

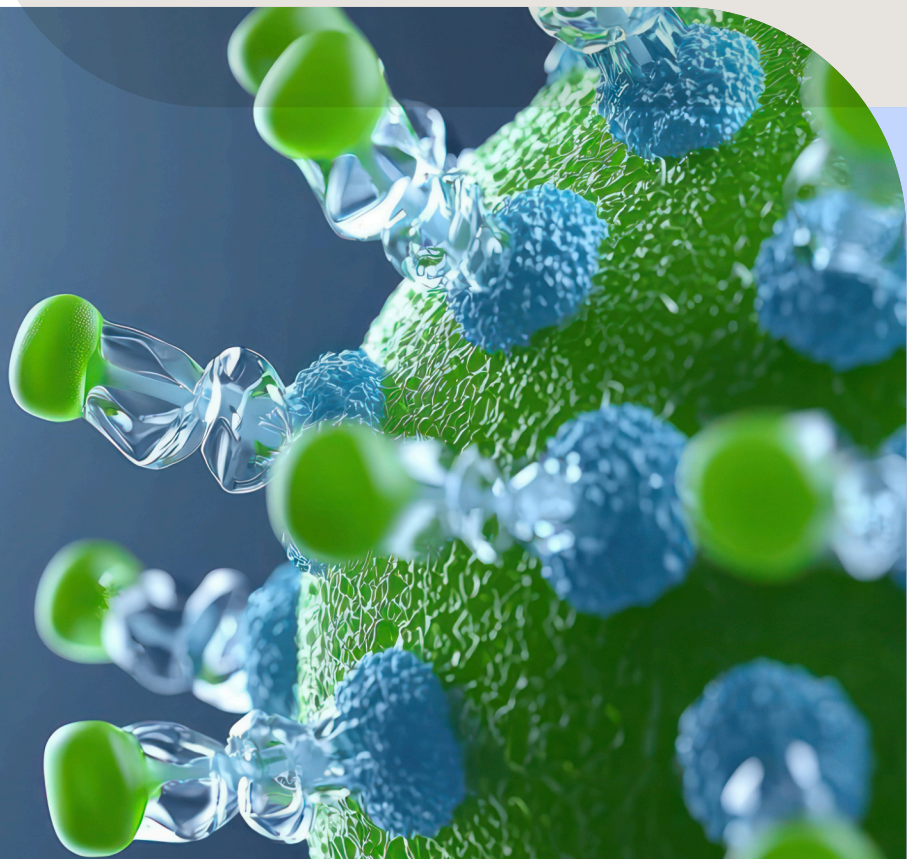


RIKSFÖRBUNDET
FÖR ME-PATIENTER

Conference Program Bio

BRIDGING IMMUNOLOGY AND GENETICS IN ME/CFS AND LONG COVID

Uppsala & online



14 Oktober
2026

www.rme.nu



Chris Ponting

Professor
University of Edinburgh

Professor Chris Ponting is Chair of Medical Bioinformatics at the University of Edinburgh and an Investigator at the Institute of Genetics and Cancer. Chris started his research in particle physics before moving via biophysics to bioinformatics and genomics.

Aside from one year at the National Centre for Biotechnology Information (NIH, Bethesda, MD), he pursued his research at the University of Oxford before moving to Edinburgh in 2016. His research group has made contributions to protein science, evolutionary biology, genetics and genomics.

Professor Ponting is an Investigator on the DecodeME project and also its sub-project, called “Sequence ME & Long Covid”, which is seeking to complete whole-genome sequencing of thousands of people with ME/CFS.

Aside from ME/CFS genetics, he is interested in determining whether there are blood based biomarkers for subsets of people with ME/CFS.

Chris has been on the Editorial Boards of Genome Research, Genome Biology, Human Molecular Genetics, Annual Review of Genomics and Human Genetics, and Trends in Genetics. He also served as Program Committee member for the CSHL Biology of Genomes, American Society of Human Genetics and Genome Science conferences. He is a Member of the European Molecular Biology Organization (EMBO).

<https://edwebprofiles.ed.ac.uk/profile/chris-ponting>



Maria Lerm

Professor
Linköping University

Maria Lerm is a Professor of Medical Microbiology at Linköping University, where she leads a research program focused on host–pathogen interactions and the immunobiology of infectious diseases. Her work spans broad areas of infection biology, ranging from fundamental mechanisms of immune regulation to translational approaches that support improved diagnostics and patient care.

