IDSOMICS

## Meet the team

## An experienced immunegenetics scientist



## Iris Jonkers PhD, Associate Professor

**Iris** is a researcher who applies her fundamental background in **transcription regulation** to the study of **autoimmunity**, with a special focus on **celiac disease (CD)** and **multiple sclerosis**. After a

postdoc at Cornell University, USA, she was recruited by Professor Cisca Wijmenga to the University Medical Center Groningen, the Netherlands, and started her own group with support from a Rosalind Franklin Fellowship, a Dutch Science Foundation (NWO) Vidi grant, and a MS-Research grant.

She closely collaborates with **Associate Professor Sebo Withoff** to lead a diverse, **multidisciplinary research team** working to elucidate the **molecular and genetic** underpinnings of CD. As a **second-line Netherlands Organ on Chip Initiative (NOCI) PI**, Iris expanded her expertise and network to create **complex human models**.

She is a prominent member of the **CD community**, evidenced by her:

- Membership on the scientific advisory board of the Dutch CD Patient Society (NCV)
- Participation in national and international CD patient forums
- Role as treasurer and president-elect of the International Society for the Study of Celiac
  Disease

She is an **invited speaker** at major **CD and gastroenterology conferences** such as **ICDS**, the **NIAID-NIDDK Celiac Disease Workshop**, and **ESPGHAN**. Iris is also passionate about **education**, which has culminated in her role as **Programme Director of the Biomedical Sciences MSc programme** at the **University of Groningen**.

**Iris** uses **genomics and genetics**, in combination with **patient-derived materials**, to understand how the **genetics associated with CD** impact disease processes. She strongly believes in **multi-disciplinary research**, where **complex models** are used to generate insights into **transcriptional**,



epigenetic, and genetic responses in CD.

She performed the **largest CD-specific expression quantitative trait locus (eQTL) analysis** to date and focuses on determining **transcriptional responses** in **biopsies** and **patient-derived primary cells**, using both **bulk- and single-cell RNA sequencing (RNA-seq)**.

To investigate genetic effects in patient-specific materials, she has established the CeDNN cohort to collect biomaterials, clinical data, and questionnaires from CD patients and controls. As a member of PreventCD, a cohort collecting longitudinal data on CD patients, she identified cell-specific CD biomarkers in blood.

Moreover, Iris participated in **TIMID**, a consortium aiming to evaluate **variation in autoimmunity** and identify **biomarkers specific to CD** and **potential treatment targets**.

Lastly, as a **NOCI member**, she contributed to the development of the **small intestine on chip** to investigate the role of **genetics in CD**, using **human pluripotent stem cells** from CD patients and controls.

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