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TEN YEARS OF CONNECTING IMAGING COMMUNITIES

By Antje Keppler, Co-Founder and Coordinator of Global BioImaging

Ten years ago, in 2016, Global BioImaging began as a simple idea in the form of an EU-funded project: bring people together to meet, share knowledge and learn from one another, with the Exchange of Experience (EoE) conference at the heart of its activities. We could hardly have imagined the positive storm of enthusiasm that would follow, or the connections it would spark around the world.

Over the years, national and regional imaging communities from all continents have contributed to GBI, and our annual EoEs have become much more than a meeting platform. They have helped build an international community of imaging scientists, trainers and trainees, whose knowledge and support continue to travel far beyond the events themselves. This unique network also made the Imaging4All programme possible, with philanthropic support helping extend access to imaging expertise and training for participants from low- and middle-income countries. Its impact continues to ripple outward through the people it reaches and the connections they carry forward.

As we celebrate the EoE's tenth anniversary in Heidelberg, we are proud of what this community has built together. The strong foundations laid over the past decade give us every reason to look ahead with confidence. Over these ten years, Global BioImaging has reached more than 5,000 imaging scientists around the world.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this journey. We look forward to meeting, learning and building together over the next ten years of Global BioImaging.

Antje Keppler



2019-2022 2023 2024 2025 2026

Global BioImaging's Management Board Chairs. From left to right: Antje Keppler (Euro-BioImaging), Teng-Leong Chew (HHMI Janelia Research Campus), Lisa Yen (Microscopy Australia), Claire Brown (McGill University, Canada BioImaging), Shinya Komoto (Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology, ABiS)

GLOBAL BIOIMAGING IN 2026

Global BioImaging is an international network connecting imaging infrastructures, networks, and scientists worldwide. Recognising that scientific, technical, and data challenges transcend geographical boundaries, we bring together imaging facility operators and technical staff, scientists, managers, and science policy officers to share knowledge, exchange experiences, and build capacity internationally.

As of 2026, our network brings together 15 partner organisations worldwide, representing imaging communities across more than 70 countries. Together, we work towards three core goals:

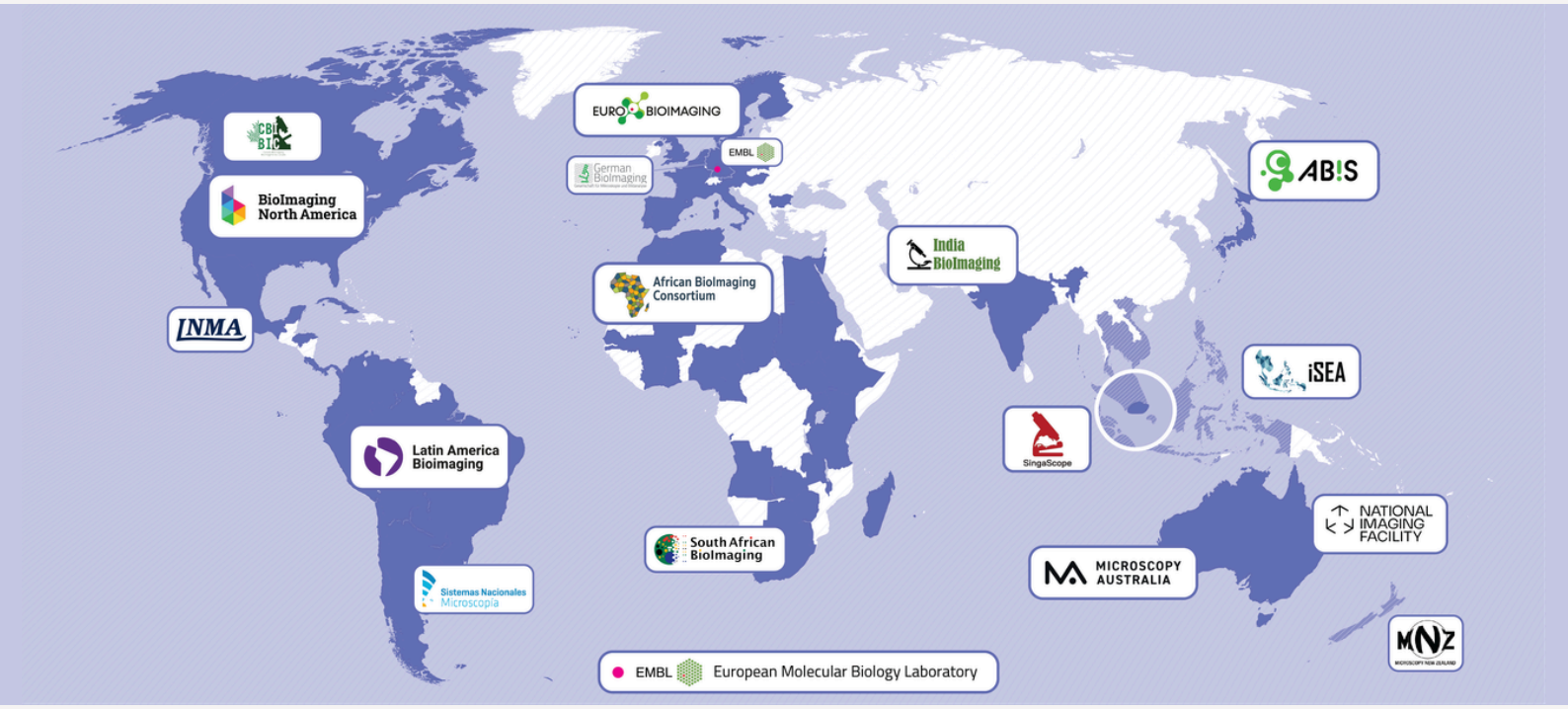
- Advocating for open and equitable access to imaging technologies, expertise and research infrastructures.
- Strengthening the case for imaging as an essential part of scientific research and its advancement.
- Building capacity internationally, drawing on the strengths and expertise of our global community.

Growing our global network

In 2026, our network continues to grow, with the membership of the newly established Imaging Southeast Asia network [1] being finalised. Our partnerships with Wiley, the Royal Microscopical Society, Microscopy New Zealand, Beautiful Biology and the Wellcome Photography Prize extend our reach and create new opportunities to share imaging knowledge and recognise the people behind it.