In recent years, her research has increasingly centred on post-COVID condition, where her group investigates the immunological, epigenetic, and molecular signatures that may explain persistent symptoms following SARS-CoV-2 infection. By integrating multi-omics analyses with clinical data, her team aims to identify biomarkers and biological mechanisms that can guide precision diagnostics and support tailored interventions for individuals living with long-term effects of COVID-19.

Lerm has led several major national research programs, including a large Swedish Heart–Lung Foundation initiative (2022–2025), and consistently secures competitive funding from the Swedish Research Council and other prominent agencies. She serves in multiple leadership roles at Linköping University and contributes as an evaluator and editor within the international scientific community.



Carmen Scheibenbogen

Professor, MD

Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin

Carmen Scheibenbogen, MD, is Professor of Immunology and Deputy Director of the Institute of Medical Immunology at Charité Universitätsmedizin Berlin, and Director of the Immunology Department at Labor Berlin. She is a specialist in Internal Medicine, Hematology/Oncology, and Immunology. She co-founded the European ME/CFS research network EUROMENE, the Charité Fatigue Center, and the Charité Post-COVID Network.

Her research focuses on myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome (ME/CFS), post-COVID syndrome, and primary immunodeficiencies, with a particular emphasis on autoimmune mechanisms in ME/CFS and the development of mechanism-based therapeutic approaches. She leads several national research initiatives, including the IMMME consortium on immune mechanisms in ME/CFS and the National Clinical Study Group for Drug Development in ME/CFS and Post-COVID (NKSG). She also coordinates the health services research projects CFS_CARE and PAIS Care, which aim to improve clinical care for patients with post-infectious syndromes.

<https://cfc.charite.de>



Serena Fineschi

MD, Associated Researcher
Uppsala University

Serena Fineschi is a physician and researcher affiliated with Uppsala University whose work has become increasingly focused on Long COVID. With a background in primary care and clinical research, she has emerged as part of a growing body of investigators seeking to understand the long-term biological mechanisms underlying persistent post-viral illness.

Her Long COVID research has centered on identifying measurable biological changes in patients long after the acute infection has resolved. Through proteomic and transcriptomic studies, Fineschi and collaborators have demonstrated evidence of persistent immune activation, inflammatory signaling, and altered molecular pathways in patients more than two years after mild COVID-19 infection, helping strengthen the case that Long COVID is a biologically driven condition rather than simply a residual recovery state.

She has also contributed to research into the neurological dimensions of Long COVID, including advanced MRI studies of non-hospitalized patients with cognitive impairment, helping document subtle but important brain-related changes associated with persistent symptoms such as brain fog and cognitive dysfunction.

Fineschi's work bridges clinical medicine and translational science, with a strong emphasis on uncovering biomarkers, understanding immune dysregulation, and improving recognition and care for patients living with prolonged post-COVID illness.



David Systrom

MD, Assistant Professor
Brigham and Women's Hospital and
Harvard Medical School

Prof David Systrom is an Assistant Professor of Medicine at Brigham and Women's Hospital and the director of the Massachusetts General Hospital Cardiopulmonary Laboratory in Boston, USA. Systrom is also an Assistant Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School where he directs the Dyspnea Clinic and the Advanced Cardiopulmonary Exercise Testing Program.

David Systrom conducts groundbreaking ME/CFS and Long COVID research focused on exercise intolerance. Using invasive cardiopulmonary exercise testing (iCPET), he proved that patients suffer from objective physiological impairments rather than simple deconditioning.

His key findings include preload failure (reduced blood flow returning to the heart) and impaired systemic oxygen extraction in muscles. This is frequently driven by neurovascular dysregulation and small fiber neuropathy.

Currently, he leads the LIFT clinical trial, investigating treatments like Mestinon and low-dose Naltrexone.



