

INSTAND

Promoting Quality in Medical Laboratories



Volume 1, January 2026

INSTAND NEWSLETTER

Dear Colleagues,

We warmly welcome you to the New Year's edition of the INSTAND newsletter, which covers the following topics:

- News about the INSTAND EQA Schemes:
 - Three new molecular genetic EQA Schemes
 - EQAS 706 (Molecular Genetics – Hereditary Fever Syndromes)
 - EQAS 726 (Molecular Genetics - UDP-Glucuronyltransferase 1-Gene (UGT1A1) – Whole Blood)
 - EQAS 728 (Molecular Genetics - Determination of Fetal Sex)
- INSTAND Academy:
 - The Current Program for 2026 is now online
- News from the INSTAND Calibration Laboratory
 - Metrological traceability now also available for cell counting
- INSTAND Publications:
 - POCT - Point-of-Care Testing, 4th edition, December 2025
 - 'The concept of external quality assessment super challenges with special consideration of their importance during pandemics', Lancet Microbe, December 2, 2025
- Future Events
 - '27. Bamberger Morphologietage', January 2026
 - WHX Dubai, February 2026
 - IGLD-INSTAND Annual Conference, March 2026

Happy reading!

Kind regards,
Your INSTAND Team

Prof. Dr. med. Michael Spannagl
Prof. Dr. rer. nat. Ingo Schellenberg
Prof. Dr. med. Klaus-Peter Hunfeld

INSTAND EQA Schemes

EQAS 706

Molecular Genetics – Hereditary Fever Syndromes

We will soon be offering our new **scheme 706** (Molecular Genetics – Hereditary Fever Syndromes) regularly every six months.

The new scheme will be launched in April 2026 (**dispatch date 04/28/2026**). Please register in RV-Online as usual by **02/27/2026**. You can find the relevant data and deadlines in our [digital catalog](#).

Additional information:

Scheme 706 requires analysis of the MEFV, NLRP3, MVK, and TNFRSF1A genes, as well as evaluation of the sample. This scheme is designed so that not all genes need to be analyzed. You can also report only the genes that you analyze in your laboratory.

EQAS 726

Molecular Genetics - UDP-Glucuronyltransferase 1-Gene (UGT1A1) – Whole Blood

In addition to our preexisting survey scheme 742 (Molecular Genetics - UDP-Glucuronyltransferase 1-Gene (UGT1A1)) – where dissolved DNA from leucocytes resembles the matrix for genotyping – we will shortly be offering scheme 726 – for those participants who prefer to analyze whole blood.

On an optional basis, participants are also welcome to check for the UGT1A1*6 genotype. Both genotypes, UGT1A1*28 and UGT1A1*6, are explicitly queried, and the certificates will be issued explicitly for both genotypes. Similarly, both genotypes can now also be optionally analyzed in our present scheme 742.

The new scheme 726 (Molecular Genetics - UDP-Glucuronyltransferase 1-Gene (UGT1A1) – Whole Blood) will be available every six months. It will be launched in March 2026 (dispatch date 03/10/2026). Please register in RV-Online as usual by January 23, 2026.

Please refer to the relevant data and deadlines in our [digital catalog](#).

EQAS 728

Molecular Genetics - Determination of Fetal Sex

We are pleased to offer you a new EQA scheme, **EQAS 728** (Molecular Genetics - NIPT – Aneuploidies, fetal sex and fetal fraction), on a regular biannual basis starting in February 2026.

For the new start, we can offer you a subsidized participation in February 2026 (dispatch date 02/17/2026) as part of a pilot trial. Please register for this by **01/23/2026**, as usual in the RV-Online system. The subsidized fee will be 450,-€ (catalogue price 1.200,-€). The corresponding dates and deadlines can be found in our [digital catalog](#).

Additional explanations:

- 1 mL of plasma per sample will be shipped.
 - EQA scheme 728 requires the determination of the fetal fraction, fetal sex, and possible aneuploidies (possible trisomies: 13, 18, and 21) as a non-invasive prenatal test (NIPT).
 - Due to limited sample stability, we recommend testing the samples within 72 hours of receipt. Please note the shortened deadline for returning the results until **02/27/2026**.
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INSTAND ACADEMY

The Current Program for 2026 is Online

The [current program](#) is now available online. It includes all courses for which the registration deadline has not yet expired or will start later this year.

