

Curriculum Vitae

Stephan Pleschka Apl. Professor, Dr. rer. nat.
d.o.b. February 25th, 1962, in Velbert, Germany

University Education

2002 Habilitation in Virology, Justus Liebig University (JLU)
1994 Doctorate in Biology, Philipps University Marburg (PUM)
1983–1989 Studies of Biology, PUM

Scientific Career

2013-2020 PI, Collaborative Research Center SFB 1021
Since 2012 PI; Faculty member in the German Center for Infection Research (DZIF)
Since 2012 Representative for Radioactivity Safety at the Institute of Medical Virology, JLU
2010-2018 PI, Transregional Collaborative Research Center TRR 84, Giessen/Berlin
Since 2010 Faculty member in the German Center for Lung Research (DZL)
Since 2010 Faculty member in the “University Giessen/Marburg Lung Center (UGMLC)” and the LOEWE-Center (Hessen) “Inflammatory and Hyperproliferative Diseases of the Lung and the Respiratory Tract”, JLU
Since 2008 Faculty member in the network on zoonosis research „FluResearchNet: Molecular Signatures determining Pathogenicity and Species Transmission of Influenza A Viruses”, Germany
2007-2009 Coordinator and PI for the EC funded “Specific Targeted Research Project (STREP) “EuroFlu - Molecular Factors and Mechanisms of Transmission and Pathogenicity of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Virus”, Germany, Greece, Israel, Slovakia, Spain
Since 2006 Faculty member, “Giessen Graduate School of Live Sciences (GGL)”, JLU
2006-2013 Faculty member and PI of the Int. Graduate School „Enzymes and multi-enzyme complexes acting on nucleic acids“ (GRK1384), JLU
Since 2006 Adjunct Professor, Institute of Medical Virology, University of Giessen
2005 Advisory board member, commission for pharmaceuticals (Arzneimittelkommission) for recommendations concerning use of anti-viral pharmaceuticals and vaccination in response to the seasonal influenza, bird-flu and potential pandemics, Germany
Since 2004 Faculty, Int. Graduate School “Molecular Biology and Medicine of the Lung (MBML)”, JLU
2003-2008 Assistant for the coordination of the Collaborative Research Center SFB 535, JLU
2003-2005 PI, Collaborative Research Center SFB 535, Giessen
2003-2008 Associated Professor (C2) and group leader, Institute of Medical Virology, JLU
2002-2007 Faculty and PI, Int. Graduate School “Biochemistry of Nucleoprotein Complexes”, JLU
Since 1999 Head of the BSL-3 facilities, JLU, certified expertise and personal allowance to work with BSL-3 class viral pathogens and personal allowance to submit BSL-3 applications
2000-2002 Postdoctoral Fellow, Institute of Virology (Vet.), JLU
1997-2000 Postdoctoral Fellow, Institute of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics, JLU
1996-1997 Postdoctoral Fellow, Institute of Virology, PUM
1994-1996 Postdoctoral Fellow, Mount Sinai School of Medicine, New York, NY, USA
1989-1994 Research associate, Institute of Virology, PUM

Awards and Honors

2013 “Science2start” award (first price) of the “BioRegioStern (Baden-Württemberg)”
2009 Fellowship from the “von Behring/Röntgen-Foundation”
2002 Award for Clinical Research, GlaxoSmithKline Foundation for Clinical Research
1994 Fellowship from the “German Research Foundation” (DFG)

Citation Record

Total citations: 11,462; h-index:49; h-index since 2021: 36 (Google Scholar March 09th, 2026)

Top-10 selected Publications

Füll Y, Schüssele LM, Hamza H, Hoffmann H, Bauer M, Stenglein S, Pötz O, Steinhilber A, Anselm V, Delany MW, Van den Brand JMA, Van Amerongen G, De Waal L, **Pleschka S**, Ludwig S, Planz O. Antiviral and immunomodulatory effect of zapnometinib in animal models and hospitalized COVID-19 patients. **Front Immunol**. 2025 Sep 22;16:1631721. doi: 10.3389/fimmu.2025.1631721.

