



Koen Van der Maaden

Assistant Professor and head of the Pharmaceutical Immunology group at Leiden University Medical Center (LUMC), The Netherlands

Title of the presentation: Targeting skin dendritic cells to induce anti-tumor immunity

Short academic CV:

Koen van der Maaden is Assistant Professor and head of the Pharmaceutical Immunology group at Leiden University Medical Center (LUMC). His research connects pharmaceutical sciences and immunology to develop therapeutic cancer vaccines and targeted delivery strategies.

He obtained his PhD (cum laude) at Leiden University in 2014 for his work on microneedle-mediated vaccine delivery, receiving the C.J. Kok Prize for the best thesis of the Faculty of Science. Following research positions in academia and industry in the Netherlands and Germany, he established his research group at LUMC in 2023.

His group investigates how vaccine formulation and delivery route shape immune responses against cancer. Key areas include liposomal peptide vaccines, intradermal delivery using microneedles and other devices, and local delivery of immunomodulators into tumors. His work combines formulation development with immunological studies, aiming to induce strong tumor-specific T cell responses while limiting systemic side effects. An important translational focus is developing scalable manufacturing methods for peptide-loaded liposomes suitable for clinical use.

Van der Maaden is an inventor on multiple patents and a start-up co-founder. He works closely with academic, clinical, and industrial partners to translate delivery technologies into cancer immunotherapies.