Title: The good, the bad and the beautiful: turning viruses into allies of the immune system to fight cancer
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Principal Investigator

Full name: Joeri Aerts
Research Group: Pharmaceutical Biotechnology and Molecular Biology (MICH)

Joeri Aerts graduated in 1996 from the University of Ghent as a Biochemist and obtained a PhD in Biomedical Sciences from the University of Leuven in 2002. Between 2002 and 2004, he was a postdoc at the Surgery Branch of the NIH (Bethesda, MD, USA) and at the Barts Cancer Institute (London, UK). He joined the VUB in October 2004, first as a postdoc, and from October 2015, he heads his own lab. The main focus of his current research is on the development of oncolytic viruses for cancer immunotherapy and on the development of novel immunotherapy approaches targeting the HIV reservoir.

Doctoral Candidate

Full name: Jolien De Munck

Jolien De Munck graduated from the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB) as a bio-engineer (master in bio-engineering: medical biotechnology: cell and gene biotechnology) in 2013. She started a PhD under supervision of Prof. Dr. Joeri Aerts in the Department of Pharmaceutical Biotechnology and Molecular Biology (MICH) in 2015. She studies the role of and the interactions between the immune system and (immunogenic) cell death of melanoma after treatment with HSV-1 derived oncolytic viruses.