



PHD POSITION - EXOSOME/EXTRACELLULAR VESICLES RESEARCH IN BREAST CANCER

GIGA Institute - The Laboratory of Exosome in tumor communication

START DATE : DECEMBER 2026 | DEADLINE:1/11/2026

Located in the French-speaking part of Belgium, the University of Liège welcomes nearly 27,000 students of 123 different nationalities in a dynamic, multicultural city less than an hour away from Brussels and Cologne, two hours from Paris and three hours from London and Amsterdam. ULiège is spread across 4 campuses and boasts over 5,700 staff members, including 3,600 teachers and researchers active in all areas of the humanities and social sciences, science and technology, and health sciences.

As a key player in social change and environmental awareness, ULiège promotes ethical, transdisciplinary and open science. It contributes to the socio-economic development of its region through numerous partnerships with several institutions, including the university hospital (CHU). Given its international orientation, the University participates [in the European University of Post-Industrial Cities \(UNIC\)](#) initiative and has one of the most extensive collaborative networks in the world.

ULiège offers attractive career prospects [in a high-quality working environment](#) where well-being, diversity and equality of opportunity are promoted. Since 2011, ULiège has been proud to display the European [Human resources strategy for researchers](#) (HRS4R) label, which reflects its commitment to open, transparent and merit-based procedures. In addition, it upholds quality and diversity in line with the recommendations of the [Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment](#) (CoARA). ULiège encourages its academic staff to travel internationally and welcomes international researchers through its EURAXESS center.

About the REsearch project

Metastasis is the leading cause of mortality in patients with solid tumors. A critical step in this process is the formation of the pre-metastatic niche (PMN), a tumor-conditioned microenvironment that facilitates the colonization and outgrowth of disseminated cancer cells. Extracellular vesicles (EVs) released by tumor cells are emerging as key mediators of PMN remodeling. Our preliminary data demonstrate that breast cancer-derived EVs carry multiple immune checkpoint proteins (ICPs) at their surface suggesting a potential role in establishing an immunosuppressive PMN.

This project aims to define the contribution of EV-associated ICPs to immune suppression during the pre-metastatic and metastatic stages.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Ph.D. student position in the lab *Exosome in Tumor Communication* under the supervision of Ingrid Struman

SPECIFIC DUTIES AND ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Establishment and characterization of mouse models of breast cancer metastases to following EV uptake in the lung PMN and breast tumors.
- ▶ Single-cell transcriptomic, immunological characterization by flow cytometry of lung PMN.
- ▶ Histological and molecular analyses of lung PMN and breast tumors.
- ▶ Contribute to the design and implementation of experiments.
- ▶ Generate, analyze and interpret experimental data.
- ▶ Present research findings during laboratory meetings and scientific conferences.
- ▶ Participate in the writing of scientific publications.
- ▶ Collaborate with researchers, technicians and PhD students within the Lab and with collaborative partners's labs.

PROFILE

○ REQUIRED SKILLS:

- ▶ Master's degree in molecular biology, biochemistry or biomedical sciences
- ▶ We are seeking a highly motivated person with a strong interest in molecular biology and Cancer Research.
- ▶ Strong academic record (minimum distinction at master's level)

○ DESIRABLE SKILLS:

- ▶ Ability to work independently.
- ▶ Previous experience in classical molecular biology techniques would be an advantage (qRT-PCR, cell culture assays...) but is not required.
- ▶ Expertise in animal experiment and FELASA certification is considered an asset.

○ HUMAN SKILLS :

- ▶ Good communication and enthusiastic personality are skills required to perform this research successfully.
- ▶ Scientific curiosity and motivation.
- ▶ Ability to work in teams and in an international research environment.

○ LANGUAGES:

- ▶ Very good written and spoken scientific English is required



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PhD / ExTC /sept 2026

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

- ▶ **TYPE OF CONTRACT:** Doctoral fellowship. of 1 year, renewable (for an estimated PhD duration of 4 years).
- ▶ **WORK SCHEDULE:** 38h/week
- ▶ **CONTRACT DURATION:** One-year contract, renewable annually for a maximum duration of four years, subject to satisfactory progress.
- ▶ **EXPECTED START DATE:** December 2026

OUR OFFER

Basic gross monthly salary for full-time work: 3500 euros (PhD Fellowship, about 2400 net)

▶ WORK ENVIRONMENT

Our centre, the GIGA research center is located at the University of Liege in Belgium and offers a stimulatory intellectual and collaborative environment and state-of the art facilities.

Please visit our website www.gigalam.uliege.be

HOW TO APPLY?

Motivated candidates are asked to apply online. Please send CV, contact information for two references, and a brief motivation letter including a summary of research experience to: **Ingrid Struman** i.struman@uliege.be

SELECTION PROCEDURE

▶ 1. Eligibility Screening

Verification of candidates' eligibility against the mandatory requirements and selection criteria for the position.

▶ 2. Assessment of Application Documents

Review and evaluation of the CV and motivation letter to assess candidates' qualifications, experience, competencies, and motivation.

▶ 3. Interviews with Shortlisted Candidates

Candidates will be invited for an interview. Interviews are expected to take place during the second half of October 2026.

▶ 4. Final Selection Decision

The final selection will be based on an overall assessment of each candidate's performance throughout the selection process, taking into account all evaluation criteria.

Our corporate policy is based on diversity and equal opportunity. We select candidates on the basis of their skills and do not discriminate on grounds of age, sexual orientation, origin, beliefs, disability or nationality.



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CONTACT DETAILS

Informal inquiries about the project are welcome. Please feel free to contact Ingrid Struman by email : i.struman@uliege.be

Release date: 16/9/2026

Privacy policy

Personal data collected following your application will be processed by Ingrid Struman of the University of Liege for the sole purpose of recruitment.

The data will be processed within the framework of pre-contractual measures (art. 6-1, b. of the General Data Protection Regulation) and kept for up to 9 months after the publication of the vacancy. Your personal data will not be passed on to any third parties.

In accordance with the provisions of the GDPR (EU 2016/679), you may exercise your data protection rights (right of access, rectification, erasure, restriction, and portability) by contacting ULiège Data Protection Officer (dpo@uliege.be - Mr. Data Protection Officer, Bât. B9 Cellule "GDPR", Quartier Village 3, Boulevard de Colonster 2, 4000 Liège, Belgium). You may also lodge a complaint with the Data Protection Authority (<https://www.autoriteprotectiondonnees.be>, contact@apd-gba.be).