



# ACCADEMIA MEDICA DI ROMA

Giovedì 26 gennaio 2023, ore 16.00  
Auditorium Prima Clinica Medica  
Policlinico Umberto I, viale del Policlinico 155, Roma

La conferenza potrà essere seguita in presenza presso la sede sopra descritta oppure in streaming sulla piattaforma Zoom utilizzando il seguente link  
<https://uniroma1.zoom.us/j/92312414393?pwd=cDM2bTZ3VldoWEFjSnNjNjR6bmtJdz09>  
(Meeting ID: 923 1241 4393; Passcode: accademia)

## Francesco Cucca

Professore di Genetica Medica, Dipartimento di Scienze Biomediche,  
Università di Sassari

*Parlerà sul tema:*

**"Il Dna dei Sardi: una chiave per spiegare le malattie umane e sviluppare nuovi farmaci per curarle"**

*La S.V. è invitata ad intervenire.*


L'ACCADEMICO SEGRETARIO  
ANTONIO MUSARO'

IL PRESIDENTE  
VINCENZO BARNABA

Il certificato di partecipazione verrà rilasciato solo in presenza

## PERSONAL INFORMATION

Francesco Cucca

 (Italy) [www.irgb.cnr.it/people/francesco-cucca/](http://www.irgb.cnr.it/people/francesco-cucca/)**Sex** Male | **Date of birth** 6 Mar 1958 | **Nationality** Italian**Researcher unique identifier:** [orcid.org/0000-0002-7414-1995](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7414-1995)**H index:** 85 (source Google Scholar) - 75 (source Scopus) January 2022

## WORK EXPERIENCE

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- |                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Jul 2011 – Present  | <b>Full Professor of Medical Genetics</b><br>University of Sassari, Sassari (Italy)                                                                                                                  |
| Jan 2021 – Present  | <b>Director Unit Clinical Genetics, Sassari University Hospital</b><br>Sassari (Italy)                                                                                                               |
| May 2009 – Jun 2019 | <b>Director of the Institute for Research in Genetics and Biomedicine (IRGB)</b><br>National Research Council (CNR), Cagliari (Italy)                                                                |
| Jan 2005 – Jun 2011 | <b>Associate Professor of Medical Genetics</b><br>University of Sassari, Sassari (Italy)                                                                                                             |
| Jun 1998 – Dec 2004 | <b>Assistant Professor in Paediatrics</b><br>Assistant Professor in Paediatrics, University of Cagliari, Head Immunogenetics group, Children's Hospital, ("Ospedale Microcitemico"), Cagliari, Italy |
| Jan 1997 – May 1998 | <b>Senior Paediatrician</b><br>Paediatric Hospital ward, Ospedale Brotzu Cagliari, Italy                                                                                                             |
| Jun 1994 – Dec 1996 | <b>Visiting Medical Researcher</b><br>Wellcome Trust for Human Genetics, Oxford University (UK).                                                                                                     |
| Jan 1990 – May 1994 | <b>Staff Paediatrician</b><br>Paediatric Hospital ward, Ospedale Brotzu Cagliari, Italy                                                                                                              |

## OTHER ASSIGNMENTS

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- |                |                                                                               |
|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2014 – 2020    | <b>Vice-Chancellor for Research</b><br>University of Sassari, Sassari (Italy) |
| 2021 – Present | <b>Board of Trustees of <i>Nature Italy</i>.</b>                              |

- 2002 – Present During the last 20 years I have served as reviewer for various scientific journals including: Nature, Nature Genetics, Nature Immunology, American Journal of Human Genetics, Lancet Neurology, European Journal of Human Genetics, Human Molecular Genetics, Diabetes.
- 2019 – Present Member of the “Multiple Sclerosis Global Alliance” and of the “Experimental Medicine Trials Initiative”
- 2018 – Present Member of the steering committee of the FISM (Italian Multiple Sclerosis Foundation)
- 2010 – 2013 Member of the steering committee of the FISM

#### EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- 1994 – 1997 **Postdoctoral Research Fellow** EQF level 8  
Nuffield Department of Surgery, Wellcome Trust Centre for Human Genetics, Laboratory of John A. Todd, University of Oxford, (United Kingdom)
- 1985 – 1989 **Specialization in Pediatrics** EQF level 8  
University of Cagliari, Cagliari (Italy)  
(Score: 70/70 Cum Laude)
- 1977 – 1985 **Degree in Medicine & Surgery** EQF level 7  
University of Cagliari, Cagliari (Italy)  
(Score: 110/ 110 Cum Laude& special commendation by the examining committee)

#### PERSONAL SKILLS

Mother tongue(s) **Italian**

	UNDERSTANDING		SPEAKING		WRITING
	Listening	Reading	Spoken interaction	Spoken production	
English	C2	C2	C2	C2	C2

Levels: A1 and A2: Basic user - B1 and B2: Independent user - C1 and C2: Proficient user  
Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Supervision of graduate students and postdoctoral fellow
- **2009 - present:** ~10 Post-Docs, Institute for Research in Genetics and Biomedicine (IRGB), National Research Council (CNR), Italy
  - **2011 - presents:** ~15 PhD student guided as full professor, Department of Biomedical Science, University of Sa sari, Italy
  - **2005 - 2010:** ~5 PhD student guided as associate professor of Medical Genetics, Department of Biomedical

Science, University of Sassari, Italy

- **1998 - 2004:** ~10 PhD student guided as assistant professor in Pediatrics, Department of Biomedical Science and Biotechnology, University of Cagliari, Italy

#### Teaching activity

- **2005 - present:** Medical Genetics Course, first year of Master's Degree Programme in MEDICINE AND SURGERY, University of Sassari, Italy

#### Organisation of scientific meetings

- **Since 2010,** Organization and direction of 8 International summer schools on advanced functional genomics in the Polaris Technology Park, Pula (CA). Each event involved over 100 participants including ~15 speakers of clear international prominence (from USA, UK, Germany, Iceland, Iran, Japan and Italy), ~ 50 international students and ~40 local attendees for seminars and symposia (<https://www.irgb.cnr.it/summer-school/>).
- **2018,** Organization of "The European Mathematical Genetics Meeting (EMGM)" in 2018 in Cagliari

#### Membership of scientific societies

- **2008 – present,** Member of the American Society of Human Genetics (ASHG)

#### Major international collaborations

A strategic asset for increasing the critical mass and improving the quality of our research activities in Sardinia have been international collaborations I have set up with leading scientists in the fields of functional genetics.

To name the main ones:

- **David Schlessinger,** Distinguished Researcher NIH/NIA, National Institute on Aging, Baltimore, USA; as the contract officer of our NIA intramural grant and my co-PI of the Sardinia project.
- **Goncalo Abecasis,** Head Department of Biostatistics, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; key partner over the last ~10 years on the genetic analyses performed in the Sardinia project.
- **John Todd,** Professor of Precision Medicine; Oxford University (UK); my mentor in the initial work on autoimmunity more than 20 years ago and still an important collaborator in the current research activities.
- **John Novembre,** Associate Professor Human Genetics, University of Chicago; relevant collaborator on work on population genetics and ancient DNA analysis.
- **Stephen Montgomery,** Director of Genome Informatics, Department of Pathology, Stanford University, USA; a critical collaborator in developing new tools for analysis of RNA seq data.
- **Myriam Gorospe,** Head "Laboratory of Genetics" NIH/NIA, National Institute on Aging, Baltimore, USA.
- **Stephen Sawcer,** Professor Neurogenetics, Cambridge University, UK; School of Medicine.