Through our collaboration with UNESCO, we advocate for remote access to imaging technologies and expertise, helping connect researchers with resources beyond their immediate geographical reach.
Our Imaging4All programme is now in its second year of providing funded access to imaging technologies, expertise and training for researchers from low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) around the world.

By connecting expertise and infrastructure across regions, Global BioImaging supports national and regional partners in addressing shared challenges while responding to local needs and priorities. Our world map reflects the reach of this network — and the collaborations that make it possible.



World map highlighting all Global BioImaging partner infrastructures and networks as of October 2026. For more information about our regional partners, visit globalbioimaging.org.

[1] Winter, SL. Welcome to Imaging Southeast Asia (iSEA). Global BioImaging. https://globalbioimaging.org/news/imaging-southeast-asia

GLOBAL BIOIMAGING IN NUMBERS

15
Partner infrastructures and networks

70+
Countries represented

11
Publications by the working groups

10
Annual Exchange of Experience conferences

77
Countries among conference participants

6
International working groups, 20-90 members each

Training

NEW IN 2026 - BIOMEDICAL IMAGING TRAINING COURSE

Hands-on courses for imaging core facility professionals and service providers with a unique focus on:

Facility management | Image data management & analysis | Train-the-trainer

Job shadowing

International job shadowing for imaging core facility professionals and service providers, to gain hands-on experience from peers worldwide.

Working groups

- Career paths for imaging scientists
- Biomedical imaging community
- Image data management
- Impact of imaging infrastructures
- How to talk to your funder
- Training imaging scientists

Community & Media partners

Microscopy & Analysis (Wiley) • Beautiful Biology • Wellcome Photography Prize • Royal Microscopical Society • Microscopy New Zealand

IMAGING AROUND THE WORLD

Meet the imaging communities that make up our global network.

Starting with its founding members, Euro-BioImaging, India BioImaging and Microscopy Australia, Global BioImaging has grown to connect imaging communities across all inhabited continents. Wherever you are in the world, you may find a national or regional imaging community near you to connect with, learn from and get involved in.

Africa

African BioImaging Consortium [africanbioimaging.org]

Biological · Biomedical imaging
ABIC connects microscopists across Africa through a community hub with working groups focused on training, infrastructure and communication.

South Africa BioImaging [sabioimaging.org]

Biological · Biomedical imaging
SABI brings together imaging users and core facilities across South Africa, promoting training and advocating for imaging with funders.

Asia

ABiS [nibb.ac.jp]

Biological · Biomedical imaging
ABiS provides Japanese researchers with access to advanced light and electron microscopy, MRI, image analysis support, image databases and training.

India BioImaging [indiabioimaging.org]

Biological imaging
A network of 22 imaging core facilities, India BioImaging organises microscopy training courses, webinars and opportunities for imaging professionals to exchange knowledge.

SingaScope [singascope.sg]

Biological · Biomedical imaging
SingaScope connects microscopy platforms across Singapore through a shared searchable database, training opportunities and a network that also supports regional engagement.

iSEA [imagingsea.org]

Biological imaging
A regional network focused on training, education and access to imaging technologies, iSEA connects bioimaging communities across Southeast Asia.

Australia

MICROSCOPY AUSTRALIA [micro.org.au]

Biological imaging · materials science
From electron and optical microscopy to scanning-probe techniques, ion and atom probes, and X-ray imaging, Microscopy Australia connects national facilities offering a broad range of advanced analytical capabilities.

National Imaging Facility [anif.org.au]

Biomedical imaging
NIF is an open-access imaging network offering human MRI and PET, preclinical imaging, radiopharmaceuticals and imaging data collections.

Europe

EURO-BIOIMAGING [eurobioimaging.eu]

Biological · Biomedical imaging
Through a distributed network of around 330 facilities organised into Nodes, Euro-BioImaging provides open access to imaging technologies, training and image data services across its member countries.

German BioImaging [gerbi-gmb.de]

Biological imaging
German BioImaging brings together scientists, core facilities and industry to advance microscopy, image analysis and research data management through working groups, training and collaborative projects.

North America

BioImaging North America [bioimagingnorthamerica.org]

Biological imaging
BINA supports the North American bioimaging community through professional development, working groups, outreach programmes and annual events.

CBI BIC [canadabioimaging.org]

Biological · Biomedical imaging
Canada BioImaging connects around 100 imaging facilities, supporting training, job shadowing and access to national image data resources.

LNMA [lnma.unam.mx/wp/]

Biological imaging
Based in Cuernavaca, Mexico, LNMA offers specialised optical microscopy services, equipment access, technical support and training courses.

South America

Latin America Bioimaging [labi.lat]

Biological imaging
LABI supports regional bioimaging through training, education, a core facility map and a virtual exchange series, connecting imaging communities across Latin America and the Caribbean.

Sistemas Nacionales Microscopía [argentina.gob.ar/ciencia/sistemasnacionales/microscopia]

Biological imaging · Materials science
Argentina's National Microscopy System coordinates access to registered advanced microscopes and supports equipment use and training across the country.

TRAINING & JOB SHADOWING

As a global network created for imaging scientists, technical staff and managers of imaging facilities, Global BioImaging provides training and opportunities to develop skills that are often not covered by the academic curriculum.
Our training programme focuses on practical skills that are essential to running imaging facilities, supporting users and sharing expertise with the next generation of imaging scientists.

Training designed for imaging facility professionals

Global BioImaging currently offers training in three core areas: facility management, image data management and bioimage analysis, and pedagogical skills via the train-the-trainer format. These courses combine practical learning with the opportunity to exchange experiences and connect with colleagues from imaging facilities around the world.

The courses are jointly organised with GBI's partner networks, and held on a rotational basis across partner sites. Rotating the course location helps bring the training to different communities, while travel support made possible through the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative enables participants from around the world to take part.

As a result of the close collaboration with our partners, and the strong connections formed between trainers and participants, India BioImaging is organising, for the first in 2026, a course based on the GBI model, and supported by our network of trainers.

