

Sarah Lidé from Medicon Valley Alliance about NLSDays' Microbiome super session



medicon valley alliance

Creating Opportunities

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In this session we will hear from some of the world's leaders on the current developments within microbiome research, such as host-microbe interactions and their implications on disease progression and treatment. What is going on in the Greater Copenhagen metropolitan region, spanning eastern Denmark and the southernmost part of Sweden?

– Greater Copenhagen is home to Medicon Valley, which is the strongest life science cluster in Europe. The region's strongholds in life science and its active triple-helix ecosystem has provided great conditions for microbiome research – in fact, we have more than 80 companies, organisations and institutions working actively with the microbiome across industry, academia and healthcare, and engaged in cross-disciplinary collaboration. We have also a number of strong research groups based in the region's universities (Lund University, Technical University of Denmark, and University of Copenhagen) that are doing fantastic research across various segments in the microbiome, e.g. metabolic diseases, autoimmune disease, women and infant health, functional food and probiotics, and plant, animal and environmental microbiomes.

What is the aim of the EU funded Microbiome Signature Project?

– The project is co-financed by Interreg Öresund-Kattegat-Skagerrak and Greater Copenhagen, and is a partnership between Medicon Valley Alliance, Copenhagen Capacity and Invest in Skåne. Our aim with the project is to build on the Medicon Valley cluster's strengths by positioning it as a leading centre for microbiome research in northern Europe.

This region is home to 4.3 million inhabitants, with 44,000 employees in the life science industry and 14,600 university researchers. The region has published approximately 900 microbiome-related research articles between 2014 and 2019. What do you think is the most fascinating finding within the field?

– There is a lot going on in the field of the microbiome, and it has shown links to a number of diseases and conditions, though many of these links remain associations or correlations. What's important is that research continues to progress in the challenging task of identifying causal and mechanistic links, which will bring us helpful insight into how the microbiome can contribute to monitoring disease development, and perhaps even provide a base for personalised treatment and new therapies in the future. I believe that Medicon Valley, with its strong R&D heritage and many skilled researchers looking into the microbiome from different perspectives and across disciplines, will contribute well to that discussion.

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