



Rita Fior is a Developmental Biologist interested in how cells collaborate, compete and are synchronised with each other. During her scientific career, Rita has been exploring the biological system from different perspectives. Her doctoral research was centred in Notch signalling during early neurogenesis. Then her postdoctoral work focused on how differentiation, cell movement and stem cells are coordinated at the transcriptomic level during embryonic segmentation. Lately, Rita changed from developmental biology to cancer research, where developmental programs are compromised. This change began after realising that, even though we (Humans) developed sophisticated technology to fly to the moon, we don't yet have the technology to decide the best available treatment for each cancer patient. Convinced that "Cancer is as unique as the person fighting it", Rita is currently a group leader at

the Champalimaud Centre for the Unknown (CCU). Her lab is developing zebrafish "avatars" as means to study cancer behaviour in a patient-specific manner and is exploring how cancer cells can evade and hijack the innate immune system.