This year also marks a new step for GBI training: In November 2026, GBI and the National Imaging Facility (NIF) in Australia, together with the Australian Society of Molecular Imaging (ASMI), will host the first GBI course dedicated specifically to biomedical imaging. The course addresses the particular training needs of professionals working with preclinical and human imaging, as well as researchers using biomedical imaging modalities.

Keeping knowledge accessible - The Virtual Training Platform & Microtutor

To complement these face-to-face opportunities, GBI has created a Virtual Training Platform with curated, self-learning modules that can be accessed at any time. The modules cover topics ranging from core facility management and measuring impact to image data management and analysis, as well as more technical topics in microscopy.

For a more interactive learning experience, GBI has also contributed to Microtutor, a freely accessible online tool for learning the fundamental principles, experimental design and quantitative measurement controls needed for fluorescence microscopy. Microtutor was developed by an international team led by Jennifer Waters at Harvard Medical School, with GBI and leading US-based imaging scientists.

Training Courses

Hands-on courses hosted by partners around the world, since 2023.

14 training courses

600+ imaging facility professionals

36 countries represented

Course locations: Canada (2x), Mexico (2x), Brazil, Argentina, India, Denmark, South Africa, Singapore, Japan, Australia (3x)

Virtual Training Platform & Microtutor

Community-curated microscopy modules & assisted learning platform, co-developed by a team of leading imaging experts under the guidance of Jennifer Waters.

36 training modules

10 topic categories

1,000+ registered users

Learning day-to-day operations from peers - Job Shadowing

With generous funding from the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, Global BioImaging established the International Job Shadowing Programme, enabling imaging scientists to visit facilities across our partner networks and infrastructures worldwide.

Through open calls, participants could apply for exchange visits ranging from one to four weeks, learning directly from peers in similar technical and managerial roles. These visits offer insight into different approaches to facility management, bioimage analysis, image data storage, quality management, software tools, user access and much more. By experiencing how another facility handles day-to-day challenges and exchanging ideas with colleagues, participants can bring new knowledge and approaches back to their home institutions.

Job Shadowing

Imaging staff exchange visits since late 2022.

48 participants in 4 years

Denmark → Japan

Xiaowen Wang at Kyoto University

Indonesia → Singapore

Alfina Gracia Feronytha at A*STAR Microscopy Platform

Argentina → Portugal

Lucía Pagola at Advanced Light Microscopy i3S

Czechia → Mexico

Martin Schätz at the Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social

Switzerland → South Africa

Yury Belyaev at Stellenbosch University

Australia → Singapore

Nicholas Condon at iCORE, A*STAR | Sepideh Valimehr at National University of Singapore

GLOBAL BIOIMAGING GOES BIOMEDICAL

Imaging in the life sciences spans a vast range of technologies, applications and scales. Broadly, biological imaging focuses on microscopy-based approaches such as light and electron microscopy, including increasingly multimodal approaches, spatial omics and technologies adapted from other fields.
Biomedical imaging, in contrast, encompasses modalities such as MRI, PET and ultrasound, and extends into pre-clinical and human imaging, where patient data and applications in health and disease bring a different set of requirements.

Bringing these two communities together is challenging, but also highly promising. Global BioImaging has been working to strengthen these connections for several years. In 2024, GBI coordinated the two-week Molecules-to-Human (M2H) training workshop in Denmark, bringing together participants from around the world to explore imaging across the biological-to-biomedical spectrum.[2]

GBI's Biomedical Imaging Community Working Group has provided a platform for this exchange to continue. The group brings together imaging professionals from different regions and backgrounds to identify shared challenges, discuss solutions and develop activities addressing the specific needs of biomedical imaging.

From data challenges to global solutions

One of the first areas where this community identified a strong need for exchange was image data management. Building on discussions within GBI's Image Data Management Working Group and the focus on image data at the 2024 GBI Exchange of Experience, the Biomedical Imaging Working Group organised an international webinar in 2025 on the challenges of managing biomedical imaging data.

The 90-minute discussion brought together experts from different regions and imaging communities to explore challenges ranging from data storage and sharing to standards, infrastructure and reuse. The discussion subsequently developed into a joint article, published in EMBO Reports at the end of 2025, highlighting gaps in biomedical image data management and potential solutions from the global community.

2024
2 weeks training workshop

Molecules-to-Human
A two-week training workshop in Denmark spanning biological to biomedical imaging

2025
online panel discussion with participants from 63 countries

Image data management
An international webinar on biomedcial image data led to a joint article in EMBO Reports.

2026
online challenge

Sustainathon Challenge
Teams worldwide designed sustainable imaging facilities. The winners join #GBI_EoE2026 in Heidelberg.

November 2026
1st biomedical imaging training course

Training for biomedical imaging
GBI, NIF and ASMI host the first GBI course dedicated to biomedical imaging.

PUBLISHED IN EMBO REPORTS, 2025

A global effort toward standards for data sharing in biomedical imaging

Winter SL, Moore J, Tavares AAS, Galloway G, Dojat M, Longo DL, Sullivan R, Mathur A, Chaabane L · doi:10.1038/s44319-025-00652-w

Read the paper

[2] Winter, SL. From Molecules to Human: Bridging Imaging Across Communities and Scales. Global BioImaging. https://globalbioimaging.org/news/from-molecules-to-human-bridging-imaging-across-communities-and-scales

GLOBAL BIOIMAGING growing collaboration

Can you build an imaging facility that lasts?

In 2026, the working group took a different approach to exploring another major challenge: sustaining biomedical infrastructures.

The Sustainathon Challenge asked imaging specialists from around the world to answer a deceptively simple question: How would you establish and sustain a biomedical imaging facility for at least ten years, with just US$1 million to get started?

Participants had to look beyond the scanners themselves and develop realistic models covering equipment, people, data, infrastructure, user access and finances.

The three winning proposals demonstrated very different approaches, reflecting the realities of high- and low-resource settings. While one team focused on building a new multimodal preclinical imaging facility, another proposed upgrading existing CT and ultrasound infrastructure and addressing unreliable power through a solar microgrid. A third model combined institutional support with fee-for-service and industry partnerships.