#### Honours and awards

- **2018** Premio Marcello Sgarlata 2018; awarded each year, in the Campidoglio in Rome, to personalities from the fields of science, culture, art, sport, entertainment, politics and economics (<https://www.cnr.it/it/news/8060/premio-marcello-sgarlata-2018-gioia-in-campidoglio-all-insegna-del-coraggio>)
- **2013** Invited to give a lecture entitled "Molecular genetics of autoimmunity and its clinical implications", at a meeting dedicated to science, innovation and health at the Senate of the Italian Republic in Rome in the presence of the President of the Republic Giorgio Napolitano (<https://list.cineca.it/pipermail/silfs-l/2013/001149.html>).
- **2002** "Premio Navicella Sardegna"; attributed to persons who have contributed most to the image of Sardinia in the world (<http://www.premionavicellasardegna.it/albo-doro-i-premiati-edizione-2002/>)

On-going Grants of which I am the principal investigator/coordinator

<b>Project Title:</b> Longitudinal studies for Age Associated Conditions in a Sardinia Population Cohort (SardiNIA 5)		
<b>Funding Source</b> National Institute of Health (USA)	<b>Amount</b> \$ 11.902.994	<b>Period</b> 2021 - 2026

<b>Project Title:</b> Dissecting the impact of gut mucosal immunity in autoimmune diseases.		
<b>Funding Source</b> The Italian Ministry of Education, Universities and Research (MIUR), Research projects of national interest (PRIN)	<b>Amount</b> € 764.210	<b>Period</b> 2019 - 2022

<b>Project Title:</b> Longitudinal studies for Age Associated Conditions in a Sardinia Population Cohort (SardiNIA 4)		
<b>Funding Source</b> National Institute of Health (USA)	<b>Amount</b> \$ 4.345.690	<b>Period</b> 2016 - 2021

<b>Project Title:</b> An integrated approach to dissect determinants, risk factors and pathways of ageing of the immune system		
<b>Funding Source</b> EU HORIZON 2020	<b>Amount</b> € 5.850.000	<b>Period</b> 2015 - 2019

<b>Project Title:</b> PATH Pathology in Automated Traceable Healthcare		
<b>Funding Source</b> The Italian Ministry of Education, Universities and Research (MIUR),	<b>Amount</b> € 806.000	<b>Period</b> 2019 - 2021

<b>Project Title:</b> Elucidazione del ruolo dell'immunità mucosale nella sclerosi multipla		
<b>Funding Source</b> Regione Autonoma della Sardegna (Legge regionale 7 Sardegna)	<b>Amount</b> € 378.000	<b>Period</b> 2019 - 2021

<b>Project Title:</b> A genetic toolbox in MS drug discovery: patent development of candidate genes		
<b>Funding Source</b> Multiple Sclerosis Foundation (FISM)	<b>Amount</b> € 1.050.000	<b>Period</b> 2019 - 2022

<b>Project Title:</b> Impact of genetic factors and drugs used in the treatment of multiple sclerosis on cellular and humoral immune responses after vaccination against Sars-Cov-2: a pilot study in Sardinia		
<b>Funding Source</b> Multiple Sclerosis Foundation (FISM)	<b>Amount</b> € 50.000	<b>Period</b> 2021 - 2022

<b>Project Title:</b> Impact of genetic factors and drugs used in the treatment of multiple sclerosis on cellular and humoral immune responses after vaccination against Sars-Cov-2.		
<b>Funding Source</b> Multiple Sclerosis Foundation (FISM)	<b>Amount</b> € 350.000	<b>Period</b> 2012 - 2023

## Publications

My research activity includes more than 250 peer reviewed works (for the complete list please see <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7414-1995>)

Below are the 15 most relevant publications of the last 10 years (2011-2021).

\* corresponding author

1. Orrù V, Steri M, Sidore C, Marongiu M, Serra V, Olla S, Sole G, Lai S, Dei M, Mulas A, Virdis F, Piras MG, Lobina M, Marongiu M, Pitzalis M, Deidda F, Loizedda A, Onano S, Zoledziewska M, Sawcer S, Devoto M, Gorospe M, Abecasis GR, Floris M, Pala M, Schlessinger D, Fiorillo E, Cucca F\*. Complex genetic signatures in immune cells underlie autoimmunity and inform therapy. *Nature Genetics*. 2020 Oct;52(10):1036-1045. doi: 10.1038/s41588-020-0684-4.