Waqas FH, Shehata M, Elgaher WAM, Lacour A, Kurmasheva N, Begnini F, Kiib AE, Dahlmann J, Chen C, Poulsen TB, Merkert S, Martin U, Olmer R, Olnagier D, Hirsch AKH, **Pleschka S**, Pessler F. NRF2 activators inhibit influenza A virus replication by interfering with nucleo-cytoplasmic export of viral RNPs in an NRF2-independent manner. **PLoS Pathog**. 2023 Jul 17;19(7):e1011506. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1101/2023.06.11.544457>.

Sohail A, Iqbal AA, Sahini N, Chen F, Tantawy M, Waqas SFH, Winterhoff M, Ebensen T, Schultz K, Geffers R, Schughart K, Preusse M, Shehata M, Bähre H, Pils MC, Guzman CA, Mostafa A, **Pleschka S**, Falk C, Michelucci A, Pessler F. Itaconate and derivatives reduce interferon responses and inflammation in influenza A virus infection. **PLoS Pathog**. 2022 Jan 13;18(1):e1010219. doi: 10.1371/journal.ppat.1010219.

Su W, Harfoot R, Su YCF, DeBeauchamp J, Joseph U, Jayakumar J, Crumpton JC, Jeevan T, Rubrum A, Franks J, Pascua PNQ, Kackos C, Zhang Y, Zhang M, Ji Y, Bui HT, Jones JC, Kercher L, Krauss S, **Pleschka S**, Chan MCW, Webster RG, Wu CY, Van Reeth K, Peiris M, Webby RJ, Smith GJD, Yen HL. Ancestral sequence reconstruction pinpoints adaptations that enable avian influenza virus transmission in pigs. **Nat Microbiol**. 2021 Nov;6(11):1455-1465. doi: 10.1038/s41564-021-00976-y.

Hamza H, Shehata MH, Mostafa A, **Pleschka S**, Planz O. Improved in vitro Efficacy of Baloxavir Marboxil Against Influenza A Virus Infection by Combination Treatment With the MEK Inhibitor ATR-002. **Front Microbiol**. 2021; 12: 611958. Published online 2021 Feb 12. doi: 10.3389/fmicb.2021.611958

Schloer S, Goretzko J, **Pleschka S**, Ludwig S, Rescher U. Combinatory Treatment with Oseltamivir and Itraconazole Targeting Both Virus and Host Factors in Influenza A Virus Infection. **Viruses**. 2020 Jun 29;12(7):E703. doi: 10.3390/v12070703.

Laure M, Hamza H, Koch-Heier J, Quernheim M, Müller C, Schreiber A, Müller G, **Pleschka S**, Ludwig S, Planz O. Antiviral efficacy against influenza virus and pharmacokinetic analysis of a novel MEK-inhibitor, ATR-002, in cell culture and in the mouse model. **Antiviral Res**. 2020 Jun;178:104806. doi: 10.1016/j.antiviral.2020.104806.

Droebner K, **Pleschka S**, Ludwig S, Planz O. Antiviral activity of the MEK-inhibitor U0126 against pandemic H1N1v and highly pathogenic avian influenza virus in vitro and in vivo. **Antiviral Res**. 2011 Nov;92(2):195-203. doi: 10.1016/j.antiviral.2011.08.002.

Pinto R, Herold S, Cakarova L, Hoegner K, Lohmeyer J, Planz O, **Pleschka S**. Inhibition of influenza virus-induced NF-kappaB and Raf-MEK-ERK activation can reduce both virus titers and cytokine expression simultaneously in vitro and in vivo. **Antiviral Res**. 2011 Oct;92(1):45-56. doi: 10.1016/j.antiviral.2011.05.009.

Pleschka S, Wolff T, Ehrhardt C, Hobom G, Planz O, Rapp U, Ludwig S. Influenza virus propagation is impaired upon specific inhibition of the Raf/MEK/ERK signaling cascade. **Nat Cell Biol**. 2001 Mar;3(3):301-5. doi: 10.1038/35060098. featured in "Nature Views" and in "Science Now"