

Giacomo Oliveira, PhD

How long have you been at DFCI?

4 years, from June 2017

In which lab/department do you work?

I work in the lab of Dr. Catherine Wu, within the Department of Medical Oncology

From where did you receive your graduate degree?

From Vita-Salute San Raffaele University, Milan (Italy)



Why did you choose this area of study?

I chose to study T cells in cancer immunology initially by chance, since the first lab I visited as an undergraduate student was focused on T-cell based immunotherapies for the treatment of hematological malignancies. Since then, I became passionate about T cells, given their great potential in anticancer immune responses, and therefore I got interested in defining how T cells interact with tumor cells, and how it is possible to take advantage of such information to foster and elicit T cell reactivity against cancer cells.

What is the focus of your current research?

My current research studies focus on understanding the biology of antitumor T cells in cancers, with the goal of developing effective and potentially personalized therapies to treat solid tumor and hematological malignancies. The recent advances in cancer immunotherapy— from adoptive cellular therapy and vaccines to checkpoint blockade therapy—and the variability in clinical responses observed to these agents have motivated in me the broad interest in understanding the cellular states and antigen specificities of tumor-recognizing T cells.

How do you envision your career trajectory? How has working at Dana-Farber enhanced your career?

I would like to further grow both personally and professionally as an independent scientist. I envision myself as leading a group of people that have the passion to face the next challenges in the field of cancer immunotherapy. Working at Dana-Farber has provided me the environment and the technologies to satisfy my scientific interest and to generate high-impact results.

If there was one change you could recommend that would improve the postdoc experience at DFCI, what would it be?

I believe that postdoctoral fellows are the major engine of the research activity, especially at DFCI. As so, they should deserve more credit, awards and acknowledgments for their efforts, as well as better economical support to sustain their life. Moreover, DFCI should establish more funds to support post-doc travel and attendance to scientific conferences.

What DFCI resources have been the most beneficial to you during your postdoc?

A major beneficial resource at DFCI that allowed me to accomplish my scientific achievements was the possibility to perform great translational research and to access primary samples from the clinical trials. This, together with the accessibility to state-of-the-art technologies, allows to obtain scientific results that have a high potential to change the lives of patients.

When you're not doing science, where might we find you? (i.e., any outside activities or hobbies you enjoy?)

You might find me playing with my little son or watching soccer matches of Italian Serie A with friends.



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