Despite their differences, the proposals shared a central message: sustainable imaging infrastructure is about much more than funding equipment. Long-term access depends on maintaining instruments, retaining expertise, managing data, engaging users and developing financial models that fit the local context.

The Sustainathon has now moved from challenge to action. The winning teams will join this year's EoE in Heidelberg, and the Biomedical Imaging Community Working Group is using the ideas generated through the challenge as a starting point for a community-driven publication on sustainable biomedical imaging facilities.



GET INVOLVED
Join our working group





PUTTING DATA IN THE SPOTLIGHT: BUILDING A STRONGER DATA COMMUNITY THROUGH GBI

Bioimaging in research and diagnostics depends on more than generating high-quality images. It also relies on how we manage, document, share, and reuse the data behind them. Across the bioimaging community, data management and stewardship are becoming increasingly important — and GBI is helping bring people, skills, and initiatives together to meet these challenges.

Over the past years, GBI's activities have increasingly highlighted the importance of data, from training in image data analysis and data management to building a community of experts and aspiring data stewards. This work spans several interconnected initiatives, all contributing to a shared goal: making good data practices an accessible and integral part of everyday bioimaging.

Connecting the global image data community

As a community partner in the foundingGIDE project, GBI has helped engage the global bioimaging community and has contributed to several publications resulting from this three-year collaborative effort (for more information on foundingGIDE, see p. 14).

Alongside this work, GBI's Image Data Management Working Group connects professionals working with large image data volumes or developing data management strategies through monthly online meetings. The group currently develops practical resources to help imaging facilities improve their data management practices.

Its *10 Steps to Image Data Management in Core Facilities* are being published as individual chapters on the GBI website and explored through the Data Spotlight webinar series, organised in collaboration with German BioImaging. Each session focuses on one step, offering practical guidance and a space for participants to exchange experiences.

The sessions are designed as individual modules, so participants can join the topics most relevant to them without having to follow the entire series.

Whether new to image data management or already working on data-management strategies in their facility, participants can learn from others, and contribute to the resource designed for the wider imaging community.

GBI's Spotlight Seminar Series on Image Data Management

10 Steps to Image Data Management in Core Facilities



Join the discussion: want to contribute more actively? Join the GBI Image Data Management Working Group and help shape the conversation.

GBI is also contributing to the development of data stewardship skills through its role as a consortium partner in the EMBL-led STARDAST project [3], which works to train data stewards across sectors and strengthen the expertise needed for responsible and effective data management.

Beyond these initiatives, GBI's networks are helping address broader challenges in data quality, AI tools, standards, and metadata collection. By connecting people working on these topics, we can build on existing expertise, identify shared needs, and make resources and good practices more accessible across the community.

Making data practices work across regions

Sharing knowledge is only part of the story. Data tools, standards, and workflows must also be relevant to the local context in which they are used. Different regions and facilities have different priorities, infrastructure, resources, and training needs. Understanding these differences is essential to ensuring that data initiatives have a lasting impact.

GBI's hands-on training courses on image data management, held in India, Mexico and Japan, as well as online webinars have provided opportunities to explore data challenges and discuss how tools and approaches can be adapted to new regions and local settings.

One example of how training can translate into practice is the installation of the first OMERO server in Pune, India, in June 2025, following the GBI training course. Since then, India BioImaging has continued to support data management training for facilities in India, building on this initial experience.

This example illustrates how training can become the starting point for longer-term capacity-building. Together with India BioImaging, GBI can draw on these experiences to explore how similar approaches might be extended to other regions, adapting them to local needs and learning from the communities involved.

Preparing for new data challenges

As AI tools, large language models (LLMs), and increasingly sophisticated image analysis methods become more accessible, the challenge is to ensure that these developments translate into practical benefits for the bioimaging community.

GBI can help bridge this gap by connecting technological advances with the needs of facilities and researchers, linking people to existing expertise and resources, and creating opportunities to learn from one another. Through training, webinars, working groups, and international collaborations, we can share good practices, identify gaps, and adapt solutions to different local contexts.

From image data analysis and data management training to community-led initiatives and locally adapted infrastructure, GBI is helping make good data practices an integral part of bioimaging. By strengthening data quality, stewardship and standards, we can support the community in generating, managing, sharing and reusing their data effectively, wherever in the world they work.

[3] Paredes Cisneros, I. and Vollmar, L. The scientists behind the data: investing in Europe's data stewardship workforce. EMBL, 2026. https://www.embl.org/news/connections/the-scientists-behind-the-data-investing-in-europes-data-stewardship-workforce/

foundingGIDE: BUILDING A GLOBAL IMAGE DATA ECOSYSTEM

How can imaging data become easier to discover, understand and reuse across borders? The foundingGIDE project has laid the technical and community foundations for a more connected global image data ecosystem.

Biological and preclinical imaging generates vast amounts of data, offering opportunities to advance research across disciplines and borders. Yet, these data often remain difficult to discover, access and reuse beyond the environments in which they were generated. Differences in metadata practices, ontology use, and repository infrastructures continue to limit the potential of imaging data for collaborative research and emerging applications such as AI. Addressing these challenges requires more than technical solutions. It calls for global collaboration, shared approaches to data stewardship and a community committed to making imaging data more interoperable.

This was the aim of foundingGIDE (Founding a Global Image Data Ecosystem), a Horizon Europe project coordinated by Euro-BioImaging ERIC from January 2024 to June 2026. Working with partners across Europe, Australia and Japan, including Global BioImaging, the project established technical and community foundations for a more connected global imaging data ecosystem. Rather than creating a new central archive, foundingGIDE focused on making data from existing repositories easier to discover and establishing a blueprint for this approach.

Global BioImaging played a critical role in bringing the global bioimaging community into this work. Throughout the project, foundingGIDE reached researchers in 30 countries, helping ensure that the development of GIDE considered different regional needs and infrastructure capabilities.

The project organised major community events in Japan, Australia and Germany. The first took place in Okazaki, Japan, back-to-back with GBI's Exchange of Experience in 2024, bringing the wider bioimaging community together to discuss shared metadata practices. The series



continued in Brisbane alongside International Data Week and ended at EMBL Heidelberg in 2026 with the launch of the GIDE Search Portal and API. These tools enable researchers to search for imaging datasets across independent repositories through a single interface.

