Blueprints of disease: precision platforms for modelling breast cancer

Lutz, C.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Catrin Lutz was born on May 8th, 1991, in Mühlacker, Germany. After completing high school, she began training as a nurse in radio-oncology and nuclear medicine at the Katharinenhospital in Stuttgart, which sparked her interest in oncology and patient care. In 2011, she moved to London, where she worked as an administrative assistant, programme coordinator, and teaching assistant at an English language school, whilst following undergraduate studies in English language and culture.

She returned to Germany to pursue a Bachelor's degree in Oecotrophology (Nutrition, Medicine, and Economics) at the Christian-Albrechts-Universität in Kiel. During her Bachelor studies, she developed a strong interest in metabolism, virology, and biotechnology and was able to receive research training into these fields at the Max Rubner-Institut in Kiel, where she specialised in the isolation and characterisation of lactic acid bacteriophages. After graduating, she moved to the Netherlands to undertake a Master's degree in Oncology at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. There, she joined the group of Michiel Pegtel at Cancer Center Amsterdam, leading a project on biomarker discovery in urinary tract cancers using exosomes, complementing her research training with literary work in the same field.

In 2017, Catrin joined the group of Prof. Jos Jonkers at the Netherlands Cancer Institute (NKI). After a brief internship, she embarked on her PhD trajectory, focusing on the development of advanced preclinical models for breast cancer, including pre-cancerous lesions. Her work involved establishing genetically engineered mouse and rat models as well as xenograft systems, with a central focus on somatic engineering approaches to more faithfully investigate tumour biology, therapeutic responses, and mechanisms of resistance.

Between January 2023 and December 2025, Catrin has continued her research in the Jonkers laboratory as a postdoctoral researcher. She was expanding the use of genetically engineered rat models for breast cancer, developing tumour organoid systems, and exploring the models' potential for unravelling breast (cancer) biology and clinical translation. Catrin continues her work as a postdoctoral fellow in the lab of Hendrik Messal.

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