**Editorial related to Orrù et al:**

- Ramos PS Unravelling the complex genetic regulation of immune cells. *Nat Rev Rheumatol*. 2021 Mar;17(3):131-132. doi: 10.1038/s41584-020-00563-1.
2. Lodde V, Floris M, Beerman I, Munk R, Guha R, Steri M, Orrù V, Abdelmohsen K, Crompton PD, Gorospe M, Idda ML, Cucca F\*. Evolutionarily Selected Overexpression of the Cytokine BAFF Enhances Mucosal Immune Response Against *P. falciparum*. *Frontiers in Immunology*. 2020 Oct 6; 11:575103. doi: 10.3389/fimmu.2020.575103
  3. Marcus JH, Posth C, Ringbauer H, Lai L, Skeates R, Sidore C, Beckett J, Furtwängler A, Olivieri A, Chiang CWK, Al-Asadi H, Dey K, Joseph TA, Liu CC, Der Sarkissian C, Radzevičiūtė R, Michel M, Gradoli MG, Marongiu P, Rubino S, Mazzarello V, Rovina D, La Fragola A, Serra RM, Bandiera P, Bianucci R, Pompianu E, Murgia C, Guirguis M, Orquin RP, Tuross N, van Dommelen P, Haak W, Reich D, Schlessinger D, Cucca F\*, Krause J\*, Novembre J\*. Genetic history from the Middle Neolithic to present on the Mediterranean island of Sardinia. *Nature Communication*. 2020 Feb 24;11(1):939. doi: 10.1038/s41467-020-14523-6.
  4. Idda ML, Lodde V, McClusky WG, Martindale JL, Yang X, Munk R, Steri M, Orrù V, Mulas A, Cucca F, Abdelmohsen K, Gorospe M\*. Cooperative translational control of polymorphic BAFF by NF90 and miR-15a. *Nucleic Acids Research*. 2018 Dec 14;46(22):12040-12051. doi: 10.1093/nar/gky866.
  5. Floris M, Olla S, Schlessinger D & Cucca F\*. “Genetic-Driven Druggable Target Identification and Validation”. *Trends in Genetics*. 2018 Jul;34(7):558-570. doi: 10.1016/j.tig.2018.04.004.
  6. Chiang C W K; Marcus J H; Sidore, C; Biddanda A; Al-Asadi, H; Zoledziewska M; Pitzalis M; Busonero, F; Maschio A; Pistis G; Steri M; Angius A; Lohmueller K E; Abecasis G R; Schlessinger, D; Cucca F & Novembre\* J Genomic history of the Sardinian population. *Nature Genetics*, 50 (10), pp. 1426–1434, 2018. Cover Issue of Nature Genetics
  7. Olivieri A, Sidore C, Achilli A, Angius A, Posth C, Furtwängler A, Brandini S, Capodiferro MR, Gandini F, Zoledziewska M, Pitzalis M, Maschio A, Busonero F, Lai L, Skeates R, Gradoli MG, Beckett J, Marongiu M, Mazzarello V, Marongiu P, Rubino S, Rito T, Macaulay V, Semino O, Pala M, Abecasis GR, Schlessinger D, Conde-Sousa E, Soares P, Richards MB, Cucca F\*, Torroni A\*. Mitogenome Diversity in Sardinians: A genetic window onto an island's past. *Mol Biol Evol*. 2017 May 1;34(5):1230-1239. doi: 10.1093/molbev/msx082. PMID: 28177087; **Cover Issue** of Mol Biol Evol.
  8. Steri M, Orrù V, Idda ML, Pitzalis M, Pala M, Zara I, Sidore C, Faà V, Floris M, Deiana M, Asunis I, Porcu E, Mulas A, [...], Pani A, Hillert J, Sawcer S, D'Alfonso S, Todd JA, Novembre J, Abecasis GR, Whalen MB, Marrosu MG, Meloni A, Sanna S, Gorospe M, Schlessinger D, Fiorillo E, Zoledziewska M & Cucca F\*. “Overexpression of the Cytokine BAFF and Autoimmunity Risk”. *New England Journal of Medicine*. 2017 Apr, 376. (17): 1615-1626. doi: 10.1056/NEJMoa1610528;