Behind the portal is the GIDE Stack [4], a set of metadata models, ontologies and tools developed to make this kind of interoperability possible. It provides a common foundation for describing imaging datasets and exchanging their metadata across repositories. For biological imaging, it builds on approaches such as RO-Crate, while for preclinical imaging, the PRISM metadata model provides a structured way to describe studies across the experimental lifecycle.

Together, these components help make distributed datasets more consistent and searchable, while allowing repositories to maintain their existing infrastructures. The work also built on expertise from existing communities and initiatives, including QUAREP-LiMi, the vEM community and GloBIAS.

With foundingGIDE now complete, the next step is to build on the foundations it has established. The GIDE Stack, GIDE Search Portal and GIDE API provide practical starting points for connecting existing resources. A global image data ecosystem is not a single repository or a finished technical solution. It is an ongoing effort to make imaging data easier to find, understand and reuse, wherever it is generated.

This article was written by Maria Mirza from Euro-BioImaging



[4] founding-gide.eurobioimaging.eu/gide-stack/

WEBINARS AS INFRASTRUCTURE FOR GLOBAL SCIENTIFIC ENGAGEMENT

Imaging and core facility professionals often face similar challenges, whether they are working in Europe, the Americas or elsewhere in the world. Yet opportunities to exchange experiences across these communities can be limited by geography, resources and the demands of busy professional roles.

How can webinars, when they are carefully designed, branded, and held regularly, function as an infrastructure to bring people together despite geographical distance? This year, Global BioImaging and the Association of Biomolecular Resource Facilities (ABRF) spearheaded two important activities together: the first was a joint reflection on webinars as community infrastructure and the second was a widely attended town hall on the impact of core facilities.

Global BioImaging and ABRF share a commitment to connecting imaging and core facility professionals across institutional and geographic boundaries by strengthening scientific networks, supporting the professional development of imaging scientists and core facility staff, and promoting the exchange of good practices. Their collaboration contributes both practical spaces for community dialogue and broader learning about how online engagement can support strong, inclusive scientific communities.

Learning how online communities thrive

Drawing on the collective experience from the GBI, Euro-BioImaging, BioImaging North America and ABRF communities, GBI and ABRF have co-authored a paper titled "From Broadcast to Community: Rethinking Webinars as Infrastructure for Global Scientific Engagement", which has been accepted for publication in the Journal of Biomolecular Techniques.

Its central message is that webinars should not be seen merely as convenient channels for broadcasting information, or as temporary substitutes for in-person meetings.

When designed around a clear purpose and embedded within wider community activities, they can become part of the infrastructure that enables distributed communities to exchange knowledge, develop shared practices, and maintain connections over time.

The paper distinguishes between different functions of online programmes, including technical exchange, professional and career development, and community dialogue. It also provides practical steps for implementation.

Principles for sustainable online engagement

- **Start with a defined purpose and audience.** The subject, format, and intended participants should be clearly aligned.
- **Create continuity and trust.** Consistent timing, facilitation and identity help participants understand what to expect and encourage repeat engagement.
- **Use interaction purposefully.** Active moderation and inclusive discussion can turn a presentation into a space for genuine exchange.
- **Keep organisation sustainable.** Lightweight processes, shared responsibilities and realistic frequency reduce the burden on organisers and speakers.
- **Extend value beyond the live event.** Recordings and supporting resources can broaden access across regions and time zones, while recognising that some discussion-based formats may benefit from remaining unrecorded.
- **Measure what matters.** Attendance is useful, but continuity, shared learning, new connections, and resources created for the community may better reflect whether a programme has achieved its purpose.

Creating space for a shared conversation

If the paper captures what international imaging communities have learned about effective online engagement, the Town Hall on the Impact of Core Facilities, held online in June 2026, demonstrates why such cross-community spaces matter.

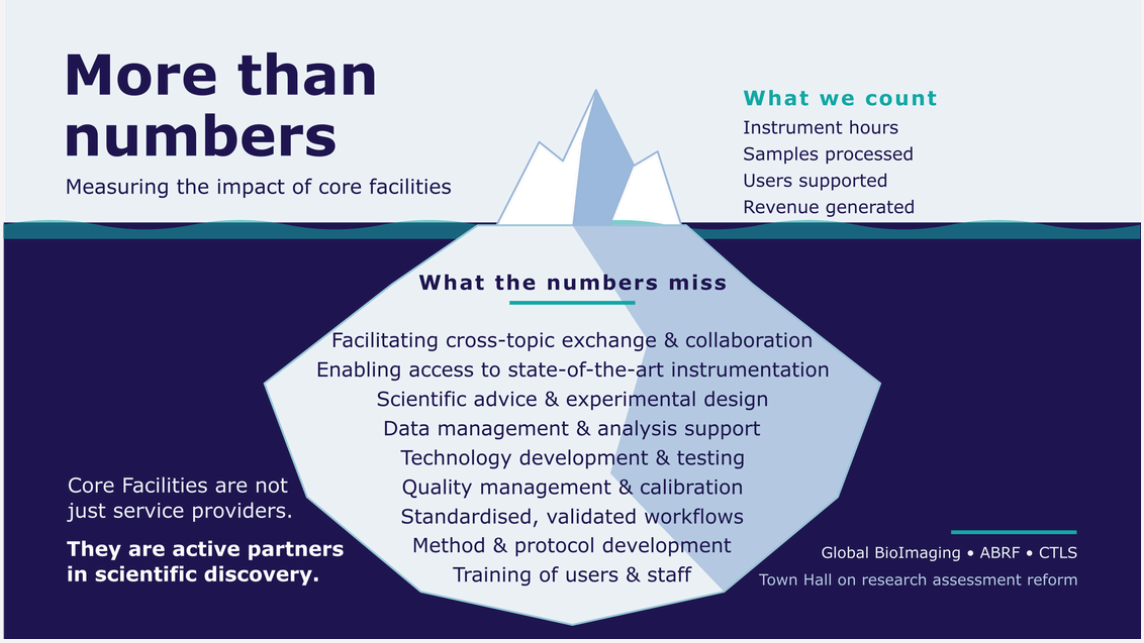
Organised by the Co-Chairs of the GBI Working Group on the Impact of Imaging Infrastructures in collaboration with ABRF and Core Technologies for Life Sciences (CTLS), the event attracted more than 200 participants. This strong response reflected widespread interest from the communities in how the contribution of core facilities can be understood, measured and communicated.

