

# Workshop

## Rethinking Cell Differentiation and Development: A Unicellular Perspective

6 – 9 December 2026  
Buxted Park,  
East Sussex, UK



### Funded places for early-career researchers

One of the central questions in developmental biology is how different cell fates are generated from a single founding cell. Although great strides have been made in our understanding of this problem in animals, the evolutionary origins of this process are not understood. It is known that many unicellular organisms progress through different cell stages during their life cycle, known as temporal cell differentiation, and it has been hypothesized that spatial cell differentiation (as seen in animals) evolved from this more ancient differentiation-mode. A full understanding of how this occurred has been hampered by a lack of information on the basic principles underlying temporal cell

differentiation in the closest relatives of animals, the unicellular holozoans.

The Workshop will consist of sessions of talks and discussions centred around various aspects of development to unicellular holozoans. Each session will contain a mixture of researchers working on unicellular holozoans and those working on other eukaryotic systems who will provide alternative insights. Through these sessions the Workshop will build knowledge aiming to produce a white-paper document outlining the emerging conceptual framework in the field, the major outstanding questions as well as seeding collaborative efforts to address these questions.

#### Organisers

Elena Casacuberta  
James Gahan

#### Speakers

Detlev Arendt  
David Booth  
Thibaut Brunet  
Pawel Burkhardt  
Susana Coelho  
Omayya Dudin

Nicole King  
Lucie Laplane  
Eric Libby  
Aurora Mihaela Nedelcu  
Àlex de Mendoza  
Iñaki Ruiz-Trillo

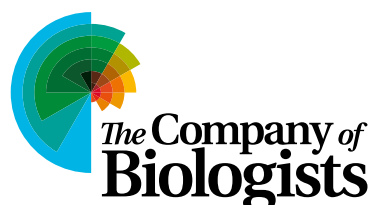
Florentine Rutaganira  
Arnau Sebé-Padrós  
Hiroshi Suga  
Katrina Velle  
Renske Vroomans

Secure your place\* alongside leading experts and other early-career researchers from a diverse range of scientific backgrounds.

**Deadline: 12 June 2026**

To find out more or apply online visit [workshops.biologists.com](https://workshops.biologists.com)

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