**Editorials related to the study of Steri M et al :**

- Korn T, Oukka M. A BAFFing Association between Malaria Resistance and the Risk of Multiple Sclerosis. *N Engl J Med*. 2017 Apr 27;376(17):1680-1681. doi: 10.1056/NEJMe1700720.
  - Stohl W., Systemic lupus erythematosus: BAFF emerges from the genetic shadows. *Nat Review Rheumatol*. 2017 Aug;13(8):456-457. doi: 10.1038/nrrheum.2017.99.
  - Comabella M. Neuroimmunology: B cells and variant BAFF in autoimmune disease. *Nat Rev Neurology*. 2017 2017 Aug;13(8):453-454. doi: 10.1038/nrneuro.2017.87.
9. Pala M, Zappala Z, Marongiu M, Li X, Davis JR, Cusano R, Crobu F, Kukurba KR, Gloudemans MJ, Reinier F, Berutti R, Piras MG, Mulas A, Zoledziewska M, Marongiu M, Sorokin EP, Hess GT, Smith KS [...], Fiorillo E, Bassik MC, Sawcer SJ, Battle A, Novembre J, Jones C, Angius A, Abecasis GR, Schlessinger D & Cucca F\*, Montgomery SB.\* “Population- and individual-specific regulatory variation in Sardinia”. *Nature Genetics*. 2017 Apr 10. doi: 10.1038/ng.3840;
  10. Danjou F, Zoledziewska M, Sidore C, Steri M, Busonero F, Maschio A, Mulas A, Perseu L, Barella S, Porcu E, Pistis G, Pitzalis M, Pala M, Menzel S, Metrustry S, Spector T, Leoni L, Angius A, Uda M, Moi P, Thein SL, Galanello R, Abecasis GR, Schlessinger D, Sanna S, & Cucca F\*. “Genome-Wide Association analyses based on whole genome sequencing in Sardinia provide insights into regulation of hemoglobin levels”. *Nature Genetics*, 2015, Nov; 47(11):1264-71 doi: 10.1038/ng.3307.

11. Sidore C, Busonero F, Maschio A, Porcu E, Naitza S, Zoledziewska M, Mulas A, Pistis G, Steri M, Danjou F, Kwong A, Ortega del Vecchyo VD, [...], Zeggini E, Soranzo N, Jones C, Lyons R, Angius A, Kang HM, Novembre J, Sanna S, Schlessinger D, Cucca F\*, Abecasis GR\*. "Genome sequencing elucidates Sardinian genetic architecture and augments association analyses for lipid and blood inflammatory markers." *Nature Genetics*, 2015 Nov; 47(11):1272-81. doi: 10.1038/ng.3368.

12. Zoledziewska M, Sidore C, Chiang CWK, Sanna S., Mulas A, Steri M, Busonero F, Marcus JH, Marongiu M, Maschio A, Ortega Del Vecchyo D, Floris M, Meloni A, Delitala A, Concas MP, Murgia F, Biino G, Vaccargiu S, Nagaraja R, Lohmueller KE, UK10K Consortium, Timpson Nicholas J, Soranzo N, Tachmazidou I, Dedoussis G, Zeggini E, The Understanding Society Scientific Group, Uzzau S, Jones C, Lyons R, Angius A, Abecasis GR, Novembre J, Schlessinger D & Cucca F\*. "Height-reducing variants and selection for short stature in Sardinia". *Nature Genetics*, 2015, Nov;47(11):1352-6. doi: 10.1038/ng.3403

**Cover Issue of Nature Genetics and Editorials related to: Danjou F et al, Zoledziewska M et al & Sidore C, et**

- A new genomic island. *Nature Genetics*. 2015 Nov;.2015 Nov;47(11):1221
- Small island, big genetic discoveries. *Nature Genetics*. Lettre G, Hirschhorn JN 2015 Nov;47(11):1224-5. doi: 10.1038/ng.3426.