The discussion considered the value created by facilities beyond conventional indicators such as publications, grants and service numbers. Participants explored their broader contributions through specialist expertise, researcher training, improved research quality and reproducibility, access to advanced technologies, and support for interdisciplinary collaboration.

By bringing together people from different organisations, countries and professional contexts, the town hall enabled the exchange of experiences around a challenge shared across the international core facility community. Making the recording publicly available [5] further extends its reach and provides a continuing resource for facilities seeking to demonstrate their scientific and societal value.

Together, the paper and town hall show two sides of effective community collaboration: learning collectively from experience and creating accessible spaces in which shared challenges can be explored. Through continued cooperation, GBI and partners can connect expertise across established networks and support a stronger, more visible global community of core facility professionals.

This article was written by Johanna Bischof from Euro-BioImaging



Looking beyond the numbers: The GBI–ABRF–CTLS Town Hall on the impact of core facilities explored how their contributions to science extend beyond conventional metrics, including instrument hours, samples processed and revenue generated. Training, innovation, research quality and experimental guidance are among the contributions that numbers alone may fail to capture. Figure created by Sophie Winter in Inkscape; ideation supported by Claude (Anthropic).

[5] https://globalbioimaging.org/working-groups/impact-of-imaging-infrastructures

CONNECTING IMAGING SCIENTISTS THROUGH INTERNATIONAL WORKING GROUPS

Imaging scientists worldwide empower research and diagnostics. At Global BioImaging, we advocate for open and equitable access to imaging technologies, expertise and infrastructure — and strive to strengthen the global community needed to make this possible.

We're connecting imaging scientists to tackle shared challenges.

Through regular online meetings, our international working groups bring together peers facing similar questions in different research environments. Their work can lead to practical resources, recommendations, publications and initiatives.

The resources and initiatives available on our website are created collectively by our community, through projects coordinated and spearheaded by our Working Groups.

In 2026, we have several ongoing projects:

- Acknowledging imaging scientists: mapping international practices for recognising the contributions of imaging scientists working at facilities.
- Training and events: developing a practical manual for organising workshops, training courses and conferences.
- Image data management: creating a 10-step guide, accompanied by a monthly webinar series to help facilities put the recommendations into practice.
- Biomedical imaging: developing a community-driven paper on the challenges of establishing and sustaining biomedical imaging facilities.



The QR code links to our Working Group webpage.

How can we create a **curriculum for imaging scientists**, including technology developers, technicians, analysts and facility managers? What makes a **meaningful training** course or workshop? How do we deal with ever-growing **data volumes and storage** needs? How can we connect the **biomedical and biological imaging** communities to share expertise? How can we communicate effectively with **funders**? How can we demonstrate the **impact of imaging** on science and society?

These are some of the questions we address.

Explore our Working Groups and find a group to join. Whether you have expertise to share, an idea for a new initiative, or simply want to join the discussion and connect with imaging scientists around the world, we welcome your involvement.

The people behind our Working Groups

Our Working Groups have met online monthly since 2019, bringing together imaging professionals from around the globe. They are chaired on a voluntary, in-kind basis by committed and inspiring members of our global community, who balance this responsibility with their day-to-day job across the imaging ecosystem - as imaging scientists operating imaging technologies, research leads, or facility and infrastructure staff.

Their commitment, ideas and drive make our Working Groups the open, welcoming and productive spaces they are. They dedicate their time and expertise to connecting colleagues across borders, turning discussions into initiatives and helping make our shared goals a reality.

A huge thank you to all our current and former chairs for the time, energy and expertise you have contributed to Global BioImaging. Our community and its achievements would not be the same without you!

Working Group Chairs

Biomedical Imaging



Adriana Tavares

Training



Daniela Aviles Huerta

Career Paths for Imaging Scientists



Johanna Bischof

Image Data Management



Josh Moore

Impact of Imaging Infrastructures



Laurence Lejeune

How to talk to your funder



Antje Keppler



Graham Galloway



Marcela Diaz



Michelle Itano



Shuichi Onami



Camilo Guzman



Yara Reis



Linda Chaabane



Mariana de Niz

Previous Chairs

- Training: Gleb Grebnev
- Career Paths for Imaging Scientists: Kerry Thompson, Graham Wright, Yara Reis
- Impact of Imaging Infrastructures: Antje Keppler, Claire Brown

STRENGTHENING IMAGING CORE FACILITIES, ONE PUBLICATION AT A TIME

July 2026 – Core facility management belongs at the forefront of imaging science. In recognition of that, Wiley's Journal of Microscopy now accepts community- and staff-driven articles in its regular issues.

Growing funding uncertainty and increasing pressure on research infrastructures are affecting imaging scientists in many parts of the world. Despite their tremendous impact on research and development, imaging service providers and facility staff remain underrecognised. While their careers are on the line, so is the future of open-access facilities.

In response, the imaging community is drawing closer together.

Joint publications co-authored by imaging scientists across the world show how much scientific progress depends on well-supported, well-run facilities. At the centre of this work are imaging scientists, facility staff and service providers who keep facilities running and up to date, support researchers, develop new technologies and train the next generation of imaging professionals.

Although publications on facility management, career paths and training are not traditionally featured in research journals, they have found a home in Wiley's Journal of Microscopy (JoM) through its special issues.

Following the strong interest in the first special issue on Light Microscopy Core Facility Management*, JoM has now published a second volume** covering career perspectives, recommendations for core facility management, lessons from train-the-trainer courses and global surveys on the current state of instruments, facilities and staff.

Similar to the first issue, these articles are among the journal's most downloaded articles, and so JoM has made a deeper commitment to the field:

> *JoM now welcomes community-driven articles in its regular issues, publishing them alongside research papers and expert reviews.*

This is more than a publishing decision. Imaging infrastructures, core facilities and service providers enable discoveries across virtually every area of the life sciences. Excellence in facility staff translates directly into excellence in research.

