Biography

Milena Bellin, PhD

University of Padova and Veneto Institute of Molecular medicine (IT) & Leiden University Medical Center (NL)

Milena Bellin is Full Professor of Genetics and Group Leader at the Dept. of Biology and Veneto Institute of Molecular Medicine, University of Padua (Italy), and Principal Investigator at the Dept. of Anatomy and Embryology, Leiden University Medical Center (The Netherlands). She received a PhD in Genetics and Molecular Biology of the Development at the University of Padua, Italy. She then pursued her long-standing interest in human pluripotent stem cell (hPSC) biology and merged it with her expertise in cardiac genetics by joining the group of Prof. K-L. Laugwitz as a post-doctoral fellow at the Technical University of Munich, Germany; she described one of the first hPSC models of an arrhythmic disease of the heart, called long-QT syndrome. After receiving a personal Marie Curie Fellowship, she joined Prof. C. Mummery's laboratory where she derived the first cardiac isogenic hPSC pairs to investigate molecular mechanisms underlying inherited cardiac arrhythmia. She is now leading a team focused on molecular and electrophysiological characterization of patient-specific hPSC-derived cardiomyocytes, developing hPSC-based platforms for drug-screening and safety pharmacology, and building three-dimensional cardiac microtissues to study complex and multi-cellular cardiac diseases. During her career, she has been granted with a Marie Curie fellowship (2012), FEBS Anniversary Prize for outstanding achievements in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (2016), and an ERC Consolidator Grant (2020). She is part of the Institute for human Organ and Disease Model technologies. She sits on several scientific advisory boards and reviewing panels. Her research is supported by national and international bodies and private foundations (European Research Council, Italian Ministry of Education and Research, Friedreich's Ataxia Research Alliance).