13. Orrù V, Steri M, Sole G, Sidore C, Viridis F, Dei M, Lai S, Zoledziewska M, Busonero F, Mulas A, Floris M, Mentzen WI, Urru SA, Olla S, Marongiu M, Piras MG, Lobina M, Maschio A, Pitzalis M, Urru MF, Marcelli M, Cusano R, Deidda F, Serra V, Oppo M, Pilu R, Reinier F, Berutti R, Pireddu L, Zara I, Porcu E, Kwong A, Brennan C, Tarrier B, Lyons R, Kang HM, Uzzau S, Atzeni R, Valentini M, Firinu D, Leoni L, Rotta G, Naitza S, Angius A, Congia M, Whalen MB, Jones CM, Schlessinger D, Abecasis GR, Fiorillo E, Sanna S & Cucca F\*, "Genetic variants regulating immune cell levels in health and disease". *Cell*, 2013 Sep 26;155(1):242-56.

**Research highlight related to Orrù et al:**

- Vogan K. Genetics of immune cell levels, *Nature Genetics*, 2013, 45(11): 1273

14. Francalacci P, Morelli L, Angius A, Berutti R, Reinier F, Atzeni R, Pilu R, Busonero F, Maschio A, Zara I, Sanna D, Useli A, Urru MF, Marcelli M, Cusano R, Oppo M, Zoledziewska M, Pitzalis M, Deidda F, Porcu E, Poddie F, Kang HM, Lyons R, Tarrier B, Gresham JB, Li B, Tofanelli S, Alonso S, Dei M, Lai S, Mulas A, Whalen MB, Uzzau S, Jones C, Schlessinger D, Abecasis GR, Sanna S, Sidore C & Cucca F\*, "Low-pass DNA sequencing of 1200 Sardinians reconstructs European Y-chromosome phylogeny". *Science*, 2013 Aug 2;341(6145):565-9.

**Editorial related to Francalacci et al:**

- Cann RL. Y weigh in again on modern humans. *Science*, 2013 Aug 2;341(6145):465-7. doi: 10.1126/science.1242899.
- Bahcall O. A deeper look back at Y *Nature Genetics*, 2013 Sept 45(9):969.

15. Naitza S, Porcu E, Steri M, Taub DD, Mulas A, Xiao X, Strait J, Dei M, Lai S, Busonero F, Maschio A, Usala Zoledziewska M, Sidore C, Zara I, Pitzalis M, Loi A, Viridis F, Piras R, Deidda F, Whalen MB, Crisponi L, Concas A, Podda C, Uzzau S, Scheet P, Longo DL, Lakatta E, Abecasis GR, Cao A, Schlessinger D, Uda M, Sanna S, Cucca F\*. A genome-wide association scan on the levels of markers of inflammation in Sardinians reveals associations that underpin its complex regulation. *PLoS Genet*. 2012 Jan;8(1): e1002480. doi:10.1371/journal.pgen.1002480.

**Main international conferences as invited speaker (last 10 yrs.):**

I have presented my work as an invited speaker in numerous national conferences and in more than 40 international conferences or advanced schools. The most significant from last years are listed below. For the complete list, please see <https://www.irgb.cnr.it/people/francesco-cucca>.