Recognition starts with the publication

WHO ENABLED THE RESEARCH?

Authorship and acknowledgement are more than a courtesy. They make the scientific contributions of Imaging Scientists and core facilities visible and provide critical evidence of facility impact.

Global BioImaging's Career Path Working Group surveyed the imaging community on how imaging core facility staff are acknowledged in publications worldwide.

The result: recognition remains inconsistent, with consequences for career progression, staff retention and the ability of facilities to demonstrate their value. Where clear acknowledgement policies and fair authorship practices are in place, imaging core facilities and their staff are better positioned to demonstrate and sustain their contribution to research.

A simple action: Discuss authorship and acknowledgement at the start of a project - not when the paper is already being submitted.

The findings of the survey on career development and recognition for imaging scientists in core facilities have been published in the *Journal of Microscopy*.[6]

[6] Thompson et al. (2026), Journal of Microscopy, 302(3), 274–294. https://doi.org/10.1111/jmi.70089

If publications remain one of the principal currencies of academic recognition, then the scholarship of imaging support scientists cannot remain an exception.

Publishing the knowledge required to establish, improve, maintain and sustain imaging facilities—and to develop and retain the people who run them—is not ancillary to research. It is an essential contribution to the research ecosystem itself.

This development is therefore more than an expansion of scope for one journal. It is a recognition that the work of imaging scientists and facility staff deserves a visible place in the scientific record.

And it is a testament to a resilient, collaborative and forward-looking community that continues to invest in people, share expertise and strengthen imaging infrastructures for the benefit of science worldwide.

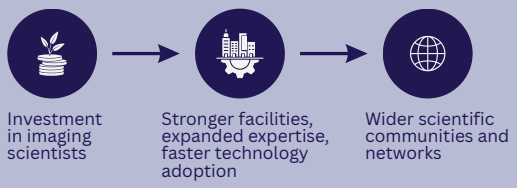
[*]: Journal of Microscopy, 294(3), Special Issue: Light Microscopy Core Facility Management, June 2024, pp. 251–447.
[**]: Journal of Microscopy, 302(3), Special Issue: Light Microscopy Core Facility Management, Volume 2, June 2026, pp. 241–464.

Invest in people, multiply the impact

IMAGING INFRASTRUCTURE IS MORE THAN EQUIPMENT

Imaging Scientists turn advanced technologies into research capacity: they develop and validate methods, integrate new technologies into routine use, train researchers, support reproducible workflows and connect expertise across institutions and countries.

What happens when funders invest directly in these people? A global cohort of Imaging Scientists supported through a multi-year, people-centred funding programme from the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative provides a unique opportunity to see the impact. By funding Imaging Scientist positions and enabling them to participate in conferences and build international connections, the programme invested not only in individual careers, but also in the wider imaging infrastructure around them.



The message for funders: Investment in technology and investment in the people who make it work are complementary - not competing - approaches to sustainable research infrastructure.[7]

This article was written by Sophie Winter from Global BioImaging and Johanna Bischof from Euro-BioImaging

[7] Reis et al. (2026), Journal of Microscopy, 302(3), 295–311. https://doi.org/10.1111/jmi.70099

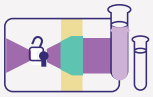
IMAGING 4 ALL: CONNECTING RESEARCHERS, EXPERTISE AND OPPORTUNITIES WORLDWIDE

Advanced imaging has transformed how scientists investigate living systems, from molecular structures to entire organisms. Access to imaging technologies and the expertise needed to use them effectively, however, remains highly unequal. For researchers in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), these limitations can shape not only which experiments are possible, but also which scientific questions can be explored.

Imaging 4 All (i4A), Global BioImaging's first international mobility programme, was launched to address these barriers. Funded by the Wellcome Trust with €1.17 million and coordinated at EMBL Heidelberg, it supports researchers and imaging professionals in accessing imaging facilities, laboratories and specialised training worldwide. Its defining flexibility allows applicants to select the host institution best suited to their research, wherever that expertise may be found.

Three pathways to imaging access

Access Grant
up to €10,000



Experimental work and skills development worldwide (1-4 weeks)

66 grants awarded

Pro Grant
up to €20,000



Extended visits to Global BioImaging partner facilities (2-8 weeks)

23 grants awarded

Training Grant
up to €5,000



Hands-on international imaging courses and workshops

60 grants awarded

Growing demand - and growing experience

Across three open calls, applications rose from 84 to 145, with researchers from 44 LMICs participating. Nearly half of eligible applicants received support. Beyond the growing demand, the programme revealed another important challenge: access to equipment alone is not always enough.

Applicants brought widely varying levels of imaging experience. Some sought highly specialised technologies, while others needed support in developing experimental approaches. i4A responded through individual guidance, early involvement of host facilities and constructive reviewer feedback. In some cases, training provided a foundation for subsequent experimental projects.

Reviewers and hosts reported a marked improvement in proposal quality over successive calls.

> *"I always had the idea of becoming an electron microscopist. After this visit that idea has become even more firmly rooted — electron microscopy will play a major role in my scientific life."*
> ***Anil Can**, Acibadem University, Türkiye → Czech Academy of Sciences*

Different needs, extraordinary science

The applications reflected diverse imaging landscapes. Latin American researchers frequently sought advanced light microscopy, including super-resolution and light-sheet techniques, while fundamental fluorescence microscopy was particularly important for many African applicants.

The supported research was equally diverse and country-led: investigating malaria parasites, resolving mycobacterial proteins, developing AI-assisted ultrasound approaches, exploring lizard evolution and examining cardiac organoids using sophisticated live-imaging methods. What connects these projects is the opportunity to pursue locally driven scientific questions with technologies and expertise available internationally.

A global community in action

Global BioImaging's partner networks played a central role in connecting applicants to expertise and hosting their visits. Although Europe remained the main destination, exchanges within Latin America and across Asia-Pacific also demonstrated opportunities for regional collaboration. Facilities and institutes that are part of Global BioImaging's partner infrastructures and networks hosted more than 61% of all visitors. These include primarily Euro-BioImaging, followed by LABI, BINA, ABiS, SingaScope, ABIC and German BioImaging.