Jonas Bergquist

Professor
Uppsala University

Professor Dr Jonas Bergquist, MD PhD, is Full Chair Professor in Analytical Chemistry and Neurochemistry at the Biomedical Centre, Department of Chemistry at Uppsala University, Sweden, Adjunct Professor in Pathology at the Department of Pathology, School of Medicine, University of Utah, USA, Distinguished Professor in Precision Medicine, Binzhou Medical University, Yantai, China, and Visiting Professor in Molecular Diagnostics and Physiology at Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Uppsala. He is the Chief Medical Officer and director of the clinical collaborative research centre in Uppsala (together with Harvard Medical School, Stanford University, Montreal and Melbourne) with focus on Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME). He is also Inspector Equitandi at Uppsala University.

Professor Jonas Bergquist's group is continuously developing general analytical tools for molecular diagnostic screening and discovery of biomarkers of pathological states. Technologies include all important links: identifying relevant clinical applications, invasive in-situ sampling of complex samples, advanced sample pre-treatment, multidimensional liquid-based separation, high resolution mass spectrometry, and multivariate data analysis. Professor Bergquist among other things focus to explore the neuroimmunological involvement in neurodegenerative diseases and neurocognitive disturbances by using proteomics and metabolomics with a special interest in cerebrospinal fluid and hard-to-reach tissue studies. Link to full publication lists: <https://katalog.uu.se/empInfo?id=N99-791>
ORCID: 0000-0002-4597-041X.



Håkan Walles

Psychologist

Karolinska University Hospital, Huddinge

Håkan Walles is a licensed psychologist with 15 years of experience and section manager at Karolinska University Hospital, where he has worked since 2013 and has served as head of the Behavioral Medicine section as well as head of the Post-Infectious Diseases Unit since 2023.

He has extensive experience in clinical psychological assessment and treatment in hospital care, as well as neuropsychological evaluation and differential diagnosis of patients with cognitive impairment and cognitive decline. He has worked with patients across the fields of Neurology, Geriatrics, Cardiology, Oncology, Women's Health, Endocrinology, Nephrology, and Audiology & Balance.



Soroush Hejazi

MD

Karolinska University Hospital, Huddinge

Soroush Hejazi is a medical doctor with a strong interest in complex chronic conditions, particularly those in which biological, medical, and psychosocial factors interact. His work focuses on understanding patients from a broader perspective, identifying underlying disease mechanisms, and supporting individualized, long-term, evidence-based care.

Dr. Hejazi has clinical experience in geriatrics, primary care, cardiology, internal medicine, endocrinology, neurogastroenterology, and neurology. He currently works as a specialist physician at the post-infectious disease outpatient clinic at Karolinska University Hospital.

Alongside Hejazi clinical practice, he is actively involved in research on Long COVID. His goal is to advance an integrated understanding of chronic illness by bridging clinical care and research, while improving diagnosis, treatment, and quality of life for patients with persistent, difficult-to-diagnose, and multifactorial health conditions.



Maria Enander

People with Lived Experience

Både Maria och hennes dotter har ME. Med dubbla perspektiv, både som drabbad och anhörig, berättar Maria mer om hur vården misslyckades med henne – men ändå kunnat bidra mer konstruktivt när det gäller hennes dotter.



Alexandra Hempel Svenonius

People with Lived Experience

Alexandra och hennes nu 19-åriga dotter fick covid tidigt under pandemin och drabbades av postcovid. Alexandra har själv fått vård för bland annat POTS, men hon har samtidigt kämpat hårt för att dottern, som är svårt sjuk, ska få hjälp. Till slut valde familjen att söka vård utomlands.

Vill du stödja RME:s verksamhet med en gåva?

Vill du bidra till nästa steg i svensk ME-vård? Bli medlem, ge en gåva eller läs mer om RME:s ideella arbete på [hemsidan](#).

Gåva till förbundets verksamhet

Tillgångarna på detta konto används till [särskilda större projekt](#) (klicka på länken), exempelvis våra uppskattade konferenser.

Gåva till forskning

Din gåva går oavkortat till [viktig forskning](#) om ME/CFS. Nu går pengar som skickas från RME till svensk ME-forskning via Open Medicine Foundation (OMF).

Vill du stödja Svenska Covidföreningens verksamhet med en gåva?

Svenska Covidföreningen är en ideell förening som är beroende av medlemsavgifter och gåvor för att kunna arbeta för alla de svenskar som blivit långvarigt sjuka av covid-19. [Här kan du skänka en gåva till föreningen](#). Varje krona räknas.



Kontakt:

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