigate how the 26S proteasome regulates protein homeostasis and plant development. Part of his PhD results can be found [here](#). He is a postdoc in the Gasperini lab since Oct 2023.



Udit Acharya, postdoc

Udit, originally from Kolkata (India), pursued her academic journey with a fervent interest in microbiology. She obtained her BSc degree in microbiology and an MSc specializing in Plant Molecular Biology and Biotechnology at

the **Bose Institute**, supported by an **INSPIRE fellowship**. Fascinated by the dynamics between microbes and plants, she continued her PhD with **Anupama Ghosh** focusing on elucidating the role of rice defense proteases and protease inhibitors against sheath blight infection. Since Oct 2023, Uditā concentrates on deciphering the mechanism of signal perception by plastids to initiate jasmonate precursor production.



Ying Chen, postdoc

Ying is from Yiyang (Hunan province) China. She obtained her BSc in Ecology from the **South China Agricultural University** and an MSc in Developmental Biology from the **Institute of Botany, the Chinese Academy of Sciences**. Her MSc thesis focused on investigating proline transport in *Arabidopsis* under osmotic stress. Motivated by her curiosity in understanding how plant control their organ size at the molecular level, Ying became a PhD student in **Dirk Inzé's** lab at **VIB-UGent Center for Plant Systems Biology** (Belgium). After defending her doctoral thesis in October 2021, she remained with Dirk Inzé's group as a postdoctoral researcher, continuing her research in dynamic ubiquitination balance in regulating leaf growth. She joined the Gasperini lab in January 2024 to characterize early steps in jasmonate biosynthesis.





Frieda Roessler, PhD candidate

Frieda grew up in Berlin, Germany. She obtained her BSc in life sciences and MSc in biochemistry and molecular biology at the **University of Potsdam**. During her MSc thesis she worked on osmotic stress responses in bacteria at the **Federal Institute of material research**. She is especially fascinated by the role of specialized metabolites in stress acclimation. Frieda joined the Gasperini lab in February 2024 to uncover early events in the initiation of JA biosynthesis, in frame of the **RTG2498 Communications and Dynamics of Plant Cell Compartments**.

Interested in joining us?

Applications from talented PhD students and postdocs who can attract their own fellowships are always welcome. If you would like to work with us, please send an e-mail to [debora.gasperini\(at\)ipb-halle.de](mailto:debora.gasperini(at)ipb-halle.de) with your CV and a motivation letter explaining your research interests and how they fit our lab. To find the appropriate funding scheme please visit <http://www.ipb-halle.de/en/career/research-funding/>. We will support suitable candidates during the application process.

Alumni

- **Jhonny O. Figueroa Parra, postdoc (08.2023-02.2024)**
Next: postdoc in Lucia Strader Lab, Durham (USA)
- **Yunjing Ma, PhD candidate (07.2019-07.2023)**
Next: postdoc in Lieven De Veylder Lab, Gent (BE)
- **Andreas Schenke, PhD candidate (11.2018-11.2022)**
Next: STEM teacher
- **Dr. Mukesh Kumar Meena, postdoc and Marie Curie fellow (12.2018-08.2022)**
Next: Faculty at NIPGR, New Delhi (IN)
- **Ronny Hennig, MSc student (03.2021-07.2022)**
Next: Navigo Proteins GmbH, Halle (DE)
- **Marlene Zimmer, Lab technician (04.2016-03.2022)**
Next: Lab technician in Severin Sasso's Lab, Leipzig (DE)
- **Adina Schulze, MSc student (05.2017- 05.2018)**
Next: PhD student in Stefan Schild's Lab, Graz (AT)

Employee

Acharya, Udit

Postdoc

Hofland, Twan

PhD Student



Leibniz-Institut für Pflanzenbiochemie
Stiftung des öffentlichen Rechts

Mielke, Stefan	Postdoc
Rößler, Frieda	PhD Student
Wang, Haojie	Postdoc
Wilde, Verona	Technician
