

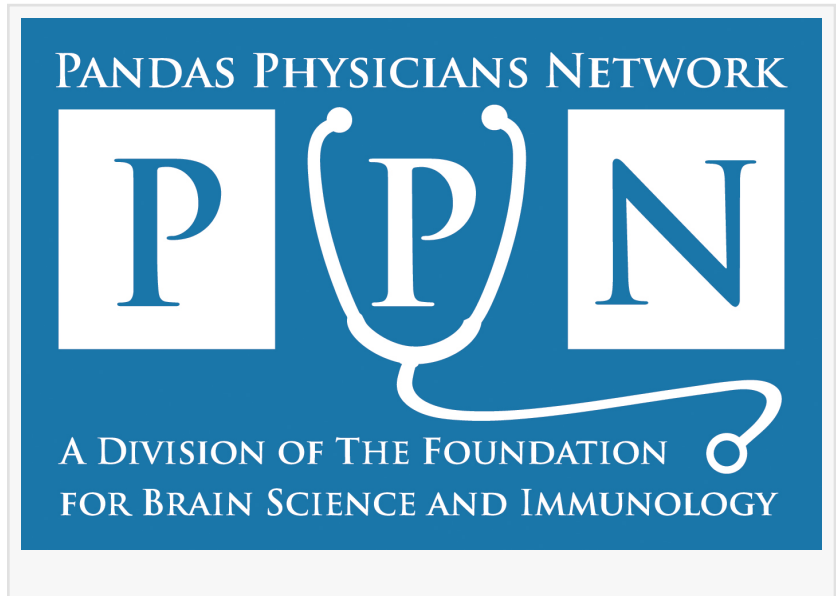
PANDAS Physicians Network Awards Funding to the Agalliu Lab for Immune Mediated OCD, PANDAS/PANS Research

This research will provide important insights into how the immune system and inflammation affect brain function, particularly in children with PANDAS/PANS.

MOORESVILLE, NC, UNITED STATES, April 3, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The PANDAS Physicians Network is pleased to award funding to the Agalliu Lab in the Department of Neurology at Columbia University Irving Medical Center. This award will enhance our understanding of how the adaptive

and innate immune systems contribute to post-infectious sequelae in the brain. Through whole exome sequencing of children with PANDAS, researchers in the lab of Dr. Dritan Agalliu identified RXRA as a potential genetic risk factor for the disease. This award will support an ongoing study conducted by Dr. Uğur Akcan which will provide insight into the mechanisms by which the RXRA genetic risk factor identified in children with PANDAS affects the immune responses that triggers immune-mediated neuropsychological changes, including obsessive-compulsive behaviors.

According to Dr. Akcan, "Our research will provide important insights into how the immune system and inflammation affect brain function, particularly in children with PANDAS/PANS. It underscores the importance of studying the neuroimmune axis, which connects the immune system and the brain, as a vital area of biomedical research. The findings challenge the traditional focus on neurons alone in psychiatric disorders. Instead, they emphasize the role of other central nervous system (CNS) cells, particularly those governing immune functions, in the development of neuropsychiatric symptoms after infections. Moreover, the study highlights that microglia, the brain's immune protectors, are crucial players in the development of behavioral abnormalities seen in post-infectious obsessive-compulsive disorders. This research also points to genetic risk factors like RXRA mutations as potential contributors to psychiatric disorders, including obsessive-compulsive disorders."



We celebrate the continued excellence from the Agalliu Lab and congratulate Dr. Agalliu and Dr. Akcan on their accomplishments. [CLICK HERE](#) to learn more about this work and contribute to the Agalliu Lab.

PANDAS Physicians Network (PPN) is a non-profit organization that provides [PANS/PANDAS resources](#) to clinicians while supporting research. Our vision is that PANS/PANDAS will become easily diagnosed and treated with accessible therapies that dramatically reduce suffering and lead to a cure. Learn more at www.pandasppn.org.

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PANDAS Physicians Network

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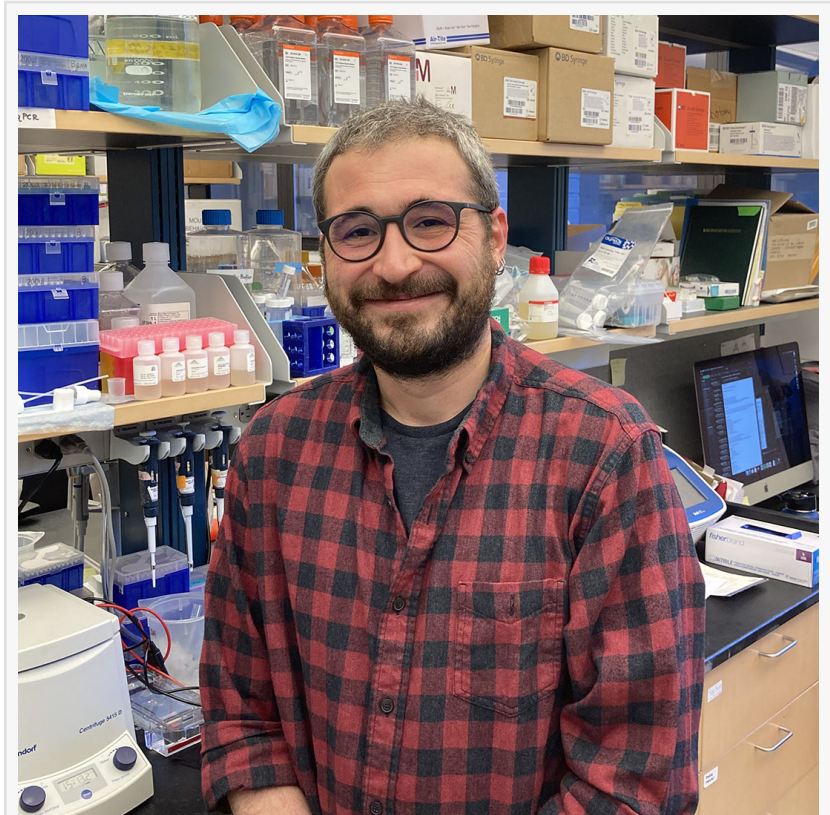
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Dr. Uğur Akcan, Postdoctoral Research Scientist in the Agalliu Lab

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