KU Leuven Open Science Day

Science communications on a pandemic during the pandemic

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Author biography

[Johan Neyts](#) (KU Leuven) is full professor of virology and teaches virology at the medical school and at the school of dentistry. His lab has a long-standing expertise in the development of antiviral strategies and drugs against emerging and neglected viral infections (such as dengue and other flaviviruses), Chikungunya and other alphaviruses, enteroviruses, coronaviruses, noroviruses, HEV, and rabies. A second focus of the lab is the development of novel vaccines. His team developed/develops a number of very potent single dose vaccines, including against COVID-19. The approach is based on the yellow fever vaccine as a vector. The laboratory also developed a platform technology, the PLLAV (Plasmid Launched Live Attenuated Virus) vaccine approach. This technology allows to rapidly engineer highly thermostable vaccines against multiple viral pathogens. Johan Neyts is past-president of the [International Society for Antiviral Research](#). Four classes of antivirals discovered in his laboratory have been licensed to major pharmaceutical companies (two on HCV, one on dengue, and one on rhino/enteroviruses). He is co-founder of the KU Leuven spin-off Okapi Sciences (which was acquired within five years of incorporation). He published ~520 papers in peer reviewed journals, is inventor of a large patent portfolio, has given ~260 invited lectures, and ~450 interviews to lay-press.