Where the 149 visits took place

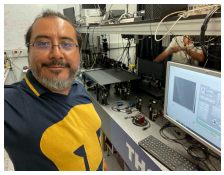


Europe, 102 • North America, 16 • Latin America, 15 • Asia, 10 • Africa, 4 • Oceania, 2

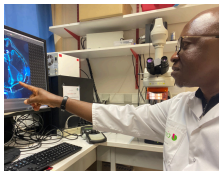
Early feedback suggests that the benefits extend beyond individual experiments. Grantees have reported new research directions, plans to introduce imaging methods at home institutions and continued collaboration with their hosts, including joint data analysis and publications.

One-year follow-up surveys are now examining how these opportunities translate into scientific outputs, career development and local imaging capacity.

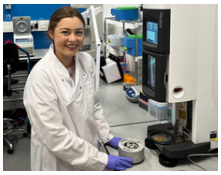
> *"The visit brought substantial data and collaborations for understanding the fundamentals of organ shape emergence — and has a significant impact on my career by facilitating the publication of the findings."*
> ***Vishwadeep Mane,*** *IISc Bengaluru → ENS Lyon, France*



Carlos Lozano-Flores
Mexico → Spain



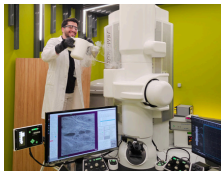
Libert Brice Tonfack
Cameroon → France



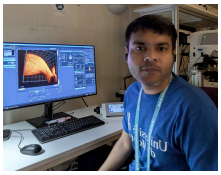
Paige Mackenzie
South Africa → UK



Joelma Alves Lucio
Brazil → USA



Anil Can
Türkiye → Czechia



Vishwadeep Mane
India → France

i4A grantees during their scientific visits. Photos provided by the grantees.

CONNECTING THROUGH MEDIA: GLOBAL BIOIMAGING & MEDIA PARTNERS

As a researcher, technology or software developer, or service provider, staying up-to-date is an important part of the job. To remain at the forefront in their respective field, scientists read about trends in research and technology, innovations and new discoveries alongside upcoming training courses, conferences and community activities.

So how - and where - does anyone learn about Global BioImaging or any of our partner networks?

Since February 2025, Global BioImaging has been an official partner of Wiley's Microscopy & Analysis journal. Alongside each quarterly issue, we have one page dedicated to our community, past and upcoming events, and opportunities. This is a simple way to reach people who are already interested in microscopy and imaging, but may not yet be connected to Global BioImaging or one of our partner networks.

Arguably more than many other technologies used in science, imaging strikes a chord with people. Intended to reveal details invisible to the naked eye - from single molecules, through living cells and tissues, to the anatomy of a whole organism -, images can be beautiful, artistic pieces of evidence of one hypothesis or another, and they can spark curiosity far beyond the scientific community.

Harnessing the potential to reach people with no scientific background, HHMI and its Janelia Research Campus initiated "Beautiful Biology", a web portal of stunning images taken by scientists around the world. Global BioImaging is an official partner of Beautiful Biology, and we encourage our community to submit their work and share the sense of awe, beauty and science behind the images they create.

Similarly, we have partnered with the Wellcome Photography Prize since 2025. While the prize is typically associated with photography, its recently added biomedical imaging category showcases powerful microscopy, scientific, and medical images, opening another route for imaging scientists to share their work with audiences beyond their immediate field. In 2025, the prize showcased the work of several members of the global bioimaging community, including two imaging scientists from Latin America.

By autumn 2026, Global BioImaging has contributed seven articles to Wiley's Microscopy & Analysis, highlighting GBI activities and milestones, showcasing our partners, exploring the future of imaging infrastructures in a changing political and technological landscape, and emphasising the importance of training and global initiatives.

Seeing our partners and members of the global imaging community share their work through images and joint publications is a reminder that, despite working in different places and contexts, we are part of a shared endeavour.

These media partnerships give our community more opportunities to celebrate its achievements and reach new audiences. They help ensure that the people, ideas and innovations driving imaging forward receive the visibility they deserve.

Microscopy & Analysis • Beautiful Biology • Wellcome Photography Prize

Imaging Facility Guidelines for Acknowledgement

1. **All publications** resulting from the use of instruments and support staff within the facility should **acknowledge the facility as a whole**, e.g. '*the authors gratefully acknowledge the "Unidad de Microscopía de la Universidad Mayor" for their support & assistance in this work*' and the facility should be **informed of the publication**.

2. **Specific grants** that have funded the facility instruments used for the work to be published must be acknowledged if the data was acquired during the active period of that grant. **Facility staff will advise users of such grant codes**.

3. **Assistance provided above the technical or routine level**, with any facility staff providing scientific input and expertise in experimental set-up, acquisition, analysis or writing, should be recognised through **co-authorship** on resulting publications. Please discuss authorship and acknowledgement with facility staff prior to manuscript submission.

Example scenarios:

Sample Preparation	Routine sample preparation following standard protocol.	Simple acknowledgement
	Development of new sample preparation protocols. Optimisation of existing protocols for specific samples.	Inclusion of specific facility member on author list
Image Acquisition	Training of users to acquire images themselves. Simple acquisition of raw data.	Simple acknowledgement
	Operational image acquisition with input and decisions dependent on expertise. Design or re-design of experimental conditions.	Inclusion of specific facility member on author list
Image Analysis	Recommendation of analysis software and tools. Basic data analysis help and advice.	Simple acknowledgement
	Constructive data analysis and interpretation. Creation of complex custom image analysis tools.	Inclusion of specific facility member on author list

Based on the publication policy compiled by Natasha Stephen, Plymouth Electron Microscopy Centre, after discussions with the RMS EM-UK community.

Thank You

A heartfelt thank you to our dedicated working group members, the Management Board, the international trainers who share their expertise so generously, and the fantastic bioimaging community worldwide.

And we thank our funders, the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative and the Wellcome Trust.

Together, you make imaging possible —
across borders,
across disciplines,
across people.

GLOBAL BIOIMAGING
growing collaboration