- Nov 2018 Reggio Calabria, Italy – 3<sup>rd</sup> USERN Congress & Festival for awarding the USERN Prize  
Lecture: The relevance of Genetic Studies in a Sardinian Isolated Population.
- Jun 2018 Biddeford, ME, USA - Gordon Research Conference - University of New England  
Lecture: Genetic Analysis of Multifactorial Traits in the Sardinian Founder Population.
- May 2018 Venice, Italy - 32nd European Immunogenetics and histocompatibility Conference  
Lecture: Immunogenetics in autoimmunity.
- Apr 2017 Bethesda, USA - NIAID/NIH - Malaria Cell Biology Section,  
Seminar: Overexpression of the Cytokine BAFF and Autoimmunity Risk.
- Dec 2016 Doha, Qatar - Sidra Symposium: "Functional Genomics and Beyond"  
Lecture: Nature versus Nurture in autoimmune diseases: the Sardinian exception.
- Nov 2016 Teheran, Iran - 1st USERN Congress & Festival for awarding the USERN Prize  
Lecture: What the genes tell us about our origins, evolutionary history and our current health
- Jan 2016 Siena, Italy - Mérieux Foundation Conference: "Aging and Immunity III"

Lecture: Genetic variants regulating immune cell levels in health and disease.

- Oct 2015 Baltimore, USA - SardiNIA Symposium; National Institute on Aging (NIA)/NIH  
Lecture: Genetic Variants Regulating Immune Cell and Soluble Molecule Levels in Health, Aging, and Disease.
- Jun 2014 Yokohama, Japan - 9th RCAI International Summer School Program; Research Center for Allergy and Immunology (RIKEN) - Lecture: Finding genetic variants regulating immune cell and molecule levels in health and autoimmune disease.
- Jun 2014 Milano, Italy - The European Human Genetics (ESGH) Conference 2014  
Lecture: High resolution genetic analysis to detect variants associated with quantitative traits and diseases in the founder Sardinian population.
- Mar 2014 Muscat, Sultanate of Oman - 2nd Genetics Conference: "Genetics in developing countries, unique challenges and opportunities"; College of Medicine & Health Sciences, Sultan Qaboos University.  
Lecture: Genetic Isolates: Lessons Learned from the SardiNIA project
- Nov 2013 Cancun, Mexico - 3rd Meeting of the Latin American Society of Human Genetics & 38th Meeting Mexican Society of Human Genetics (AMGH)  
Lecture: Genetic Factors in Immunity and Autoimmunity.
- Jun 2013 Yokohama, Japan - 8th RCAI International Summer School Program 2014; Research Center for Allergy and Immunology (RIKEN)  
Lecture: Finding genetic factors affecting both levels of immune cells and molecules and autoimmune disease risk.
- Apr 2013 Baltimore, USA - National Institute on Aging (NIA) /NIH  
Seminar: Analysis of genetic factors in autoimmune disease in the Sardinian population.
- Nov 2012 Boston, USA - 11th International Society of Neuro-Immunology (ISNI)  
Lecture: Searching for causal factors in genetic associations with Multiple Sclerosis.
- Oct 2012 Tokyo, Japan - Keio University  
Seminar: Genetic variants associated with immune traits and diseases in the Sardinian founder population.
- May 2012 Stockholm, Sweden - Karolinska Institute  
Seminar: The nexus of genetic factors in immunity-autoimmunity: new entry points for intervention in MS and other autoimmune diseases.
- Oct 2010 South Korea - University of Seoul  
Lecture: The ProgeNIA/SardiNIA project: dissection of age – associated conditions in a Sardinian population cohort”.

**Major contributions to launching the careers of outstanding researchers**

During my career I have trained/supervised many younger colleagues with some of them like Patrizia Zavattari --initially one of my PhD students and now independent Associate Professor at Cagliari University—and more recently several others including Carlo Sidore, Elonora Porcu, Maristella Steri, Mauro Pala, Edoardo Fiorillo, Valeria Orrù, Matteo Floris, Magdalena Zoledziewska, and Maristella Pitzalis all now with tenured positions and recognized investigators in human genetics/immune-genetics.