We want to thank all speakers and cooperating professional associations for their support and look forward to a prosperous 2026.

This year, we are switching to on-demand shipping for **case collections**. For this reason, no order dates are currently available. We are currently changing our system to make this possible. We will inform you as soon as this is complete.

There is currently only one date for the **online training courses**. The second date will be announced in the spring.

We look forward to your participation in our training courses.
Kind regards,
Your INSTAND Academy team

NEWS FROM THE INSTAND CALIBRATION LABORATORY

Metrological Traceability now also available for Cell Counting

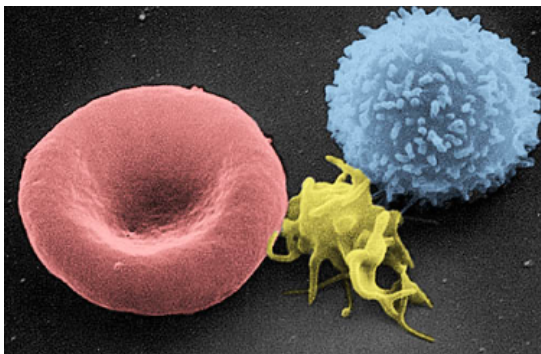
Authors: Fiona Cox, Dr. Patricia Kaiser, Prof. Dr. Michael Spannagl

We are pleased to announce the launch of a significant development project in our calibration laboratory. Together with the Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt (PTB), we are currently beginning to implement the determination of reference values for whole blood cells.

With a device configured explicitly for this purpose, INSTAND e.V. will in the future be able to offer metrological traceability for cell counting. This closes a gap in our calibration services and enables us to meet the requirements of the German Medical Association's guidelines on quality assurance in laboratory medical testing (Rili-BÄK) even more comprehensively, particularly regarding the quality assurance of cellular measurements.

Initially, the method will enable the determination of reference values for erythrocytes and leukocytes. However, the system can be expanded to include specialized cell types such as thrombocytes, stem cells, or CAR-T cells.

With this expansion, we are sustainably strengthening the quality assurance of cellular parameters and establishing a future-proof, metrologically traceable reference for cell counting.



Source: Electron Microscopy Facility at The National Cancer Institute at Frederick (NCI-Frederick), Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

INSTAND PUBLICATIONS

POCT - Point-of-care laboratory diagnostics, 4th edition, December 2025

Prof. Dr. med. Peter B. Lupp and Ralk Junker (Publishers)

This reference book provides an overview of the most essential POCT analysis methods and their clinical application in hospitals, medical practices, and self-testing. It provides important information on the medical and economic significance of procedures in point-of-care laboratory diagnostics, as well as organization and quality assurance, technologies, and future trends for POCT.

The reference book is aimed at anyone who performs point-of-care laboratory tests or would like to introduce them into healthcare: physicians of all specialties, managers in clinics, clinic administrators, other healthcare facilities, and private practitioners. Laboratory diagnostics manufacturers also receive valuable information about development trends and European legislative requirements for the development and use of POCT devices and reagents. The 4th edition has been completely revised and takes into account many current developments, such as continuous glucose monitoring (CGM) and molecular detection methods for infectious agents.

Publication in German

THE LANCET Microbe

'The concept of external quality assessment
super challenges with special consideration of
their importance during pandemics'

Christoph Buchta, Stephan W Aberle, Stéphanie Albarède, Xavier Albe, Tony Badrick, Andreas Bietenbeck, Vincent Delatour, Gro Gidske, Andrea Griesmacher, Jaap J van Hellemond, Gitte M Henriksen, Jim F Huggett, István Juhos, Martin Kammel, Piet Meijer, Ingo Schellenberg, Heinz Zeichhardt, Cas Weykamp (2025)

Article

FUTURE EVENTS



'27. Bamberger
Morphologietage'
23-25 January 2026
Bamberg, Germany

Find further information [here](#).



WHX Dubai
9-12 February 2026
Dubai

More Information [here](#).



IGLD - INSTAND Annual
Conference
5-7 March 2026
Frankfurt, Germany

Continue reading [here](#),

All Events



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All INSTAND News

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